

the support of the members of my side of the House. But after all is said and done, that is nothing except carrying out the work which was begun and ably carried on by my hon. friend Mr. Fisher during the period he was Minister of Agriculture. If they will do it as well as he did, and produce as good results as he did, they shall have my hearty commendation and support. I regret, however, to see that there is one proposition they make which is specious enough on the face of it, but which requires a great deal of careful consideration, that is the proposition to cooperate with the several individual provinces for the purpose of constructing roads. Now that is a thing which may or may not, under certain conditions, be of advantage to the country, but the hon. gentleman has not alluded in the slightest degree to certain facts which are very material in this connection, and which this Senate ought in particular to seriously consider when any such measure is brought before them. Everybody who knows anything of the economic conditions of Canada knows perfectly well that there are many provinces which tax themselves at this present moment very highly for local and municipal purposes, and others which hardly tax themselves at all, and they know perfectly well there are many of those provinces which contribute to the Dominion treasury sums per head vastly in excess of those that are contributed by others. Now I am perfectly willing that those provinces which are rich should contribute in proportion to their means, but it is not so clear to me that provinces like Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia which are already heavily taxing themselves for municipal purposes, and which are already contributing enormous sums to the public treasury, larger in proportion to their population than those of many other provinces, should be compelled out of that contribution of theirs to submit to heavy expenditures for the benefit of other portions of the community who do not choose, and never have chosen to tax themselves for municipal purposes. Therefore, I doubt exceedingly the wisdom or propriety of mixing together the Dominion and the provincial finances any more than we have done.

Those who remember the circumstances under which our confederation was formed are aware that the system of subsidizing the provinces was had recourse to with extreme reluctance. It was necessary to do it, or let the whole scheme go by the board, but the fathers of confederation were not blind to the dangers which were likely to arise from that, and looking at it from the constitutional point of view I can conceive of nothing more likely to encourage extravagance, or corruption for the matter of that, than requiring one party to provide the money for other parties to spend. Unless great care is taken, I am afraid that will be the result under the proposition which has been suggested by the government of to-day. However, that can be better discussed when we have the matter before us in detail, as I presume it will be in reasonable time.

Now with reference to reciprocity, I desire to say but one thing with respect to certain matters which have lately transpired and which transpired during the course of last election. I have not the slightest objection whatever to the people of Canada deciding for themselves as they see fit whether or not they should extend their trade relations with the people of the United States. That was their clear right. Nobody can dispute it, but I do object and did object at the time in the strongest possible manner to the unfortunate way in which the contest was conducted on the part of a very great portion of the press and supporters of hon. gentlemen opposite. If there is one thing more than another that every Canadian statesman who is worthy of the name ought to avoid it is fostering or pandering to a spirit of hostility and animosity between Canada and the United States. Now, for months together I could not take up an opposition paper of that day from one end of Canada to the other without seeing some slur or taunt or innuendo or scurrilous attack—for it amounted to that very often—on the people and government of the United States. I observed some little time ago that the present premier took occasion at a dinner in the city of New York to express to the people and through the press the remarkable good will and affection which he entertained towards