

the interests of all the people. The characteristic of all the legislation and discussion before the world to-day is that it is moving on the lines of national ownership. Municipal ownership has done everything for the cities of Great Britain and the principle is spreading, in European countries they derive great benefits from the state operation of railways. In the United States they think they can secure a great measure of relief from the high charges of the railways if the railways were owned by the country. It may be impossible for them to accomplish that end now but it would be easy for us to take over the Grand Trunk Railway, to combine it with the Intercolonial and to make a national system not only giving the people reduced freights but making a road which would be a power in reducing the charges of the Canadian Pacific Railway of which the people in the west complain. That is practical politics, earnest politics, an endeavour to solve the transportation problem, and Hon. Mr. Blair was moving along that line but he got no credit for it and to-day is told that he made the mistake of his life. The people of Ontario and Quebec to-day are looking for lower passenger rates. Is there any way to get them other than to take over the railways? If the Grand Trunk be taken over and a passenger rate of 2 cents a mile be given on it, we would have every road in this country giving a 2 cents a mile rate. This would be going a long way in solving the transportation problem and in a moderate way it would secure the opening up of the back country of Canada. I think we should have a two cent rate and that it will come. Government ownership to my mind is the only way to obtain relief and I believe it is on lines of that kind that the people of Canada are looking for improvement. They want to have something done and this is the only way to bring relief to the farmer, to the man who raises stock.

We have great stock industries all over this country, in Quebec and Ontario, and the people engaged in these industries wish to get their cattle to market without having to submit to exorbitant rates and there is no way of accomplishing that result except by adopting the principle of government ownership and in that way giving the relief that these people require. The farmers are meeting all over the country asking for railway relief. They are meeting all over the Northwest Territories, and the constant cry is that they want a reduction in transportation rates. We are told in the address that in some way the Bill now before parliament will aid them because it will help to move the grain of the west. It may do so in a very modified form, but the real solution has not been arrived at, it will not come from this measure and it is not likely to come from any measure introduced by hon. gentlemen opposite. We have to na-

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tionalize the railways in order to improve the transportation of this country. The time has come when we should not only nationalize the railways but when we should nationalize the telegraphs and telephones of this country. Nothing of that kind is being attempted. We have been promised it for years but it does not come and yet this is a practical question and a question that the people are thinking of. The people want cheaper express rates. They cannot get them. The government have refused to put the express companies under the Railway Act although they introduced a measure last year. The right hon. Prime Minister says the chief work of his life will be the completion of this national transcontinental line. Again I tell him it is not a solution of the transportation question, again I tell him he is offering the people no relief, again I tell him he is giving the farmers no assistance, he is not dealing with the grievances of the people, he has not suggested any remedy, he has only complicated the situation.

Passing from the railway question there is another matter, a constitutional issue that ought very properly to come up at this time. I have read within the last few days with great interest a book recently published in Toronto by the late clerk of this House, Sir John Bourinot. Sir John Bourinot was a man who gave a great deal of time to the study of the public life of this country. In the last chapter of his book on the life of Lord Elgin he gives his conclusions, and just for two or three minutes I propose to direct the attention of the House to them. His findings, I consider, bear in a remarkable way upon some of the questions I have raised in the House. At page 247 of the book on the chapter comparing the American system with the Canadian system Sir John Bourinot says:

The Canadian Minister—

Referring to the Prime Minister,

—having control of the finances and taxes and of all matters of administration, is directly responsible to parliament, and sooner or later to the people for the manner in which public functions have been discharged. All important measures are initiated by the cabinet, and on every question of public interest to ministers are bound to have a definite policy if they wish to retain the confidence of the legislature. Even in the case of private legislation, they are also the guardians of the public interests and are responsible to the parliament and to the people for any neglect in particular.

The right hon. Prime Minister has laid down the rule and that in regard to railway legislation, in some ways, neither he, nor his party, nor the government is responsible, that it is private legislation and we have been frequently told that in Ontario the government are not responsible. I disagree altogether with the doctrine and I am glad to see that the late Sir John Bourinot took the position