

good roads, canals, lake and river transportation, the carriage of letters and express parcels, telephones and telegraphs, etc. A strike on the railroads or in the telephone service causes the greatest inconvenience to thousands, perhaps to hundreds of thousands. To take only one or two instances: the milk supply of Toronto or Montreal or any other large city could easily be shut off by a strike affecting the railway lines. The coal supply, which is rarely sufficient for more than a few weeks at the most, would be similarly affected. The suffering inflicted upon those who dwell in cities would be incalculable. Transportation is, then, a very important factor in the economic life of a country. It cannot be left entirely to employers and employees to say just when that transportation should be stopped. The public is deeply concerned with rates and prospective stoppages of transportation, so we have the Government appointing a permanent Railway Commission to fix rates, and passing an Industrial Disputes Act to compel an investigation of the causes of quarrels between masters and men which threaten to tie up the business of the country. This public investigation usually leads to a peaceful settlement of the quarrel.

### **Water Transportation.**

Water transportation is much cheaper than land carriage. Before the era of railroads, the difference was even greater than it is to-day. The early settlers of Canada naturally settled where water transportation was available, as the thick bush made land transportation very difficult. During the whole earlier history of the country—before the age of railroads—water transportation was everywhere in use. During the whole of the French and the early part of the English occupation of Canada, the St. Lawrence was the chief means of communication. After the commencement of settlement west of the Lachine Rapids, it became necessary to portage goods where the water was unnavigable. This cost a lot of money; therefore we have canals built in order to avoid the necessity for it. Short canals at the rapids of the St. Lawrence were constructed 1779-1781, and were enlarged in 1804 and 1817. The Lachine canal was constructed 1821-