

instead of going to such fashionable hotels as the Mount Royal and the Ritz Carlton to live a fast life, well, I think we are a little better off than we were twenty years ago. On the contrary, those of us who have adopted modern habits realize that it requires more money.

As far as the labour element is concerned, I agree to some extent with the hon. member for North Winnipeg (Mr. Heaps), but I must relate an experience I had last year. Out of the savings of twenty years of arduous life I was foolish enough to build myself a modest home; and during the six months which it took to build that house it was always surrounded with the automobiles of the gentlemen painters, the gentlemen carpenters and the gentlemen bricklayers who came to erect my house. It cost me so much money that I have had to renounce for the rest of my life the luxury of owning an automobile.

There are many other factors which could be mentioned, but I mention only that one little point, the convenience of members of parliament in attending to their own business as well as the country's business. I leave it to the conscience of the government and to their common sense, whether it is not high time that they should renounce their aristocratic attitude, shrouded with mystery, similar to that attitude which permitted the leaders of governments in England, long ago, to launch an election or to refuse it. To-day no government in England would dare to appeal to the country without giving such notice in advance as permits all parties, all leaders, and all expressers of opinion, ample time in which to face the issues. As far as I am concerned, I am absolutely indifferent. I am prepared to go to the polls to-morrow, six months hence or a year hence. Whether I am elected or defeated is all the same to me. I will say to my people simply and candidly what I think, and I will be judged by their common sense, as I hope I will be judged in this house, not upon the few pin-pricks which I may have sent right and left, but on my real thought as disclosed to the members on all sides of the house.

Mr. JOHN EVANS (Rosetown): Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that it is my misfortune to follow the hon. gentleman (Mr. Bourassa) after his delivery of such an interesting and instructive speech. I do not have very much concern as to the time of the next election, but I do hope that when the government goes to the country the electors will know exactly what the government stands for, as well as the stand taken by the opposition.

[Mr. Bourassa.]

I do not think I would have taken any part in this debate, except that I desire some information as to the "unprecedented prosperity" which has been spoken of by both leaders, as well as referred to in the speech from the throne. I am hoping that some day the workers of this country, the farmers and the wage earners particularly, will have more to say as to the politics which concern them, and that in this house their opinions as to prosperity will be voiced rather than the opinions of the president of the Canadian Pacific Railway or the presidents of our banks. Of course, the banks are prosperous because of the adversity of other people. I have listened to the speeches of both the leader of the government and the leader of the opposition in an effort to find some indication of policy which would give a hopeful outlook to the workers and farmers of this country, but I have been disappointed. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, can anyone in this house say that one party is protectionist and the other party for free trade? What does one party stand for which distinguishes it from the other? Both parties stand for the utmost in privilege, both stand for the utmost in trade restriction for the farmer, both deny the workers and wage earners the freedom of exchange in goods and labour. Both parties stand for the utmost in class privilege, and I would like to mention some of the means used to carry on this game of privilege. There is, first, the intimidation of the workers in our industrial centres; then there is the concealment of the real facts regarding the administration of the customs tariff. The act does not say that the amount of duty levied on any article is to be according to the status of the person who happens to be the importer. Such status is always defined by the privileged interests, the manufacturers and the distributors—their decision is taken and acted upon by those who administer the act. I have here a statement from one who has seen many years of active service in the administration of the Customs Act. He plainly shows that so far as the manufacturer is protected against the private importer or the purchasing public, his protection is not 30 or 35 per cent but often over 100 per cent and sometimes 150 per cent. Let me show how this is done. He says:

To approach a discussion of the tariff question properly, there are two acts of parliament to consider, and these acts cannot be divorced. The Customs Act is the controlling factor in the amount of revenue collected from any importer, the Tariff Act only classifying the merchandise and giving the rate of the impost. The Customs Act lays down the method of arriving at the value for duty and also the method of arriving at the status of the importer by the customs appraisers.