

crop in the West means a speeding up of our industries in the East, where most of our manufacturing concerns are situated. Thus interested as we are, the transportation problems of Canada should be well looked after, our agricultural interests should be carefully guarded, and our future immigration should be carried on along lines which will result in benefit to all. I propose therefore to address some remarks to the question of transportation in this country; and I shall quote from the Moncton Transcript an item on this very question that puts the whole matter in a nutshell before the public of Canada. It has regard to our enormous public debt, which aggregates about two and one-third billions of dollars, to our limited population, and to the fact that we are commencing to ask ourselves, where is it all going to end? The article in question refers to the construction of the Hudson Bay Railway, and says:

It is high time that some plain speaking was done on this very important subject. To what purpose has Canada spent hundreds of millions in building and maintaining thousands of miles of railway, if a large portion of this is to be allowed to rust through the building of new competitive routes designed to take away traffic from the originally contemplated routes? The heavy railway deficits will continue for an indefinite period, unless the existing railway mileage is used to a much greater extent than it is to-day.

In this connection I am going to take the opportunity to make a few remarks as to Canada's position in reference to the Transcontinental railway. The unity of the Intercolonial, the Grand Trunk, the Grand Trunk Pacific, and the Canadian Northern is, we are told, an accomplished fact. The operation of the Government railways during the past year has resulted in a deficit of about \$60,000,000. This is a better showing than was made in the previous year, when the deficit ran to about \$70,000,000. But the question is, how long can this continue or how soon may we expect it to come to an end?

Let us look at the amalgamation of the railroads, and more particularly at the Grand Trunk, which has recently come in. Let us look at the effect this will have on the transportation from the West to the East, not only of grain but of cattle and every other product of the farmers in the Western Provinces as well as of the farmers in the other provinces.

We have had in the past, and always must have, export markets, because we do not consume everything that we grow. This means, of necessity, that our market will be, as it has been in the past, in Europe to a very large extent. Therefore we must look to

our transportation between the West and the East.

Let us take a retrospective glance at the transportation system of the province of Ontario. Some gentlemen here will recollect the old Northern railway, which was built at a time when it was thought to develop the country north of Toronto. That road ran from Toronto to Barrie, and from Barrie to Collingwood. It was constructed through a country that was teeming with timber, and it was also thought that it would ultimately be a means of intercourse with the Northwest. That line was constructed with English capital. In the earlier years it was believed that a system of transportation from the western states could be developed, and an elevator was constructed on the Collingwood division. The elevator is still there, and while it is a rather old one, Collingwood is in the strategic position that from there to Barrie the line, so far as grades go, is in magnificent condition, having a splendid bottom. From there the grain would have to be carried to Orillia, a distance of about 25 miles, where it would reach the main line between Midland and Montreal. In times of congestion, the Collingwood line could be resorted to, and with improved elevator facilities that line would be a very advantageous one.

Following that line was the road from Midland to Belleville, which connects with the main line of the Grand Trunk to Montreal, and the line to Port Hope. There was a time when men dreamed that Port Hope would become the rival of Toronto, and would be the greatest city on Lake Ontario. Dream as it may have been, it had one effect, and that was the development of a valuable line of railway. In due course of time, after many years, that line reached the shores of Georgian Bay at what is now Midland. What was the result? The line had passed from the hands of a private company into the hands of the Grand Trunk, and within the last thirty years they have been able to develop a grain trade between the West and Midland. Later on came the development of the trade of the Northwest. When that road was acquired by the Grand Trunk, Charles M. Hays looked forward to that branch from Midland becoming the backbone of the Grand Trunk's transportation system from the Canadian Northwest. It had many advantages. If the Grand Trunk railway had a system in the West to connect with Fort William or some other point at the head of the lakes, it could carry its grain by water to Midland, and from there over a good system of railroad to