

Sir Robert Borden's Address to a Railway Brotherhood at Ottawa.

The Prime Minister, in addressing the Canadian Legislative Board, International Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen at Ottawa, Dec. 8, 1919, said: "It is my privilege on behalf of the government to extend to you a welcome to Ottawa, and to convey our best wishes that this annual gathering may be useful and successful in every way. In the early days of my parliamentary career, I had occasion to consider very attentively the character of the organizations established by the various railway brotherhoods, and ever since I have been impressed with the thoroughness of their system, and with the fairness of their procedure for dealing with controversial questions. These organizations must necessarily exercise great power and influence in the policy which they pursue, and in the purposes which they undertake. Such power and influence carry with them a corresponding responsibility. I believe that on the whole this responsibility has been fulfilled justly and considerably, having regard to the national interests as a whole.

"History teaches us that every great war has been followed by some period of unrest and disturbance among the peoples of the belligerent nations. Such an outcome seems inevitable, and one is not surprised that such conditions prevail today, to a greater or less extent, among all the nations which have taken part in the tremendous and world wide conflict through which we have passed. While Canada has not been wholly free from these tendencies, there is reason to believe that no country in the world has suffered less from them than our Dominion. I am confident that the strong, sound, common sense of the Canadian people will support all authorities, whether federal, provincial or municipal, in maintaining public order, in the just enforcement of the law and in upholding institutions and traditions founded upon ideals of ordered liberty and progress.

"I have already spoken in parliament of the character and terms of the treaty of peace which was consummated a few months ago, and which will doubtless be ratified by the required number of belligerent nations in the early future. That treaty embodied a sincere attempt to bring together the nations of the world in such co-operation and by such methods as would greatly minimize the risk of future wars. It is impossible to imagine that the existing organization of society can be maintained, if the unmeasured destruction of human life and the maiming of countless millions, with all the tragic sorrow and sacrifice which have been the outcome of this war, are to be the sole or even the chief means of arbitrament in international disputes. If the plenipotentiaries of the allied powers had not given their best energy and their highest endeavor to prevent any such outcome in the future, assuredly they would have failed in the duty which they owe to this and future generations. No nation can divorce itself from the responsibility measured by its power and influence. More and more the oceans have become international highways. There is no hermit nation and there can be none. I venture to submit to you a conclusion which I think may be drawn from the purpose embodied in the League of Nations covenant. That covenant received the unanimous approval of plenipotentiaries representing 32 nations, in-

cluding the dominions of the British Empire. Only those who participated in the deliberations of the Peace Conference can fully realize the rivalry of ambitions, the sharp antagonisms, the intense jealousies, and the deep rooted prejudices which manifested themselves between peoples represented at the conference. Moreover there is every diversity in the standards of living, the educational and industrial development, the temperament and character of the peoples concerned. It is at once remarkable and highly encouraging that all these nations should have agreed upon the organization and the methods by which their co-operation is assured, in the endeavor to secure the world's peace so far as that is humanly possible.

"One lesson which we may learn from this relates to our own domestic concerns. In any country, but especially in a country of vast area and scattered communities, the problem of transportation is all important. The efficiency of transportation in Canada is an essential factor in the national life. Railways, waterways and highways all have their part. From conditions which have gradually developed during many years has arisen the result that about one half the total railway mileage of Canada is, or shortly will be, in the ownership of the state. You must realize, and I hope you will agree, that this condition emphasizes the importance of devising some means by which this great essential and national activity shall not be interrupted or prejudiced by disputes between employers and employed. Even as between a private corporation, operating a great public utility, and its employees there should be some more reasonable method than the imposition upon the general public of the inconvenience, the loss, and the suffering which are occasioned by strikes. If, between jealous and sometimes antagonistic nations, the principle of settling international disputes by peaceful means has been acknowledged and adopted, surely disputes between employers and employed can be investigated and adjusted by means other than those which may bring upon the whole people distress and suffering comparable to that entailed by war. So far as railways in the ownership of the state are concerned, there is one additional consideration of which you should not lose sight. Those responsible for the administration of state railways are not actuated or influenced therein by any motive of private interest. Their duty is, on the one hand to the public whom they serve, and on the other hand to the employees who also serve the same public. So that in this instance employers and employed alike serve the people as a whole.

"I commend to your most thoughtful consideration the results which have been obtained in this country by the establishing of the tribunal known as Board of Adjustment No. 1 in connection with the Canadian Railway War Board. It was constituted on Aug. 7, 1918, under an agreement made between the Canadian Railway War Board and the six leading railway brotherhoods. It consists of 12 members, 6 representing the railway companies and 6 the brotherhoods. The board has given decision in 52 cases, as well as 6 supplementary cases, or in all, 58 disputes, which have thus been settled without resort to strike. In ad-

dition about a dozen potential disputes have been adjusted through the board's good offices without the necessity of a formal hearing. Disputes have also been adjusted for organizations which were not parties to the agreement. It is open to any class of railway or transportation employees to present a case to the board, provided they agree to be bound by its decision. Is there not in this record, food for the most careful reflection and consideration as to the future determination of disputes between organization of railway employees and those responsible for the administration of the railways? In other countries there have recently been legislative proposals for the prohibition of strikes. It would not be my purpose to have the question approached in that way. The members of the railway organizations are citizens of this country, interested like others in its development, its progress and its orderly government. Any movement to make permanent, and still more efficient, the methods which have had such good results during the past 18 months, might well originate with them. This obligation is imposed, and this responsibility is created, not only by the power and influence of the organizations in question, but by the duty which their members owe to the state as good citizens. On our part we must not be unmindful of corresponding obligations. The problem of administering about 22,000 miles of railways in this country is one of exceptional moment and difficulty. Upon its successful solution probably depends the success of state ownership, not only in Canada, but upon the whole North American continent. We must give earnest attention to some means by which the employees shall have just representation in the executive administration of this great system. I have given to this question some study in the consideration of the problem as a whole and you may be assured that such a proposal will command my entire sympathy.

"I am grateful for the opportunity of addressing you, and I pray that the new year, which will shortly dawn, may bring to you and to all our people, every happiness and prosperity."

The Paris, Lyons and Mediterranean Ry. of France, as a result of successful experiments with a new process of using oil for locomotive fuel, is reported to be transforming 200 of its locomotives to oil burners.

Railway Equipment Needed—Howard Elliott, President, Northern Pacific Rd., is reported to have stated before the Association of Life Insurance Presidents, at New York, recently, that United States railways need an equipment of \$3,000,000,000 and that if provision is not made for developing railways continuously, the cost of living, instead of being reduced, will go higher.

Railway Lands Patented—Letters patent were issued during October for Dominion railway lands in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia, as follows,—

	Acres
Alberta and Great Waterways Ry.....	137.06
Canadian Northern Ry.....	795.43
Canadian Pacific Ry.....	1.31
Edmonton, Dunvegan and British Columbia Ry.	5.95
Qu'Appelle, Long Lake and Saskatchewan Rd. and Steamboat Co.....	6.63
Total	946.43