

Mr. W. J. HAMMELL (Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, in rising to participate in this debate, my purpose is not to dwell on any particular phase forming the subject matter of the financial statement or of the budget resolutions so ably presented to this chamber by the Acting Minister of Finance (Mr. Robb). I propose to again leave the beaten trail, as I did in similar circumstances last year, and crave the indulgence of hon. members for a short discussion of one of the most important branches of our national trade, and one which, unfortunately, has been far too long neglected. I refer, Mr. Speaker, to that great source of actual and potential revenue, the tourist trade. The purpose of my remarks is primarily to bring to the attention of the government and more particularly to the attention of the hon. Minister of the Interior (Mr. Stewart) the urgent necessity and the beneficent effects to be derived from a government policy which would make for the proper exploitation of one of the greatest of our natural resources. In fact, the great value of the invisible exports to be credited to our tourist trade can be classed at the head of the list when we consider our national business from the viewpoint of desirability. Yet this important factor has grown in spite of nearly absolute neglect. I propose to show some of the important reasons why it is most desirable that our federal government should take immediate steps to set in motion the necessary machinery to systematize and develop this great national asset.

On the 7th of May last year, during the budget debate, I endeavoured to show with reliable figures and carefully prepared estimates the undoubted value to the nation of the tourist traffic. I may be permitted to quote one or two passages from those remarks. In giving a comparative table of amounts derived from wealth-producing industries I said, as reported at page 1857 of Hansard for 1924:

Taking only those industries which are absolutely basic we get this amazing comparison. The figures are for the year 1923, and are as follows:

Agriculture and agricultural products..	\$407,760,000
Wood and wood products.. . . .	228,756,200
Tourist travel, estimated.. . . .	136,000,000
Animals and animal products.. . . .	135,000,000
Minerals and mineral products.. . . .	123,142,653

Is it not amazing to find this item of production to which we have paid so little attention with a value higher than that of our animal and animal products or than the wealth produced by our mines?

And again on page 1859 of Hansard, 1924, I read:

Turning for a minute to the automobile traffic over our borders, we find still more amazing results. In the year 1923 the Customs department recorded entries of 1,936,598 cars. A large number of this total of

cars stayed in Canada for a period of twenty-four hours or less; on the other hand, more than 200,000 stayed for a period ranging from two days to one month, and some 3,000 cars stayed from one to six months. Even taking a most conservative estimate of three passengers per car, and an average expenditure of only \$20 per car, we obtain a total expenditure from this source alone of \$40,000,000. And when we consider the cost of maintenance and upkeep, gasoline, oil, and so forth, for the car and the food and lodgings for the passengers, without even including the large sums spent for souvenirs, entertainments and so forth, we readily realize that this is a most conservative total.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is pleasant to realize that greater interest in the tourist trade is being taken throughout the country, and since the publicity given to my speech of last session I have received hundreds of letters and newspaper clippings from all parts of Canada. The press have taken up the battle cry and are spreading the good news. Automobile clubs, good roads associations, and many other organizations are lending their efforts to the development of the tourist traffic and interest is constantly increasing. Letters have come to me from all points in Canada and many parts of the United States on this subject. I have here one letter from Halifax and another from Vancouver which I desire to read. The first is from Mr. E. G. Stairs, of Halifax, and reads as follows:

My Dear Sir,—As one who has made a personal study of the tourist trade and its possibilities by my own travels and investigations across Canada from Halifax, my home here, may I ask you for a copy of Hansard with your May 7, tourist speech.

Many thanks,

E. G. STAIRS,  
Halifax.

The other is from Mr. J. R. Davison, Manager of the Vancouver Publicity Bureau, and reads as follows:

Dear Sir,—In a Toronto paper of last summer I note a report of a speech made by you in the House of Commons last year in regard to the value of the tourist traffic.

This has a very great deal of excellent information in it and all your points are, I think, well taken. Among other things I note that you pointed out that the tourist travel is of value to the farmers. I am afraid as yet many of them do not realize this but it is a fact that the products of the farm form a great part of what tourists buy when with us. To make this point clearer out here we stressed it at our annual meeting in 1923. I am sending you a copy of the menu which will explain itself.

You may be interested in looking over a plan we have suggested for the Dominion government. This has already been endorsed by the chief publicity organizations west of Quebec, and has received very general editorial support also. We are hopeful that the government will follow our suggestion, and put in operation some comprehensive plan for increasing the revenue from this very valuable traffic.

This year has been the most profitable we have ever had, and we believe that a campaign such as we suggest will bring a great deal of business to all parts of the country.