

HON. G. G. KING.

Speech Made by Senator King, of
Queens on the Address on the
Speech from the Throne.

On moving the address was in the
Senate Senator King made the following
address:

In rising to move the address in reply to the speech of His Excellency the Governor General, delivered at the opening of this session of Parliament, I may be permitted to say that I would have been much better pleased had the task, which has been assigned to me on this occasion, been placed in the hands of some person more capable of discharging the duty devolving upon me than I find myself to be. I am encouraged, however, by the thought that while there are, in the speech to which I propose to refer, some subjects which may be open to honest and fair criticism, on the whole I believe that there is not much that is calculated to meet with strong opposition. So far as the political importance of Canada is concerned, I think I am safe in saying tonight that Canada stands upon a higher plane than she ever stood before. To say that Canada is better known in the outside world than she was heretofore is saying very little. I might go further and say that Canada is exerting an influence outside and among the nations of the world greater than she ever exerted before, I might even say as great as some of the independent powers. Then, again, with regard to her material prosperity, we have evidence today on every hand that Canada is prosperous. No man in this country willing to work need go idle. If we refer to the trade returns and to the reports of our banking institutions, we shall be forced to conclude that the business of Canada to-day is in a sound and healthy condition. That the credit of Canada is steadily improving, I am sure will be admitted on all hands. As a fact the last loan effected in the English market was placed on better terms than any loan heretofore offered. Although identified with the minority in this House, I am not disposed to claim all the credit for the improved conditions of this country for the party to which I belong, but, hon. gentlemen, I may be permitted to go this far and remind this hon. House that the predictions which were made and sent broadcast through this country previous to the change of administration, that a change of government meant ruin and desolation to Canada, have not been fulfilled. When I last had the honor of addressing this House on an occasion similar to the present, Canada had been invited to send representatives to what is known as the Diamond Jubilee, and I took occasion then to express my belief that in the person of the hon. Premier of this Dominion, Canada would find a representative who would do her credit and would ably represent all classes and all creeds within our borders. I may claim tonight that in that respect our expectations have not been disappointed, because not only in this chamber, but outside of it, throughout the length and breadth of Canada, even the political opponents of the Hon. Sir. Wilfred Laurier are generous enough to admit that his conduct and his course at that great gathering in London was such as to reflect credit upon himself and honor upon Great Britain's greatest colony. I am not tonight going to discuss the subjects referred to in the speech with reference to the denouncement of the German and Belgian treaties, but without considering the effect of that step on the part of the mother land I have this to say—and we have great reason, I think, to be proud of being able to congratulate ourselves upon the fact—that the government of Great Britain so appreciated our effort here in Canada in the matter of the preferential tariff as to at once remove the only obstacle that stood in the way of giving effect to that tariff. Last year, when Parliament was in session, we were congratulating ourselves upon the fact that we possessed in British Columbia great wealth in mines, as well as in the other provinces of the Dominion. At that time the words "Klondyke" and "Yukon" were scarcely known. To-day they are household words, not in Canada alone, but throughout the civilized world, and capital by millions is seeking investment to lay in British Columbia, in Klondyke and elsewhere. The government who are called upon to administer the affairs of this Dominion at the present time are face to face with a condition of things which is, so far as I know without parallel in the history of mining elsewhere in the world. Before it was possible to get reliable information with regard to that Klondyke country, miners began to flock there by thousands and it is said today that there are at the present time in the vicinity of Dawson City, or in the Klondyke country, from five to ten thousand people and if we are to take the opinion of gentlemen who ought to know, strong doubts are entertained at this moment as to whether their diminishing food supply will be sufficient to see them through until their stores can be replenished on the opening of navigation. That is not all. In the face of insurmountable difficulties at this inclement season of the year—shall I say hundreds—I think I am safe in saying thousands are wending their way to that country. It is estimated that this very year not less than one hundred thousand people will obtain a foothold in

