

stool could be a success managed under such conditions. I am afraid a general housecleaning is required.

Perhaps it will be a good place here for me to say that I think Sir Henry Thornton will make the Canadian National Railway system a success, if any man can. I think he is a big man in every sense of the word. He has had railway experience on two continents; he has met railway men in the United States, in England and on the Continent. He is personally and favourably acquainted with wealthy men in the United States who may be willing to invest some of their wealth in Canada and so help forward the development of our natural resources and our industries. Because of the peculiar position he occupies, and because of having been born in the United States and now being a British citizen by adoption, he may have much to do in bringing about a condition of things which will mean much to our country; in fact, he may be a contributor in establishing better trade relations between Canada and the United States.

There are a few other things I wish to mention in connection with the Prince Edward Island section of the Canadian National railway system and I will then conclude my remarks. When Prince Edward Island entered confederation in 1873 it was on the distinct understanding that efficient steam service would be established and maintained between the Island and the mainland, winter and summer, thus placing the Island in continuous communication with the Inter-colonial railway and the railway system of the Dominion. In fact "it was so nominated in the bond." This promise has never been fully implemented, either in the letter or the spirit. The establishing of the car ferry was a step in the right direction, but the benefits of that step will be almost nil till the Prince Edward Island railway is standardized, and I was therefore glad to hear Sir Henry Thornton say in Charlottetown a few weeks ago that this work would be taken up without delay.

Confederation has undoubtedly benefited the two central provinces, Ontario and Quebec. It has been injurious to the provinces on the Atlantic sea-board, and very injurious to Prince Edward Island. In proof of this statement many facts could be given, but a few will suffice. When Prince Edward Island entered the confederation fifty years ago, we had several small flourishing industries, now we have none, except a few small lobster canning establishments, which could not be moved away because the fish have to be canned where they are caught.

Mr. JACOBS: What about fox farming?

[Mr. Hughes.]

Mr. HUGHES: Fox farming is another industry. All our industries save those I have mentioned have gone to Ontario and Quebec. Then our population was increasing every year, now it is decreasing and to-day we have some six thousand souls less than we had in 1871 and some twenty thousand less than we had two decades ago, which is equal to one-fourth or one-fifth of our total population. This is surely a startling and challenging fact. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are not increasing in population as they should, but they are not actually decreasing. Our people are engaged entirely in farming and fishing, and I sometimes ask myself whether a burden has been put upon these industries which they cannot carry. Our climate is healthful, our soil is fertile, our fisheries are productive, and we think our people are mentally and physically equal to others, in fact many of them do well when they go abroad. Then what in the world is wrong with us? I ask the members of the railway board, I ask the members of this honourable House, I ask the people of Canada generally if they can be indifferent while one province, small though it be, slowly bleeds to death. We think our transportation difficulties have much to do with our dwindling population, we think the railway freight rates are unjust to Prince Edward Island—I shall give examples. We also think that no railway board composed entirely of men from the other provinces can fully understand or sympathise with our local difficulties. We therefore think we should have a man on the railway board. I put this matter as strongly as I could before the government, and I now put it before the parliament and the people of Canada, and hope for good results.

If it be thought that representation on the railway board would give Prince Edward Island too many men in public or semi-public life, so far as I am concerned, I would gladly give up part of our representation in this House and in the Senate for representation on the railway board. We have the Railway Commission and the Civil Service Commission, and if Canada is to be governed by boards and commissions we of Prince Edward Island want representation on some of these bodies, where power and responsibility rest, and where there is work to be done.

I said I would give examples of unjust freight rates so far as Prince Edward Island was concerned, and I shall now try to carry out that promise. I find that the rate on grain from Montreal to Halifax, local, is 32 cents per 100 pounds; while on the same article from Charlottetown to Halifax, much less