

immigrant and even the man on the street that we should have reasonable rates between Canada and Great Britain. I hold no brief for the press, although I pride myself on having been a member of the newspaper fraternity many years ago, but I say—

Mr. PELLETIER. Under what name did you write?

Mr. LEMIEUX. I was a Liberal press-man and I have been a Liberal ever since.

Mr. PELLETIER. What signature did you append to the articles you wrote?

Mr. LEMIEUX. I had none, I would have been paid too highly for that signature. But coming back to the advantage that would accrue to the Canadian press and to the Canadian public through low cable rates I say this: At present the cable despatches that we read in the Canadian morning and evening newspapers are more or less tainted. The press agencies are in the hands of American concerns, and I repeat that the news which we receive from England, the news which we consume daily, is more or less coloured. So much so that when a general election takes place in England, I take this as a case in point—the most important newspapers in Canada—the Toronto 'Globe,' the Toronto 'Mail,' the Montreal 'Star,' the Montreal 'Herald,' the Ottawa 'Citizen,' the Ottawa 'Journal,' the Ottawa 'Free Press,' and let me not forget to mention in that array of brilliant newspapers, the Toronto 'World'—are obliged to send special correspondents to England in order to get genuine news from the mother country. I say it is most important, not only from the Canadian point of view but from the imperial point of view also, that our newspapers should be supplied directly from the mother country and get the benefit of low cable rates. Some years ago I happened to attend at the Mansion House in London a very important meeting, convened by the advocates of cheap telegraphic communications. It was presided over by a former Governor General, the Duke of Argyle, and there were present some of the highest authorities in the empire. Members of the Imperial Government, Ex-Governors General, men of the standing of Lord Milner and Lord Strathcona. Lord Curzon was not present but he wrote a letter to the Chairman in which he stated:

Cheap fares, cheap postal rates, and a cheap and well served press have all played their part in the remarkable growth of Imperial feeling in recent years, but in my opinion a cheap telegraphic service will do more than all these combined.

The Imperial Press Conference was held in London three or four years ago with

great eclat, and produced a great impression throughout the whole British Empire. Must I remind the Postmaster General of the following resolution which was then unanimously adopted:

That for the achievement of better and cheaper electrical communication within the empire, it is one of the essentials that there should be state-owned electric communication between the British islands and Canada across the Atlantic ocean, and also state-control of electric communication across Canada between the Atlantic and Pacific cable service.

Mr. Asquith, who was introduced at that conference by some of our journalists showed himself to be in full sympathy with the aims of the Press Conference as regards the cable situation. As a result of the conference and of the efforts made by the journalists to obtain lower rates, the Pacific cable rates were immediately lowered. The Pacific cable is owned, as we all know, jointly by the Mother Country, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and is under a board that sits in London, the representative of Canada on that board being no less a personage than Lord Strathcona himself. I have not the figures before me, but the reduction on press rates made by the Pacific cable was substantial. It was reduced to nine pence. And, as a result the Eastern Telegraph Company, which is the great rival of the Pacific cable in that portion of the British Empire, immediately reduced its rates, thus bringing about a result which for many years had been sought by the public of Australia.

When I was in England some years ago advocating, not a state-owned cable but a reduction in the cable rates, after some pourparlers with the cable companies, I was given to understand that we could obtain, after a certain period of time, a substantial reduction. I always assumed that for the urgent cables the present rate might remain—one shilling a word. But I expected that for the social messages, the non-urgent messages, a clear reduction of sixpence a word would be obtained. I hold that the reduction obtained through the good offices of the Postmaster General of England in his interviews with the cable companies is absolutely insufficient and will be of little advantage to the Canadian consumer. My hon. friend (Mr. Pelletier) should therefore strive to obtain further reductions, and I would advise him after the session to go to Great Britain and interview the postal authorities and assert the rights of the Canadian consumer. It is not practical—I will say more, it is not patriotic—that the Canadian and the British people should be, as regards cables across the Atlantic, in the hands of an American monopoly.

Now, if my hon. friend cannot obtain the reduction which we advocated, and