

Railway will cost the people of Canada two hundred million dollars—that is to say that it will involve them in a charge for interest of six or seven millions or possibly more, with the present price of money put it, say, seven millions a year, it becomes our duty to see what value the people of Canada are likely to obtain for their money, not directly, but in the benefit to the country through which that railroad passes. I am in the judgment of my hon. friend, and I think he will hardly dispute my statement when I say that when you are putting a railroad of that kind through a country such as exists between Winnipeg and the Rocky mountains, it is fair to assume that something like twenty miles of country on either side of that road will become available for settlement and almost immediately productive. That, I think, is a minimum, because every one knows that a great transcontinental railroad like the Grand Trunk Pacific will provide itself with branches which will bring in other large areas of land. This bears largely on the policy of the government and on the nature of the country, and is, to a great extent, the justification for the enterprise they have engaged in. Suppose that I am correct—and I think the estimate is not an unreasonable one—that for a thousand miles, on either side, the land is of good quality—and it is almost all good country in that region—and is made available for settlement and occupied in a reasonable time, you will have 40,000 square miles practically added to the Dominion of Canada. That is equal to 25,000,000 acres. You will have a charge, no doubt, of seven, perhaps eight millions on your annual revenue. You will have in return, what? You will have 25,000,000 acres of good land, or almost all good land, made available. At the time the last census was taken, there were in all Ontario just 21,000,000 acres in the hands of the people of the province, of which 13,000,000 were improved and 9,000,000 under crop. I do not think that I am very much out of the way in saying that out of the 25,000,000 acres along the line of the Grand Trunk Pacific, something like 10,000,000 acres would be speedily brought into active cultivation. According to the census returns the 9,000,000 acres under crop in Ontario returned about \$196,000,000 a year, in-

cluding cattle products. We can afford to stand a burden of seven or eight millions if we are able to point to a country of 25,000,000 acres whereof 10,000,000 acres should be producing in the ratio that the population of Ontario succeed in making their land produce, and I may further remark, and a very interesting and suggestive fact it is, that at this present moment there are in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba a very much larger number of acres under actual grain crop than there are in Ontario, Quebec and all the maritime provinces put together. The plain truth of the matter is this: It is not entirely due to the enterprise even of the citizens of Calgary, nor to my hon. friends either, but the fact is this, that the circumstances in opening up and developing a prairie country, as we are doing now, are so favourable that it is no boast, but a literal fact to say that ten years there will do the work of 100 years in the older provinces. It is a very different thing indeed from turning a population into a thickly wooded country where they have to laborously, in the course of half a life time, clear a few acres and let their children do the rest, and turning them on a rich and virgin prairie where in a year they will receive a return from the crop they put in in spring. I repeat, while this does not justify extravagance, much less justify graft, that these are most pregnant and suggestive facts and they go a long distance indeed to justify a bold and liberal policy on the part of the government in developing a country like that, and producing such results as I think and hope will be produced, and I do not think my hon. friend will be disposed himself to deny that it is not an unreasonable suggestion on my part, that within a few years some results as I have sketched out may be expected to arise from the increased settlement of the Northwest, particularly bearing in mind that the best class of settlers going in are by no means diminishing, but are rather increasing in numbers as the returns in the hands of the Department of Immigration show conclusively.

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—I quite agree with what my hon. friend says with reference to the prairie section, but it is not on