

Among other important matters the Prime Minister points out that a board of management has been appointed for the Canadian National Railway System. I say in all seriousness, honourable gentlemen, that if there is any act of the present Government of which they should not boast it is the appointment of that board. This country has sounded a protest at the introduction of political partisanship into the constitution of the board. I am satisfied that when the announcement was first made of the personnel of that board, not only the majority of the people of Canada, but the majority of the party to which my honourable friend opposite belongs, were disappointed at the partisan character of the appointments. A capable board of executive officers who were not partisans was dismissed, and this new board has taken its place. True, two or three members of the board, executive officers of the Government, cannot be said to be partisans in any sense; but, with the exception of Mr. Stewart, of Manitoba, and also Major Bell and Mr. Ruell, officers of the road, I venture to say that no one will deny the partisanship of the lay members of the board. However, if I may use an expression which is very popular in the United States, they are regional representatives of the Government, to attend to the interests of the Government in their particular districts. In the present election campaign in the province of Quebec, the other day, we had one of the Ministers of this Government promising a large district that he would secure for them representation upon this board; and in the recent by-election in Lanark the most illusive promises were made as to what would be done by the Government on behalf of the manufacturers in that constituency in the way of their furnishing railway material, and so on, if the Government candidate were elected. Is this the kind of thing that is to give that confidence in the national road and that better feeling towards it to which the Prime Minister refers? It may possibly give inspiration to my honourable friends opposite, but it certainly will be disapproved by the people of Canada, and it will prove disastrous to the success of the National System of Railways. During the time the late Government administered those railways, so far as I can recall, no charge was ever made of partisanship in that system. In fact, it was conducted in a manner as free from partisanship, in my judgment, as the administration of justice upon any Bench in the Dominion of Canada. Now, if these roads are to be administered to the advantage of the people

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of Canada, it seems to me that every semblance of partisanship should be avoided. Would it have been unreasonable for this Government, in order to impress upon the people of Canada that partisanship would be excluded from the administration of the system, to have appointed upon that board two or three representatives of the opposite political party, who would balance, so to speak, the disposition of those who might represent the Government party? Is it going to inspire the people of Canada with confidence to have four or five partisans on the board? I am not taking any exception to men occupying offices of that kind because they have been actively identified with political parties; but if the public is to be convinced that these roads are to be protected as a non-partisan public utility, then there should not be the slightest appearance of partisanship entering into the constitution of such board or any appointment thereto.

Considerable reference has been made, honourable gentleman, to the subject of immigration. I venture to say that no more important subject could have been alluded to. While on the present occasion, in discussing the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, one cannot enter into so important a subject at any length, yet I should like to point out some of the disadvantages under which we are labouring on account of this Government not having awakened to a full appreciation of the duties of their office in dealing with this important matter. An acute crisis has been reached within the last twelve months, not only in the West, but throughout the whole of Canada, in connection with this subject. There is an exodus going on at the present time. It is evidenced by the fact that during the last nine months the exports of settlers' effects to the United States have exceeded by 25 per cent the imports from that country. At nearly all the Canadian ports on the Pacific coast there are to-day, unfortunately, hundreds—yes, thousands—of the best of our population leaving for the Pacific States. There seems to be a wave of prosperity sweeping over the United States, which is peculiarly attractive and is resulting in a large exodus, particularly from the Western provinces—and I am told that a similar exodus is marked in the East, especially in the Maritime Provinces.

Hon. Mr. POPE: Quebec too.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED: It is estimated that any increase in population that Canada has had from 1911 down to 1922 has already been lost. Competent authorities