

*Ocean Shipping Rates*

a dozen commissions investigating it, over a period of, not one year or two years but ten or fifteen years and this work still continues. Wherever you go, you hear of it.

The government has introduced a proposition to do away with it, and it may be possible for the government to do something to improve the situation. My contention, however, is that the government has not approached the problem in the right way. I am going rather out of my way, perhaps—and this is altogether on my own account—to suggest a way out of the difficulty and to start business and everything else in Canada on the up-grade again. What is my suggestion? It is this, that an effort ought to be made to incorporate the Canadian Pacific Railway and its steamship lines with the Canadian National Railways on fair terms. In that way we would start with a very high-class steamship line, with not only passenger vessels, but freight steamers and lake steamers of all kinds, and we would have something on which we could rely. That is a big proposition, but it is not an impossible one and it is one well worthy of consideration. I am not proposing anything that might be a financial failure. Everybody knows that the Canadian Pacific Railway, with its steamship lines, has been a successful proposition. It has made money from the start. It is a company that has not only a great railway doing a big business, but these steamship lines. It has a huge cash surplus and another surplus of undivided profits out of the land grants it received earlier in its career.

We have before us great problems of every kind and we are trying to solve these problems by creating new companies and making new deals and agreements with people outside this country. That has been tried long enough and we have failed. We

5 p.m. propose, however, to continue these experiments in the same direction.

I venture to predict that the agreement now submitted to the House will end where the Crownsnest pass agreement ended, it will end in a dispute which will go to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council and we shall have no relief for years. We must originate something in this country, and in doing what I suggest we shall be doing something towards clearing up the railway situation. Canada has been over-railroaded to death. We have all the roads that have been built in this country one after another for one reason or another during the past sixty or seventy years. We have had to take many of them over, and we have gone into debt in connection with the Grand Trunk, Grand Trunk Pacific, Canadian Northern and a

[Mr. W. F. Maclean.]

number of other companies. Others wish to impose themselves upon the country. The Canadian Pacific is the complement of the Canadian National if the two can be put together in some fair way. I believe that is possible and I want to suggest to the government that, instead of dealing with the Petersen syndicate, they ought to see if there is not a way of making an arrangement between the Canadian Pacific and the Canadian National to consolidate the two into one system owned absolutely by the people of Canada. As to how that is to be brought about, I am not going into details at the moment but will refer to that later on. Let me point out the immediate and absolute advantages of any such combination.

As I said, the country is over-railroaded and we want relief from that. Just to show what the extravagance has been in the past—and it has not ended—we hear that the Canadian National, the Temiskaming and Northern Ontario, a provincial road, and the Canadian Pacific are all laying plans to build lines into the new mineral country in Quebec and Ontario. One company could do all that work instead of three lines being built, and great economy could be effected thereby. There are other cases where immense savings could be made. By consolidating the two roads, you cut out all unnecessary services, and what is more important, you re-route the services on the combinations that are available. For instance, you would re-route the great freight lines across the continent and all the local services in all the provinces.

At the present time one road has the best grade here, the other road has the best grade there; one system has the best passes through the mountains, the other the best bridges over the rivers. But if we consolidated these lines and took advantage of the economies that come from re-routing and stopping of unnecessary rivalry, we would save millions of dollars to the people of Canada, and we would at the same time acquire a great railway service and a great steamship service; and the latter would do everything that we seek to accomplish by this contract, and moreover the ships would be absolutely our own.

But that is only a few of the economies that might be effected. How much longer can this country stand the competition that is now going on between the two great systems? I live in Toronto, I go between there and Ottawa every week, and I see the two systems competing for business that one system could handle just as well and save a great waste of money. There are three or four transcontinental trains daily that are unnecessary, probably they are losing money,