

fact, and I hope that this prosperity may not only continue, but increase at a compound rate.

I think the country as a whole is to be congratulated as regards the condition of business. I must also compliment the Government themselves on their modesty, because I do not find that they claim credit for the good harvest as originating solely with themselves. That has not always been true of Governments on either side.

Right Hon. Sir GEORGE E. FOSTER: A case of mere forgetfulness.

Hon. W. B. ROSS: Governments are inclined to take the credit rather than give it to Divine Providence.

I agree entirely with the remarks of the mover of the Address in regard to the Imperial Conference. He seems to have taken the position as set forth in the statement of Lord Balfour. I do not believe that the Conference has changed our position in the slightest degree. I am speaking now of our relations to the mother country and the sister Dominions. We are exactly where we were before the Conference met. It has stated our position again, and I do not know that it has been made any plainer. I have read the speeches of Lord Balfour, and his position, I take it, is this: "You may put questions to me that I cannot answer except by saying, 'Wait until the thing happens.'" We had questions put to us in 1914, on a difficult situation, and the spirit of Empire answered them. What Lord Balfour says now is that we must wait until the difficulty arises, and the spirit of Empire will answer again. If it does not, a mere written contract or verbal statement is of no value.

It is true that we have a different status and a different stature to-day from what we had in 1914. I do not want to belittle what politicians have done. They have done something; and it is something for a politician not to put any obstruction in the way if he cannot help a matter along. Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Sir Robert Borden and others have done well by the Dominion, and I do not want to detract from them at all, but I say that the name Canadian is an altogether different word in the world to-day from what it was in 1914. While giving due credit to the politicians, we must recognize that, after all, it was our men who fought and died on the battlefields who gave the Canadians the status in the world they have to-day. That is true not only of Canadians; it is true also of Australians and New Zealanders.

I have said that if there had been any advance or any change in the position of

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things since this Conference was held, it would be found to be verbal rather than real. There are still problems to solve, and they are only to be solved as indicated by Lord Balfour. It still holds true that if two men ride a horse one must ride behind; and if two Governments are going to deal with an important matter like a declaration of war or a declaration of peace, one of them must have the final say, and one must ride behind.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: Which is going to have the final say?

Hon. W. B. ROSS: My honourable friend will have to answer that; I do not pretend to answer. I simply say that things are exactly where they were before, and I am not at all frightened as to the issue. I have no criticism, nor anything further to say in regard to the matter. It is a satisfaction to know that our Ministers while in London succeeded in reaching an agreement not only with the Imperial Ministers they met there, but also with the Ministers of the sister Dominions. They all seem to be satisfied, and I think that we ought to be satisfied too.

Leaving that question, I am not quite so sure that I appreciated the remarks of the mover of the Address with regard to the Maritime Provinces. I think he gave them a little lecture upon helping themselves. Perhaps they deserved it, in one way, but I think he will find them now just a little difficult on that question. There is something else before them: the report of the Duncan Commission. It does not take much examination to see how serious a document that report is. It deals with the whole structure of the Confederation agreement, and it would be asking too much of me to say off-hand that I approve or disapprove of it. I want time to consider it, and to consult business people with regard to it. I think honourable gentlemen will find that they require assistance in considering that report, in order to ascertain its true meaning and what it will involve in the matter of legislation. In the meantime the report itself is quite harmless. The important matter will be the legislation, in respect to that report, to be submitted to Parliament by the Government. As I understand it, the Government are pledged to enact legislation to carry out the report of the Commission, and I suppose the fair thing for us to do is not to talk too much about it now, or try to throw anything in the way of the Government, but wait for the Government to submit their legislation. No doubt we shall have that immediately after the adjournment, and when it is presented, there will be a great deal of discussion. In the hope that the Government will deal with the matter at an early