

respect to agriculture. That leads one to express regret that the Government, by refusing to accept the amendments to the Highways Bill proposed by this House, and which would have put aid to roads on the same footing as that of agriculture, have prevented the good results which might have followed from the passage of that measure. While on the subject of roads I am sure that the remarks of the hon. gentleman to-day were not altogether in harmony with those he addressed to the House last session. Now the object of these roads is to enable the farmers to get their products to market readily and in such way that their carts and wagons will not be up to the hubs in mud. That was not the line that the hon. gentleman took last year. I shall just read the beginning of his speech:

It seems to me that hon. gentlemen who have been performing the role of critics of this Bill have a very great misconception of the policy, the nature and the origin of the Bill. Hon. gentlemen seem to be obsessed, if I may use that term, in its more courteous sense, with the idea that a great constitutional wrong has been done not only to the provinces, but to the Senate of Canada by the Government in the introduction of this Bill. Hon. gentlemen seem to be equally obsessed by the idea that a very great discourtesy has been extended by the Government of Canada to the Senate on account of their failure to attach that importance which certain gentlemen think should be attached to this amendment which the Senate made to the Bill last year. If hon. gentlemen will look at the preamble of the Bill they should come to a different conclusion than that which they apparently have arrived at as the object of this Bill. If they will observe the language in the preamble of the Bill they will find that this is not a local undertaking. This has not for its object the improvement of roads in a particular municipality, or group of municipalities. It is not intended for a moment that this assistance should be given to the ordinary highway in a local sense.

Further on the hon. gentleman continued:

But there is a larger object than that in view. The Government has the object in view set out in the preamble of the Bill. I maintain that while highways in their local sense are peculiarly provincial undertakings, that this is more than a provincial undertaking. This is a interprovincial and national undertaking and does not come within the class of cases referred to by my hon. friends, and particularly the hon. gentlemen from De Lorimier, who cited to us last night section 92 of the British North America Act, in which he sought to bring this undertaking under subsection 10 of section 92, and within the language 'local works and undertakings.' My hon. friend did not peruse the section or follow it up as he should have done. Had he done so he would have found that this class of undertaking does not come within the jurisdiction of the province properly speaking.

S-4

Instead of roads to enable the poor farmer to get his products to market, there was to be a highway from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and this was to be utilized it was understood chiefly by the owners of automobiles.

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—I did not say automobiles, I said main roads.

Hon. Mr. POWER—That was the impression that would be naturally left on the minds of those who listened. The next paragraph is with respect to the National Transcontinental railway:

The work on the National Transcontinental railway has been rapidly advanced during the past year, and, notwithstanding the difficulties attending the construction of the Hudson Bay railway, and the provision of terminals, every possible progress has been made in bringing that important project nearer to completion.

I am satisfied that if that National Transcontinental railway had been left in the hands of the Commission, under whose management it was, up to October, 1911, the road would have been completed before this. It was so understood at the time, but the Government got rid of the old commission and appointed a gentleman named Leonard to fill the places of the four or five gentlemen who formed that commission. I do not myself know very much about Mr. Leonard, and I do not know very much about the way the work was being done, but there is a newspaper published in Winnipeg called the Telegram which, I understand, is in a sense the personal organ of the Minister of Public Works. Consequently any criticism which that paper offers on the policy of the present Government can be trusted as being deserved. The article opens with the statement that:

The growing dissatisfaction through the West over the slow progress being made in the construction of the National Transcontinental is being reflected in the animated comment of the press regardless of party affiliations.

And then it goes on:

The old commission, responsible for much of this trouble, was dismissed and new men appointed, but there was no improvement in action and efficiency. This is too clear. Mr. Borden's Government deserves the support of the people, and they have confidence in him, but there can be no question that a mistake was made in the selection of Major Leonard as chairman of the Transcontinental commission. This Mr. Borden's warmest supporters today freely admit. The only virtue the commission can claim is honesty. This is an excellent quality, but it does not tunnel mountains, bridge rivers, and construct railways. In the interest of the people, especially the people of western Canada, and with no desire