

with ladies and gentlemen whom I see before me. It is part of my duty as Minister of Agriculture to meet those who are engaged in agriculture—as I am myself engaged in it—to meet those who are engaged in the same business of farming and horticulture. I may say that in coming in contact with them I am better able to do my duty to them. Coming face to face with the farmers from the different parts of the Province, I am much better informed with regard to the needs and wants of agriculture, in the Dominion of Canada, and better able to advise how those needs may be met. The question which is before you this afternoon, is one local in its character; that is to say it is a question of your local business relations and not one in which I am particularly well informed. Mr. Andrews said it was a subject you knew by heart. I do not know it by heart, and therefore, I am at a disadvantage. You know all about it. I do not. I cannot teach you anything in regard to it. Before this meeting closes I hope to have an opportunity of talking about fruit growing and the business of agriculture in connection therewith, and perhaps I might be able to give you some ideas; at all events they are long continued observations and careful study of these questions. This question is one of which you know more than I do. You are more familiar with the facts. It is true I stood before an audience in Kentville for two hours, and had a great deal of information given me in regard to it, and what I am able to say to you must be largely beside that. I am not going to detain you two hours to deal with this question, and therefore I would remove that impression from your minds at once.

It is a question which is of the greatest importance for your business, and therefore you are rightly greatly interested therein. It is a question which belongs to that great class of questions which practically nobody understands—the question of freight rates and transportation. It may be that a few railway magnates of the continent understand it. (Laughter). We always find them fighting about it—and there are a great many differences among them. We find steamship owners also discussing it with a great deal of acrimony, as to statements and facts—and therefore it would be well to clear the air by coming to rock bottom facts about the matter. The statement was made here this afternoon, and it was made yes-