

I speak for the youth and progress of the country in asking the House to pass this Bill. Over one hundred thousand young men and women, I believe, use the bicycle to-day in Canada; we have the best grounds for believing they do so. The sale of wheels is increasing very rapidly. As the price goes down, the sale will grow with increasing rapidity. The bicycle no longer can be said to be the luxury of the few or of the rich or even of those comfortably well-to-do; it has become an article of habitual use by all classes of the community. We all know how largely it is used in cities, not only by the rich and their children, but by the workingmen, and by the working-women; by railway employees, by factory people, and by all classes. I am able to state from my personal knowledge, that in the country districts the case is quite similar. In the part of Ontario in which I live—and I think it is not peculiar in that respect—nearly every farmer's son now aspires to have a bicycle, almost as eagerly as he aspires to have a horse and buggy to take his best girl out for a drive. He has the horse and buggy still, but he wants to have the bicycle also.

An hon. MEMBER. And the girl.

Mr. CASEY. Yes, and the girl wants to have her bicycle too to accompany him, so that the farmers' sons and daughters are equally interested in this. Then, if all classes of society in cities, and towns, and in the country are interested in this measure, I am not ashamed to insist upon the House giving it the utmost attention.

One of the arguments used against this Bill is a sort of pooh-pooh argument: Oh, this is just a thing gotten up by a few rattle-pated young fellows who have bicycles, and who want to run out a few miles from the town, and come back on the train! I have disposed of that argument by pointing out the influential character of the persons who use the wheel. They are influential in many ways. There is, I suppose, hardly a member in this House who has not been assisted in his successful campaign by the bicyclists amongst his supporters. They have drummed up meetings, they have carried special messages to committees, they have brought in reports of the state of the polls, and they have gone in procession on the triumphal evening when the hon. gentleman in question was elected. In all ways, the wheelmen have taken an important part in the last general election held in this Dominion.

It is worth the while of hon. gentlemen to consider, whether the wheelmen may not take an important part in the next campaign. I do not wish to be accused of bribery and corruption, by calling attention to a matter of this kind, but I do think it is worth the attention of every member of this House, from the members of the Government down to the junior members on the back benches—if there be such a thing as a back bench in

this House where we are all free and equal—I say that from the youngest to the oldest member here, it is worth his while to remember that these young men who use bicycles are important fellows at election times. This is by no means a party measure; these young gentlemen are by no means all of the same party feeling, but there is no doubt that they will feel much more kindly towards those who assist them to obtain what they believe are their rights, than towards those who try to debar them from obtaining these rights.

This matter has been before individual members for some time past. There has been a good deal of discussion in the lobbies, and I want to pay attention to a few of the arguments I have heard against the Bill, and to those objections to it which have been formulated in print. In the first place, I am told, that it is a matter of class legislation, and that it would be an innovation. I claim that the boot is on the other foot. Until about a year ago, every railway in Canada carried bicycles on the same terms as they carried other baggage. Therefore, it is the railways who have introduced class legislation, or rather class discrimination against a certain large section of the people. They it is who have made the innovation by declaring that something is not baggage which had been formerly considered baggage, and they have made this class discrimination against those who use wheels, as compared with the rest of the public. Not only did all railways class bicycles as baggage until within a year, but up to the present day, the Government railways continue so to class them. On the Intercolonial Railway and Prince Edward Island Railway and all others in the maritime provinces, bicycles are still carried as baggage, and for that reason some of our maritime province friends hardly realize the grievance which the people of Ontario and Quebec labour under. They have been accustomed to see bicycles carried on railways as they should be carried, viz.: As the personal necessities of the passengers. In the United States, nearly one-half of the railway companies have always carried, and still carry bicycles as articles of baggage. In eleven states of the union they are compelled by law to do so; but apart from that compulsion, such large railway systems as the Pennsylvania railroad system with its ramifications extending through many states, and the Boston and Albany, which is somewhat similarly situated, and many other railways carry bicycles as baggage. The Boston and Albany road has gone so far as to provide a complete outfit in the baggage cars to make it convenient to carry bicycles, and they make no extra charge to the passenger. The eleven states which by legislation class bicycles as baggage are as follows:—New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Arkansas, Arizona, Ohio, Colorado, California, North Dakota, and Michigan. In France, by order of the