

a surplus of over \$5,000. (Great cheering.) In view of this result perhaps you will think me justified, then, in prophesying that to-night ends the attacks of our opponents upon us for having cheapened the rates of postage to every citizen in Canada. (Loud cheers.)

#### Department of Labor.

Let me now refer to another most important branch of the public service, namely, the Department of Labor, (Applause.) Few recent events have better served to illustrate the connection between capital and labor on the one hand and national well-being on the other than the recent dispute between the mine-owners and their workmen in the anthracite coal-fields of Pennsylvania, and which is at the present time the subject of adjudication by a commission appointed by the President of the United States. Great as has been the loss occasioned not only to the parties immediately concerned but to the public generally of this country as well as in the United States, this great industrial conflict may not have been without its compensations if it has served to throw into bolder relief the national as well as social significance of some of the phases of the labor problem. (Hear hear.) Of these phases two at least can hardly have escaped the notice of even the most indifferent observer.

#### Lessons From the Coal Striks.

In the first place, it has shown the importance to the general public, as well as to the parties more directly concerned, of the preservation of harmonious relations between employers and employees, and, in the second place, no less clearly the need of some effective means of maintaining these relations. (Hear, hear.) When the United States Workers' Union on the 15th May last declared a general strike of the workers in the coalfields of Pennsylvania few people other than those financially interested in the operation of the mines gave much thought to the significance of the step which had been taken. Such a thought as that *every person, rich or poor alike*, whether engaged in industrial, professional or other pursuits, or in no pursuits at all, should be affected, not only in a social but also in a financial way, was one too remote for contemplation. Yet, as a matter of fact, it has not been the possibility of such a situation but rather its actual realization which has brought this strike so prominently to the attention of all classes. (Hear, hear.) At first this realization was but faintly appreciated. Local dealers had still on hand supplies of coal with which the needs of their customers, for the time being at least, could be supplied. Our long and charming summer made us indifferent to the remote possibility of winter being at hand and the strike still unsettled. To few of us, indeed, did it occur that our comfort or happiness in any way depended upon the relations of the owners of the Pennsylvania coalfields and their employees. It was only when coal merchants were no longer able to meet the demands of their customers, when industries were threatened with enforced cessation of work, and the progress of the autumn reminded all of the rapid approach of winter, that the public became aroused in defence of itself and demanded the adoption of a practical plan for the restoration of industrial peace.