

ment in the days that have gone by. Why, when we took that road over, even taking one of the best lines, say the line between Toronto and Ottawa, not only could the trains not make their time, but trains went off the track. I myself have been in a wreck on that line. There was an immense amount of work to do. The line practically had to be rebuilt. What is it to-day? How is the bulk of the business between Toronto and Ottawa going to-day? Why, by the Canadian National road, by the best equipped, the safest and best graded line. That is where it is going, that work has been done, and that was carried out by this country, and carried out, through the operation of the public accounts.

Let us go back and see what was done in those two years my hon. friend refers to. He points to an increase of debt in 1921 of ninety-two million and he is absolutely right. There was that increase, and it was a very very bad thing we had to have it—a most regrettable thing. But as against the \$67,000,000 that my hon. friend now talks about, the special payments in that year, over and above consolidated fund expenditures, amounted to \$150,000,000. Yet to-day, with taxation doubled and multiplied, there is difficulty with this \$67,000,000. Next year the deficit was not quite so bad, but it was too bad altogether. The increase in debt in 1922 amounted to \$81,000,000, and again, if we go back to my hon. friend's basis, dealing with these extraordinary payments, payments made that year, outside of consolidated fund expenditures, amounted to \$115,000,000, as against the \$67,000,000 that my hon. friend refers to. Why, Mr. Speaker, the work has largely been done. I am frankly surprised and amazed when I hear from my hon. friend that he expects, in the next year, that the railways will cost this country \$67,000,000. They ought not to cost anything like that sum. I do not know what the present directors fear; I do not know what the present organization are afraid of, what benumbing influences they have been subjected to; but I know this, that with the improved facilities which they now have, with the business worked up as it has been, subject, of course, to this most regrettable delay that has taken place and the consequent disorganization, if the betterments shown in the past two years of \$20,000,000 and \$16,000,000 are maintained, if the ordinary downward curve is followed on deficits and if the ordinary upward curve of business is followed, we ought to have but very little deficit on the railways next year.

In order, however, that that may be the case, the railways must be left in the posi-

1 Sir Henry Drayton.1

tion in which these hon. gentlemen got them. I am a great deal puzzled by this whole question. I want to believe that everyone is acting in good faith. I want to believe that we are getting to a point in Canada when party objects, party aims, party desires, are much smaller than the general weal of this country. I would love to be able to think that, but I confess I am wholly puzzled. On the one hand, Sir Henry Thornton tells us that politics has absolutely nothing to do with the line; that it is entirely free of political influence. He has made that statement often, and the newspapers describe how at the minute of making this declaration, Sir Henry Thornton would stiffen his chin and stick out his chest. He has a first-rate stiff chin and a grand chest, but I hope they will stay stuck out as described. I am, however, frankly puzzled. I was very much interested in a speech made by the hon. member for George Etienne Cartier (Mr. Jacobs), when he was addressing, I think, the Ladies' Club in Montreal. Perhaps it was the Gentlemen's Club, but my recollection is that it was the Ladies' Club.

Mr. JACOBS: The hon. member is quite right. It was the Ladies' Club.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: He touched on the question of the railways and he was rather mournful about them; but one thing he said was: "We have a new board and they are all Grits." And he said: "If Grits cannot do the impossible, no one can." Of course, that is a difficult thing to do. The Prime Minister says: "These railways are going to be kept out of politics," and so as to keep them out of politics, so that there can never be any political discussion around the railway board, he sees to it that the directors are all Grits. Consequently, this puzzles me a little, but I am much more puzzled at what the Minister of Finance says. He says frankly: "The railways are in politics." If the idea be that the railways are to be in politics, had we not all better stop and do a little thinking? In the other board, they were not; there were Liberals and Conservatives on the other board.

Mr. JACOBS: Unionists.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: My hon. friend may say "Unionists." Is there anything particularly bad in being a Unionist? But there certainly was no politics in the former administration.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Sir HENRY DRAYTON: Hon. gentlemen laugh and hon. gentlemen sneer. It is very