the Klondyke mining region. Some persons, perhaps not quite so conservative and not so careful, estimate the number far in advance of the figures I have given, and it is true I think that, railroad or no railroad, the chances are that these people will work their way into that country. I may be mistaken, if I am mistaken I am subject to correction, but I believe that the Klondyke country is a country which produces nothing in the way of substantial food. I have heard it said, and I have not very much doubt myself upon the subject, that the Klondyke would not grow a Lapland turnip, and it must be apparent to all that every pound of food, all the supplies required for the maintenance of that large population, must be brought into that country from outside. I hope and trust that the largest portion of it may go in from Canada; but let me say this, that unless we are prepared to start ourselves; unless we are prepared to put forth herculean efforts, the chances are that in the coming year we shall not reap the harvest, but some one else will who is not so well entitled to it as we are. I do not suppose that it is possible for us to intelligently discuss what is known as the Yukon Railway contract as the papers are not before the House. I do not know that the matter has been referred to very much upon the floor of Parliament during this session, but it is a well known fact that the press outside are dealing with the question from day to day, and that there are different opinions with regard to the propriety of the conduct of the government with reference to this matter. I am prepared to speak on this question tonight as I understand it, simply from the reports which have come to me through the same sources through which they must have reached the ears of hon. gentlemen. If when the papers are brought down and the contract is laid before Parliament, I discover anything in it which I believe is not in the interests of Canada, I shall be prepared to disapprove of it, notwithstanding what I may say tonight. As I understand it, a contract has been entered into by the government of Canada with a firm of contractors. I think they must be responsible contractors, when I take into account the fact that they have already put up \$250,000 by way of security for the completion of the work which they have undertaken. The gentlemen, Messrs. Mann & McKenzie, have undertaken to build a road from Stikine River navigation to Teslin Lake, estimated at 150 miles. In addition to that, they have undertaken to provide a sled road as early as the month of March to facilitate communication with that country. Then the price they are to get is 3,750,000 acres of land in alternate lots in the Klondyke, or the mineral region. Besides that, the government have agreed I believe, that no aid or encouragement is to be given for five years to any line from the Pacific coast to go into that country. As I am informed, and as I believe, the general consensus of opinion is that the government have selected the best route in the interests of all Canada. There is no difference of opinion on that score. If there is, I so far have not been made aware of it. I think it is admitted on all hands that in the selection of that route the government are following the policy of keeping Canada for the Canadians; but there are objections to that contract. First among them is this: it is said that the contract was made privately—that tenders should have been called for. Ordinarily, I admit that that would be the correct course to pursue, and there would be nothing to justify a departure from that course, save the emergency with which the government is confronted at this moment. The loss of a few weeks now might imperil, not merely the completion of that work, but so interfere with the construction of the road as to render it useless for another year. If the country is what we suppose it to be, we cannot afford to take any chances. If we had it there now it would be a great boon to Canada. If we fail I am satisfied it will be a great loss to Canada. The chances are that next year we will have a population, in that country, ten times—I might say twenty times—greater than we have this year. Then again, it is said that the government should have paid cash and should not have given land. It does seem to me that if there is one provision in that contract which is likely to commend itself to the people of, shall I say all Canada—to the people, at all events, of the older provinces of Canada—it is that particular feature. I do not believe that it is right to tax the people who have no direct interest in that country continually for the purpose of opening it up, when there is a possibility of avoiding it, and I am pleased tonight to be able to say that at last the government of this country have found a portion of the far west which is able to develop itself without adding to the burdens of the tax payers of the older provinces.

Hon. Mr. Boulton—To the extent of 150 miles?

Hon. Mr. King—I am not tonight going to cry over spilt milk. I am not going to complain of the moneys that have been expended in the past in the west, but I am satisfied that the people of Canada, as a whole, will be glad to know, as I have said, that even the lands in the Klondyke are of sufficient value to induce the construction of a railway for the purpose of developing the mining interests in that country. It is said that the Government should have given cash—

Hon. Mr. McCallum—Who says that?

