

of the person who has effected them; they belong henceforth to the widow, who has no other means of living, and to the orphans whom death has deprived of their father. Should these savings, instead of reaching their destination, be thrown into speculative ventures, used in stock gambling, or invested in securities of doubtful value, the policy-holder may lose the benefit of his self-denial. So I contend it would be criminal on the part of the government to overlook such a threatening evil, and to neglect amending the present insurance law, defective as it is. Certain facts of a scandalous nature, recently brought to light, especially in the United States, have sufficed to summon action on the government's part; and though not familiar with all the details of the proposed legislation, I am happy to be in a position to state that it will tend to ensure to the policy-holder a greater measure of protection. As regards its scope, it will apply as well to the mutual benefit associations under the control of the Dominion government. Insurance concerns will also be benefited thereby; for what will become of our insurance system if policy-holders suspect that they are not absolutely safeguarded against trickery and machinations on the part of officers of our insurance companies and mutual benefit associations.

I shall now draw attention to the measure for extending the powers of the board of Railway Commissioners over telephone and telegraph lines, which are nowadays considered to be on a par with our modern system of railways. In our time, steam and electricity are utilized in all industries, and as their uses multiply, it is the more necessary that the public should be protected against the exactions of monopolists. Business men have not as a rule the generosity and disinterestedness of that illustrious Frenchman, Pasteur, who gave away his discoveries, the outcome of the labours of a lifetime. Business men have laid hands on all recent discoveries in electrical science. They strive to make money out of the genius of great inventors and market out the result of scientific research. Telephone and telegraph lines are public facilities of such import as to make it desirable to place them under the control of the present Board of Railway Commissioners, in order to end all difficulties between the producer and the consumer. The problem which the government had to solve when the Board of Railway Commissioners was instituted, comes up to-day in connection with the management of telegraph and telephone lines. There has been no serious criticism as regards the establishment of the Board of Railway Commissioners. Nay, it was conceded by all that such establishment was a decided step in advance on the former condition of things. In fact, by referring to the report of that board, dated March

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31, 1906, one may ascertain all the good that board has accomplished, all the abuses it has corrected and the lawsuits it has prevented. The government in putting the telephone companies under the control of a board of commissioners, is entitled to equal praise as when they established the Board of Railway Commissioners.

As regards the proposed Act concerning elections, I shall only hope that it will be in all particulars worthy of the Liberal party in this country. It is the same party which, in 1874, with a view to putting a stop to all corrupt practices, instituted the secret ballot. That in itself would be sufficient to entitle Sir Aime Dorion to the gratitude of his fellow-citizens; for he then secured to them a sure means of freely using the franchise, provided corruption and fraud do not interfere. Since the last session of parliament, the manner in which elections are carried on in this country has been discussed on many hustings. I do not propose recalling in detail the corrupt practices denounced by representative political men belonging to either party. The 'tu quoque' argument has been freely used on both sides. It is the most clear proof that purity in elections has not attained here its highest standard. If the leader of the opposition is in earnest when taunting his opponents on account of alleged electoral corruption, he should join hands with the government in their effort to bring about a better state of things in this respect. And as I am quite satisfied that the charges brought by the Liberals against the opposition are justified, I trust that the reference made in the speech from the Throne to the desirability of having a more perfect electoral law will be unanimously endorsed by this House.

So, much, Mr. Speaker, for that part of the speech from the Throne dealing with proposed legislation. That will be our task to-morrow. As regards that part of the speech from the Throne which refers to yesterday's accomplishments, it is summed up in a reference to the Colonial Conference of 1907, and in another to the treaty between Canada and France.

Governments cannot afford to be inactive between sessions. During recess ministerial responsibility is often put to severe tests. That is precisely what happened after prorogation, when the right hon. leader of the House, accompanied by two of his colleagues, proceeded to London, at the call of the Imperial government, to take part in the Colonial Conference. They were not then in a position to shield their own responsibility behind the authority of parliament, they were left to their own resources, to their own judgment, to their own private-wisdom. Nevertheless, we were not apprehensive of any danger. What our Prime Minister had accomplished at previous conferences,