

ed the trade and commerce of this country. At the head of affairs was the Right Honourable Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who for the last ten years has guided the destinies of this country, and what a change came over public affairs. There had been only that small gain from 71,000,000 letters to 116,000,000 letters in ten years, but in the next ten years, from 1896 to 1906 we mailed no less than 323,000,000 letters in the Dominion of Canada, and instead of a deficit there was a surplus of over \$1,000,000 to the credit of the department in the treasury of Canada. Gratifying as that statement may be, it has been brought about in a businesslike way. How was it done? Why, simply by stopping the leaks and the rat holes in the department, and using business ability in the management of the affairs of the country, by increasing the postal facilities, by bringing it more closely home to the people, by reducing the rate of postage. For instance in 1899, the last year the three-cent rate was in force, we mailed 150,000,000 letters; the next year the two-cent rate came into force and we mailed no less than 179,000,000—an increase of 29,000,000. It costs no more to carry a million letters in the mails through the country than it does one thousand, and so with the increase in the post office revenue, we opened over 2,000 new post offices; we carried the mails twelve million miles more than in 1896, and by increasing facilities by which the people could communicate their wishes to each other, they have taken advantage of it, and instead of a deficit on the transaction it has resulted in a large surplus. This matter is exceedingly gratifying. Everybody must admit that great progress has been made in the construction of the Transcontinental Railway. They have constructed 250 miles of the road west of Winnipeg, which is already carrying grain. Almost the whole of the eastern division is under contract, with thousands of men at work, with every facility to rapidly carry it to completion. It is a public enterprise that must receive the sanction and approval of every hon. gentleman in this House. Does any man believe that the Transcontinental Railway is being built one day too soon? Is there any doubt about the necessity for increased transportation? I observe that at a recent meeting of the Apple

Growers' Association in Toronto, it was stated that there was \$1,000,000 worth of apples in Ontario alone for which they could not obtain refrigerator cars to carry them to the market. That fact alone shows that we need more railways, that we need more cars, and that we require better facilities for the transportation of our products, and as that great and mighty Northwest is being peopled with thousands of hardy men with stout hearts and strong arms we must provide them with facilities for transport. We cannot stand still. We must either go forward or backward, and as the stream of immigration comes in, branch lines and main lines must be constructed to enable people to move their supplies in and their products out, and it would be the most foolish policy in the world if we did not proceed rapidly with the construction of this road and other roads where they are so much needed. His Excellency refers to a few Bills that are to be submitted for our attention. There is one in reference to the public control of telegraph and telephone lines. We have various problems before us to solve. We have the great problem of labour and capital. The Act passed by the government last year known as the Lemieux Act, to my mind largely solved the difficulty between capital and labour. It only refers to works of public utility, but I believe it has already settled and prevented many strikes on private undertakings, and as the years go by I have no doubt its scope will be enlarged and extended, until it will apply to industrial concerns as well as concerns of public utility. We have those national monopolies such as telegraph and telephone lines and the problem to solve is to how we can best handle them for the public good, whether by public ownership or public control, or otherwise. For my part I have never been convinced that it is a wise thing for government to own these large concerns. I do not believe that public ownership in that respect is a good thing or a wise thing. I am heartily in favour of the course the government is adopting, that they should control all those utilities. We grant these corporations charters, and we give them power to build lines across our property and erect their poles and to charge the public certain rates for the transmission of messages. We give them