Hon. Mr. King—I have heard it said in a great many places—I hear it every day.

Hon. Mr. McCallum—Not authoritatively by anybody—merely a rumor.

Hon. Mr. King—It is said that the land which the syndicate gets could have been placed on the market and millions more than what the railway is to cost would have been realized. That is an old story and one I think that will not bear repeating. I have a vivid recollection myself of hearing similar statements made with regard to the construction of another great work in this country. I heard the hon. gentlemen who were charged with the administration of the government of this country going so far as to predict that before 1891 Canada would have received from the sales of land in the Northwest a sum of money sufficiently large to recoup it for all the expenses connected with the building of the C. P. R. I think it will not be denied that down to the present time—I may be wrong, and if so I am subject to correction—the receipts from the sale of land in the Northwest have been scarcely sufficient to pay the cost of surveys and management.

Hon. Mr. Boulton—They have been given away.

Hon. Mr. King—I believe that the government should take no chances in this matter. We all hope that the prospects in the Klondyke country may continue to grow brighter and brighter, but none of us know what may happen in a year or two from now. We do know that the inducements at the present time are sufficiently strong to warrant capitalists outside of Canada, commanding large amounts of wealth, to invest in that country, but we do not know how long placer mining in the Yukon is likely to hold out, nor do we know what value there may be in the land which the government purposes to give to the syndicate for building that road. It is said that the contractors for this railway have got a five years monopoly. To a certain extent I admit that is true—a monopoly so far as the building of railways from the coast into that district is concerned, but I shall be greatly surprised if there is any provision in the contract which prevents the building of roads from this side of the Yukon into the Yukon district.

Hon. Mr. Scott—Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. King—Then again, I may be wrong, but I think that when the navigation of the Yukon is open, it will be possible to transport supplies by way of the Yukon as they have been going heretofore, and so far as monopoly is concerned, I have not a shadow of a doubt in my mind that when it can be demonstrated, in a year or even less time, that the business of that country will warrant the construction of railways from points available on this side of the mountains in our own Northwest Territories, that capital will be found in sufficient amounts to undertake them. It must not be supposed for a moment that all the people in Canada live on the Pacific coast. If I am not greatly mistaken 95 per cent of them live south and east of the Yukon river, and we on this side of the continent have an interest in getting into that district without going to Vancouver, up the coast along the Stikine river, and by Teslin Lake to the Yukon. I expect that long before the five years expire, if the trade of that country will warrant it, capitalists will be found who will at once begin the construction of railways at points in our own Northwest Territories, and the monopoly will soon have passed away. In doing this we shall also provide a market for our workshops and factories in Canada. We shall provide a market for the products of Canadian farms, and if the Klondyke turns out to be what we hope it will, it would mean something of consequence to Canada, because the amount of supplies and provisions that would be required to provide for the wants of even one hundred thousand miners in the Klondyke region would be a very considerable item in the interprovincial trade of the Dominion. I am not an expert in railroading, and do not profess to know very much about the construction of railways, especially in a country such as the one in which this road is to be built; but the probable cost of that road is variously estimated. In some cases it is as low as \$15,000 per mile. Well, it may be possible to construct a road in that country for a sum so small as that, but I must say I do not believe that that would be an adequate remuneration for the contractor undertaking that burden. In the first place everyone must admit that the time limit will add materially to the cost of work. All the supplies and all the material necessary for the construction of that road, or a large portion at any rate, will have to be transported across the continent and find its way up there at an extremely heavy cost. Then in addition to that, the gentlemen who have that contract I fear will be subject to serious competition with the employers of labor in the mining country, and, further than that, I imagine there is danger that the employees of that syndicate when they discover that that company is compelled to complete the road by the 1st day of September, or forfeit the quarter of a million, will in all probability be ready to take advantage of that condition of things. Therefore I say that the company undertaking a work of this kind requires more than the ordinary price in a settled country for constructing a railway. One would think to read some of the newspapers which are dealing with this

