

and I am satisfied we shall appeal successfully.

My honourable friend (Hon. Mr. Bostock) referred a few moments ago to the fact that no statement was made in the Speech from the Throne in regard to the increase of freight rates. Surely my honourable friend is not serious in urging or contending that this Government was in any way responsible for the increase of freight rates. My honourable friends when in office very wisely established a railway board chargeable with regulating freight rates throughout the Dominion, and I think that Board may be complimented upon having shown up to the present time a reasonable degree of wisdom in having exercised fair discretion in regard to the rates which they have established. But my honourable friend sought to leave the impression that the initiative was taken by the Dominion Government in moving for an increase of rates on account of the Government ownership of railways. This was not the case. As my honourable friend opposite knows, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company was the active factor in demanding there should be an increase of rates, although any increase which might be given would inure to some extent to the advantage of the roads that are operated by the Government of Canada. But let it not be overlooked that there were grounds. For instance, it was established on evidence that the average annual wage of the railway employees immediately previous to the war was \$756, and at the present time they will average \$2,000. The operating expenses of railways are made up largely of wages of employees and the cost of materials. The prices of materials increased not merely one hundred per cent, but in many cases two hundred per cent. I need not weary the House by going into detail. It therefore was not unreasonable that the railways of Canada should be placed on a parity with those of the United States. We are so closely allied in our relations with the United States in business, commerce, and many other matters that when certain conditions prevail there they largely control similar conditions in Canada. My honourable friend (Hon. Mr. Bostock) is fully aware that the jurisdiction to regulate railway rates is exclusively with the Railway Board. True, an appeal lies to the Governor General in Council, but the effect of that appeal is not that Council revises the rate, but rather that it sends back the report with any suggestions it may have

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED.

to make to the Railway Board; and in this particular case this was done. I therefore need not occupy the time of the House with subjects which are not referred to in the Speech from the Throne, except that possibly I should not overlook the statement which was made as to the Conservation Commission. I think honourable gentlemen on both sides of the House will agree that there should be the greatest economy exercised in the administration of our public affairs; that because a Commission may exist and may have been appointed by one Government or another is not necessarily a reason why there should be no change when it is found that practically the same duties which were being assumed by the Commission and carried out by them were assumed by other departments of Government long before the Commission was established. No less than four or five departments of Government are and have been doing practically the same work that the Conservation Commission was doing, and as the Session proceeds and as the Bill is brought before Parliament, if honourable gentlemen desire any evidence upon that point it will be forthcoming. I think honourable gentlemen can easily satisfy themselves that this Government will be able to save approximately \$250,000 a year by the extinction of the Conservation Commission.

I have to congratulate my honourable friends who moved and seconded the Address. I listened with a degree of envy to the honourable member from Stadacona (Hon. Mr. Webster) addressing this House in both languages. Had I been able to do likewise I assure you that I should have done so with the greatest pleasure. My honourable friend is not only to be congratulated upon addressing the House in both languages equally well, but upon the sound business speech which he made, which was truly characteristic of the representative position which he occupies as a leading business man in the most metropolitan city of Canada.

I was also pleased with the speech made by my honourable friend from Pembroke (Hon. Mr. White). My honourable friend from Pembroke, like many another honourable gentleman in this House, did yeoman service in the House of Commons, and graduated from that House to this. We have to congratulate ourselves accordingly. I think the strength of this House may be said to be largely made up of honourable gentlemen who at one time as mem-