

How does the honorable gentleman account for that? I attribute it, sir, to the anxiety of the great mass of the people of this country to obtain information. I regard the publication of newspapers as one of the most potent educational influences that the country possesses. I believe that the fact that Canada can boast to-day of having a better informed population among all classes throughout the country than almost any other country throughout the world is attributable largely to the eagerness with which they look for the information which can only be conveyed to the great mass of the people through newspapers. I do not want to prejudice this question before we come to consider it on its merits; but I want at the outset to throw out for the consideration of the Government that the fact of the enormous increase in the circulation of the newspapers of the country is one of the most potent reasons why the dissemination of knowledge and information in reference to public questions should not be circumscribed by preventing the publication of these newspapers if that would be the natural result."—Hansard, 1898—page 2916, 2917.

Further on in the same speech Sir Charles Tupper said: "What this measure strikes the most potent blow at is the dissemination by the press of the proceedings of this House and the discussions of public affairs."—Hansard, 1898—page 2917.

In the debate on second reading of Sir Wm. Mulock's bill to amend Postal Act, Sir Charles Tupper said on May 13, 1898:—"There is abundant evidence that manhood suffrage in the Dominion is a far higher franchise than manhood suffrage in Great Britain for the reason that there are tens of thousands of electors in the United Kingdom who go to the polls without having the remotest idea not only of public questions before the country, but, if their lives depended upon it, they could not state who is Prime Minister of Great Britain to-day. I give that as an indication of the great advance the people of Canada have made in intelligence; and the thorough knowledge which the mass of the people here have in respect to the political issues and all other questions of that kind, as well as general information, rests largely on the fact that newspapers have so largely increased in circulation until they are now read by almost every individual in the country, and there is scarcely a family to be found that has not the advantage of receiving a newspaper in some form or other. Looking upon that as a great means of education in the country and for the dissemination of the most valuable information, I do not concur with the Honorable Postmaster-General in the opinion that it is a wise act to impose any obstruction to that great means of disseminating popular information which is furnished by and must depend upon the newspaper press of the country."

In the same debate, and on the same date, Sir Charles Tupper said:—"If the post office revenue admitted of a reduction of the charges upon parties who mail letters of \$650,000 a year (the estimated loss of revenue through reduction of rate on letters from 3 cents to 2 cents), I think it could very well bear the amount proposed to be gained by the charge of \$62,000 a year upon newspapers. I stated before that I regard the free circulation of newspapers throughout the masses of very great importance to the country. I regard the newspaper literature of this country