

lack of Parliamentary experience, my own lack of training in public life, my own limitations in a thousand and one directions adequately to meet the obligations of this great duty, this great honour, which you have conferred. I should despair altogether of being able even to attempt to discharge its obligations were it not that I know that one who is called upon to accept the office of leadership must first and foremost be the willing servant of all, and that in seeking in the spirit of service to meet the wishes of those who have chosen him as their leader, he may look for guidance and counsel to the great forces assembled about him. . . . I hope you will feel that in seeking to do the work of the Liberal party in the way I believe the Liberal party would wish it to be done, I shall rely upon the counsel of those who are outstanding in the ranks of the party, the Liberal members of the Senate, the Liberals in the House of Commons, the leaders of the party in the several provinces, the representative men who are gathered together here; and that in this way I shall find a compass which will point the direction that ought to be taken, and will point it aright.

If more is needed, that more is to be found in the platform which has been laid down by this Convention. That platform, ladies and gentlemen, is the chart on which is plotted the course desired by the people of the country, as expressed through the voice of the Liberals assembled here. So, with this chart and this compass, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, let us press on from this moment, a great, a united, a mighty force, making ever for new liberty, for wider freedom, for greater righteousness, in the public affairs of this nation; press on, ever more zealous and united, till we have reached the goal where the principles and policies laid down on this historic occasion will have become, through legislation, part of the law of our land.

That was the position which I took on the occasion of being honoured with the leadership of the Liberal party at the convention of 1919. That is the position which I took during the recent campaign, and that is the position which I take at the present time. I look upon these questions of Government, not as questions to be decided by any one man, but as matters requiring the most mature and careful consideration which it is possible for men of many points of view, assembled together, to give to them, and as long as I have the privilege of being entrusted with the responsible position which I at present enjoy, I shall ever look to the able men who are associated with me for the guidance and direction which I need in regard to these all-important public questions.

May I pass on from this subject, because the question of the tariff will come up at an appropriate time and need not be dealt with further at this moment, and speak just for a minute in reference to

the subject of railways which was also alluded to by my right hon. friend? The leader of the Opposition stated that there was no need for having any reference in the Speech from the Throne to the subject of railways because it did not involve legislation. I am sure that if my right hon. friend looks over previous speeches from the Throne with the preparation of which he has had to do, he will find references to many subjects which do not require legislation one way or the other. The reference may not have been necessary on the ground that it did not involve legislation; but it was necessary that the country and Parliament should be informed at the opening of Parliament exactly as to the purpose of the ministry with respect to the National railroads which are in our possession at the present time, and the most appropriate place to make such a declaration was in the Speech from the Throne. The statement of the Government's position has been made, I think, with sufficient clearness to be intelligible to all hon. members of the House; but I would remind my right hon. friend that the proper person to discuss railway policy is the Minister of Railways (Mr. Kennedy), and I would prefer, until he has had an opportunity of addressing members of the House, to defer saying anything further with respect to the meaning of co-ordination as set forth in the Speech from the Throne. I think the language must be perfectly clear to hon. members. If there is any doubt as to what is in the Government's mind, that doubt will be dispelled by the hon. Minister of Railways and Canals (Mr. Kennedy) himself.

I cannot however, let pass what my right hon. friend said in reference to the present position of the country and its railways. As I listened to his remarks it seemed to me that they implied that when the Administration of which he was a member took office the country was overburdened with railways, and that that was the reason why we have the serious railway problem we have to-day. If what my right hon. friend says is true, that when the Administration of which he was a member came into office the country was, to use his expression, over-railroaded, I am at a loss to understand how he can defend the extent to which railway construction was carried on after 1911. Let me read from a report which I think he will quickly recognize and not be apt to dispute. I have in my hand the report of the Royal Commission to inquire into Railways and