

for the old county of Portneuf, where his electors remained faithful to him until he was called to the Senate by Sir Wilfrid Laurier. He occupied no mean position in the Quebec Legislature, having been for a long time Speaker of the House.

Now I come to the leader of the Opposition. As the leader of the Government has very often said, we occupy a quasi-judicial position and there should be no leader of the Opposition in the Senate. Of course, when he said that, there were not very many members on the Government side of the House. Many good men might have been chosen as leader of the other side. I think it might have been a good thing for the Conservative party to apply the principle adopted by the Liberal party, of having a French leader in this House when there is an English leader in the other House, but if I had been invited to the caucus, I do not know but that I would have voted for the honourable gentleman opposite. There are two great races in this country, and honourable gentlemen opposite, in their wisdom, might have had a very brilliant man for their leader.

Hon. Mr. LAIRD: We have.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: You now have one for whom I have great admiration. Although he had not the good fortune to be born in the Province of Quebec, he showed the wisdom of the selection made by saying a few words in French, and that will make him popular.

The first thing which comes to my attention in the Speech from the Throne, which does not say very much, is the statement that we are going to have more railways in the West. The West is certainly being well treated, as it always has been well treated, no matter who has been in power. Ontario and Quebec always foot the bill, and they do not get very many railways.

Hon. Mr. LAIRD: Do you not want the West opened up?

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: The great metropolis of Canada, the city of Montreal, has no connection with the Transcontinental Railway. If you want to get to Amos you travel 90 miles east to Hervey Junction, and 90 miles west again to be only opposite to the city of Montreal. I believe if I were in another place I would insist upon Quebec getting more railways. Honourable gentlemen, are you aware that in the West there are four times as many miles of railway per capita as there are in the Province of Quebec, and two and a half times as many per capita as there are in the Province of Ontario? And what

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are they for? They are to carry wheat, the cheapest form of freight a railroad can carry.

The other day Mr. E. W. Beatty, the worthy president of a great company, the Canadian Pacific Railway, in making a speech somewhere said that in October and November the C.P.R. dispatched a full trainload of 75 cars of grain in every hour of those two months, or one full carload of grain every 48 seconds. While I have no special brief for the Canadian Pacific Railway, I say that railway has done wonderful things for the North-west and the whole of Canada. It has developed the North-west; it has brought people there. Of course it may be said that it pays to do it, but we all know that interest is the prime motive of human action. However, that does not alter the situation. That railway has done wonderfully well for the Dominion, and it may come before us to ask for further charters for new lines, and if it does, I say we should treat it very gently and very cordially. That company is up against a difficult problem, the problem of meeting Government competition. I would remind you, honourable gentlemen, that if the Government railway should happen to make some mistakes and have a deficit, the Canadian Pacific Railway, the greatest taxpayer in this country, would have to put its hand into its pocket and pay for those mistakes.

While speaking about railways I should like to dispel an erroneous idea which is in the minds of many not only in this House but throughout the country. We have all heard it said that Sir Wilfrid Laurier built too many miles of railroads. I want to prove to this House that that is not true, and in doing so I shall speak by the book of honourable gentlemen opposite. Last year the Canadian Pacific Railway built over a mile of road a day for every day in the year; during the same period the Canadian National Railways built 442 miles of new railroad, not including the replacement of rails or improvements of existing roads. In Canada to-day we have twice as many miles of railway per capita as they have in the United States. In the United States at the present time they have 240,000 miles of railroads. You may remark also, honourable gentlemen, that the mileage in the United States has not been increased during the past twelve years; in fact some of the railroads there have been scrapped. In the United States, with a population of 120,000,000, there are 400 souls per mile of railroad. When we turn to Canada with its 10,000,000 of people—our population may not be quite so much—we find that there are