question that the syndicate who are building this railway are likely to become millionaires at once. They may be now for aught I know. They have, it is true, a large area of country under this contract, but I do not believe that it is possible for them or anybody else yet to determine the value of it. That has to be proved. Gold in that country is not got without digging for it. You would suppose to hear some people talk about it, that all the syndicate had to do when they got their railway through and got down to the Klondyke, or the mining country, was simply to load up their steamers and ballast cars, and bring millions out of that region. But mining cannot be carried on, even in Klondyke without considerable cost. As I said before, with regard to the building of railways, I am not an expert, or an authority, but I had the pleasure of listening to an address delivered in another place not long since, by a gentleman who was deeply interested, who was the manager, I think, of one of the English syndicates seeking to invest capital in that country. That gentleman said, if I understood him correctly, that to produce \$22,500 worth of gold would require an expenditure of labor amounting to \$20,000. So that if Messrs. Mann & McKenzie should be so fortunate as to take out of these large tracks of land a good many millions, 90 per cent at least would be expended for labor, according to the calculation I heard the other day, from which certainly the government must derive a considerable benefit. I think that the limited time at the disposal of the government justifies their hasty and energetic action, and I have no doubt if that contract is completed in the time specified, the people of Canada from one end to the other will be prepared to appreciate and endorse the conduct of the administration which made that contract. I do not propose to refer to all the matters contained in the speech, but there is one particular question with reference to which I do intend to say a word before resuming my seat. The government have announced through the speech of His Excellency, that it is their intention to introduce a measure this year looking toward a plebiscite, or a vote on the question of prohibition in Canada. As a temperance man and prohibitionist, I have to say that I trust that the measure will receive a majority of the vote in both Houses of Parliament; and when the people at the polls are called upon to pronounce upon it, I trust also that the majority may be decisive in favor of a prohibitory law,—a law that will prohibit in Canada the importation, manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors. But I have also to say that unless the majority is a decisive one in favor of it, I would rather that it be decisive the other way.

Insulates His Bed.

A novel theory about the prevention of rheumatism and neuralgia has been practiced with success by Charles F. Hanna, Auditor of the Custom House. Mr. Hanna has long been interested in writings on medical subjects, and through his brother-in-law, who is a well-known physician in another State, he has been enabled to keep pace with the advance of medical science as recorded in technical journals.

About fifteen years ago Mr. Hanna was struck by a suggestion of Dr. Brown-Sequard of Paris, that rheumatism, neuralgia, and kindred complaints were caused by lack of electricity in the body. The physician argued that during sleep, vitality is relaxed, electricity ordinarily in the body flows off through surrounding objects to the earth. When the sleeper wakes with twinges of pain in his joints and nerves he suffers until the natural supply of electricity is regained from the air.

The remedy suggested for this was to insulate the legs of the bed and thus retain in the sleeper's body all the electricity he had accumulated during the day. To read was to act with Mr. Hanna, who had long been a sufferer from rheumatism and also from sleeplessness, as the slightest sound aroused him. He secured four glass cups, such as are used on the desks of money counters to hold sponges for moistening the fingers. A cup was placed under each leg of his bed, and that night Mr. Hanna slept soundly. Not only that but he arose the next morning without a vestige of pain in his body. Never since has he been without the four little insulators, always taking them along when he has occasion to use a strange bed, first placing the bed out from the wall, so that it is not in contact with anything.

Many of Mr. Hanna's friends have tried his prescription with gratifying results and the relief of painful symptoms from which they previously suffered.

A young man, athletic and full of life, who was visiting the family at one time, was put into one of the insulated beds, with the result that he tossed and tumbled, but was unable to sleep soundly. The following night the insulators were removed and the young man slept soundly. The third night the insulators were put back and again the young man could not sleep. After that Mr. Hanna concluded that perhaps too much electricity could be stored up in the body sometimes.

"Your extemporaneous talk on art was grand, Miss Goggles." "Well, it ought to be; I put in three solid weeks getting it up."

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