

"Heaven grant that it is not too late," cried Sir Wilfrid. and he followed up this demonstration of political piety, in which he put his hand over his heart, by putting his other hand into your pocket. It is there yet, the proof of the hostage we have given to the future against the "ever vigilant competitor."

The National Transcontinental section of Sir Wilfrid's railway between Moncton and Winnipeg is over 1,800 miles long. Nearly 1,300 miles of this is through a country which, when the railway was undertaken, did not contain as many white people as there are in this hall. The railway is being built on a scale the expense of which is greater than that of any pioneer railway built on this continent.

Mr. Graham, Minister of Railways, told the House of Commons last March that it would cost over \$145,000,000—more than \$80,000 per mile. In the end the taxpayers will have to make good a yearly interest of \$3,000 per mile, or about \$1.75 per yard on the cost of construction and equipment. In the West, the prairie section, which is really to carry the other sections, traverses 800 miles of prairie country. The mountain section, which will be far more costly than the Ontario and Quebec sections, is over one thousand miles long.

Taking the enterprise as a whole, which the country must make good, it will be found that, supposing the ratio of expenses to earnings in the early lean years is the same as that of the Canadian Pacific after it has become the greatest railway system in the world, it will have to earn anywhere from twenty to twenty-five million dollars a year, before the interest on the cost of construction can be paid out of the revenue.

I know something about another railway. The Canadian Northern, west of Lake Superior, has a mileage about the same as that of the Laurier Transcontinental from Moncton to Prince Rupert, with branches through the most fertile sections of the prairie provinces spreading out like the fingers of my hand. It has no long stretches of unproductive territory, but after thirteen years' existence it earned \$12,000,000, according to the last annual report.

You will see there are still great obligations to meet in connection with the enterprise, which was designed to secure our relationship with Great Britain, and to prevent the supremacy of the United States in Canadian commerce. And yet, while the scheme is still unfinished, the Prime Minister turns his back upon it, and prophesies at St. John, that the Reciprocity agreement will cause Canadian trade to flow towards the United States like water through a millrace.

The agreement is said by its friends to involve nothing more than a few ordinary commercial transactions that have no bearing upon our national integrity. They might as well say that the building of the Grand Trunk Pacific Transcontin-