

against the trust. We have a very good illustration of what cheap rates can bring about. Some years ago, when Sir William Mulock was Postmaster General, it was said that letter rates could not be reduced; that to reduce them would mean a huge deficit for the Post Office Department. Sir William Mulock went before the conference at the time of the Queen's Jubilee and compelled the then Postmaster General in Great Britain to accept the principle of penny postage throughout the British Empire. Canada led the way in that great reform, and since that time the Post Office Department, instead of having a yearly deficit, has had a yearly surplus. The principle worked well: The cheaper the rates, the larger the number of letters and post cards, and the bigger the business. I hope, therefore, that the resolution of the conference will carry; that we shall succeed in choking that cable trust which controls the news of the world, and that a state-owned cable will be established to unite more closely the various portions of the British Empire.

My hon. friend spoke of a very interesting and practical subject, the question of lower oceanic rates. We cannot hope to extend the trade of Canada if we are treated, as we have always been, by the British shipowners. The St. Lawrence route, which is admittedly one of the best routes in the world, which has been so much improved during the last twenty-five years, has been discredited by the abnormally high rates imposed on our shipping. I hope the Government will see to it that those rates are lowered and that Canadian traders are given a proper chance.

My hon. friend spoke of the Imperial Court of Appeals. I may surprise some of my hon. friends by what I am going to say. While I am far from being an Imperialist, speaking for myself and as a member of the minority in Canada, I stand by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and I am against any radical change. I would be against the Supreme Court of Canada as the final tribunal in Canada. Let me explain. I do not object to the Supreme Court of Canada being the last court of resort for our ordinary civil and commercial cases; but as regards constitutional cases, I stand by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. First of all, it is a court which is the honour of the British Empire, and I may say, of the civilized world.

The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council has from time immemorial given ample satisfaction to all those who have

[Mr. Lemieux.]

had the honour to appear before it. Its members are among the ablest men in the land and they are above suspicion, and, I repeat, I stand for the Judicial Committee in all matters constitutional. As regards our civil and commercial cases, I see no reason why they should go beyond the Supreme Court of Canada.

An hon. MEMBER: Is the hon. member in favour of the judgment of the Judicial Committee in the Alaska award?

Mr. LEMIEUX: It was a special commission—an arbitration, and I may say that in that arbitration our Canadian commissioners stood by Canada. Unfortunately—and I may say it was quite openly stated in this House when I was a young member—the news of our defeat before the Alaska Boundary Commission was flashed one sad morning to the House of Commons and on both sides the extraordinary attitude of Lord Alverstone was severely censured. But this is not the question. We are speaking of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and I, as a member of the minority, stand fast by that committee as the court of final appeal on constitutional questions. My hon. friend laid stress on the fact that new channels of communication had been established between the Dominion and the Mother Country in that the Prime Minister would in the future be in a position to correspond directly with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. I have the highest regard for the wisdom of my hon. friend, but if the clear results of our association with the members of the Imperial Conference only amounted to that, I would say that it was indeed a very humble pie that we were eating, because it is really not a great success to achieve when, after more than one hundred and fifty years of association with the Mother Country, we find that we have at last succeeded in having a Prime Minister who in the future will be able to correspond directly with the Prime Minister of England. I do not wish to belittle the deliberations of the Conference; far from it. But there were other questions much more vital and important than that in the discussions which took place at the Conference, and which I suppose will be discussed before this House when the Prime Minister (Sir Robert Borden) returns to Canada. He has himself declared that any constitutional change evolved from that war cabinet would have to be submitted to the Parliament of Canada. I do not know what change can take place. We have just passed through the greatest of all