

that under the circumstances this decision is a wise one. I know how difficult it would be to secure the attendance of representatives from the various Dominions—presumably the only ones that would attend outside of those from Britain—if the Conference were held here in Ottawa, because the other Dominions as well as our own would want to be represented at the Imperial Conference in London, and to attend both conferences, one in England and one in Canada, would be a very serious encroachment on the time of public men holding office for the time being in the various Dominions in which they reside. For some of the Dominions access to the Old Country, in point of time, is undoubtedly easier than to Canada. Individually I make no complaint. As both conferences are being held in the same year, I think the solution is a happy one.

I have no doubt many of us conceive that very important questions will come before the Economic Conference. I do not know that some of the dreams of the League of Nations, not only as to world peace but also as to world tariff, or absence of tariff, are likely to be acceded to by Great Britain or any of the Dominions represented at that Conference.

Reference is made in the Address to the question of status, or rather to the questions that have to be resolved before we have, not merely equality of status, but absolute equality of legislative power. Those questions relate to our merchant shipping, our extra-territorial rights, and the Colonial Laws Validity Act. It is stated in the Speech that a solution has been found on those various questions to which I allude—there are only three or four altogether—and in respect to which we are at present precluded from enjoying an absolute equality in legislative power with the Imperial Parliament. I do not dissent from that result if it has been attained. If we have equality of status, as was proclaimed at the Peace Conference, I do not know why we should not have complete equality in legislative power and absolute extraterritorial rights. We had an early illustration on that point. Many honourable gentlemen will remember that in the old days of the Mackenzie Rebellion of 1837, when some of those who were convicted were exiled to Bermuda, we had an illustration of our lack of extraterritorial jurisdiction, as it was held by the Imperial Government that the Governor General in that instance had exceeded his powers. A similar proceeding at the present time might bring a similar result; but as the days of penal colonies are gone,

Hon. Mr. WILLOUGHBY.

I do not suppose that anything like that is likely to recur.

The Speech from the Throne has a reference to a very, very important topic that has engaged the consideration of public men in Canada for a long time indeed—the question of returning to the Prairie Provinces their natural resources. It is intimated that settlements have already been found in the cases of Manitoba and Alberta. We know that a commission sat for Manitoba, and I had the pleasure of reading their report. I understand that the Province of Alberta is ready to accept, so far as applicable to it, the conclusions that were arrived at by that commission. Then we have the Province of Saskatchewan left. I do not know absolutely whether the Province of Saskatchewan, since I have come down here, has actually acceded to the proposition of the Dominion Government, but my impression is that it has done so; that is, that the natural resources are to be returned as of 1905, and a legal enquiry is to be made as to the rights accruing to the Province of Saskatchewan between 1870 and 1905. That will probably be a matter for judicial determination, with the ultimate right of appeal to the Privy Council.

In my opinion the Province of Saskatchewan was constitutionally in an entirely different position from Manitoba, which became a province at a long prior date, and whose establishment as a province was ratified by an Imperial Act. Saskatchewan and Alberta were constituted as provinces in 1905. They were not established, nor was the basis of their constitutions settled, by an Imperial Act such as was passed with respect to Manitoba. The Province of Saskatchewan is, and from its beginning has been, potentially a much more important province than Manitoba. Territorially it is much larger and has a much greater portion suitable for agricultural development. Prior to 1905 largely, and since that time to some extent, land grants totalling some 30,000,000 acres in Saskatchewan were given for the purpose of building railways. A considerable portion was given in aid of railways in Manitoba, one of which was the Manitoba and Eastern, and railways in Alberta also received a large portion, but, speaking from memory, I do not think there was any reciprocity on the part of either Manitoba or Alberta in giving lands for the purpose of aiding railway construction in the Province of Saskatchewan.

In 1905, and long before that, apparently owing to a lack of rainfall, very large areas of land in Alberta were considered more suitable for grazing and ranching purposes than for what is commonly known as mixed farming.