

takings as was the capital itself. There was no question of turning out goods beyond the consumer's needs, of setting up machinery far too costly and of a useless luxury, to experiment ceaselessly. I know of certain businesses in the city of Quebec which were founded on these methods; they have waxed wealthy thereby and during the present depression they have been a shining example. I could mention many of these men in commerce and in industry, who are well known and solidly established, who never had recourse to the thousand and one tricks that are fashionable in the world of high finance, and which the royal enquiry begun last year has shown up in all their hideousness, together with their baleful consequences.

By the side of, and to the detriment of, this sound, honest, worthy capitalism, has sprung up another form of capitalism, infinitely less appealing; it brought with it a host of fraudulent, shady tricksters, who, often under cover of our laws, have exploited the people, deceived the public, and lived opulently at their expense. In this way the multitude of individual fortunes and of independent enterprises, with their character of personal liability which was their guarantee, have been replaced little by little, by groups of capitalists, banking syndicates, industrial mergers, and combines of all kinds, sometimes, but not often, of public necessity—like the railways for instance—but generally to the direct detriment of the masses.

Under the false pretense of developing industry, of opening up natural resources, of improving trade and commerce, even those entrusted with the responsibility of government were caught in this net, offered the schemers the credit of their names, the grace of their privileges and even the help of their laws. In the province of Quebec, which was a veritable paradise for this sort of thing, our raw materials, our water-powers, forests, mineral deposits, in a word all that might ensure our well-being fell into the hands of a few people, whose sole object to-day is to exploit our population. It is with unmentionable cynicism and sans-gêne that the Taschereau administration threw away our inheritance, in return for the appointment, as corporation directors, of several of their ministers.

In one of his speeches prime minister Taschereau himself gave the following figures which tell quite a story about such business methods: In 1920 we had 100 paper mills, and 109 in 1930. The production, in 1920, was valued at \$100,000,000; by 1930 it had more than doubled, reaching \$215,000,000. But here

[Mr. Dorion.]

is the interesting side of the story: In 1920 this industry represented an investment of only \$22,000,000; but by 1930 the figure had risen to \$714,000,000, some thirty-three times the original capital. A little figuring will show you that if production had increased, in 1930, in proportion to investment, it would have reached the fabulous sum of \$3,245,000,000. As to salaries, there was no change whatever: In 1920, 31,000 employees received \$45,000,000; and in 1930, 33,000 employees received the same amount, \$45,000,000.

To me these figures appear overwhelming. While they indicate a shameful overcapitalization, encouraged, authorized, legalized, by those entrusted with political power, they show, at the same time, to what extent such business practices are prejudicial to the workingman, and how little the latter is protected. It is exploitation not only of money-capital; it is especially, as has been said, the exploitation, or rather the enslavement, of human capital.

Last year serious trouble occurred in the Abitibi lumber camps; and a few individuals were sentenced to prison. Is it really surprising that such seditious occurrences should take place when these corporations, under cover of our laws, obtain their labour on derisive terms, take advantage of unemployment and of the supreme necessity for the worker to earn his livelihood, and really speculate on extreme poverty and human misery? To remedy such a state of things the Canadian people have never been able to rely on the disciples of Liberalism who, forgetting the facts and the pitiable state of our proletarians, prate—like Mr. Taschereau, for example—of the uselessness of all social legislation and upbraid all interference, by the state, in business.

It remained for a Conservative government to champion at last the radical remedies needed to cure these ills and to bring back to the minds of these egotists the great laws of justice and of social charity. The speech from the throne informs us that we shall have a Minimum Salary and Wage Act, and that the hours of labour will be strictly controlled. Contrary to the opinion of Liberal economic theorists, the old law of supply and demand is, in the matter of wages, most unfair and the cause of disorders of the worst kind. It is not sufficient to ensure the worker a certain remuneration, even if he accepts it; what must be done is to pay him a decent wage, a fair salary, one that will allow him to provide for himself and his family.

I have mentioned the paper industry to illustrate the kind of capitalism that this