

compared by a general extravagance in every class of society, bringing, as a natural consequence, the crisis which we now deplore. We do not charge the Government with having caused the depression so universally felt, but the question is everywhere asked—Is it not the duty of the Government, is it not in the power of the Government, to aid our men of enterprise by a judicious and well considered tariff, to resuscitate many of our drooping industries, which are being crushed by importations from the United States and England? Surely it is not impossible for us to secure again those branches of foreign trade, I mean the tea and sugar trade, which have been snatched from us by our astute neighbors? Surely the Government might adopt a tariff which would make it practicable to re-open our sugar refineries at Montreal and Halifax? Who can examine the last return of the imports from the United States, amounting to \$24,500,000, without feeling that they are gradually crushing a large number of our industries, from our giving them such easy access to our markets, while they restrict us from theirs by an almost prohibitory tariff? In that return, for instance, we are said to have imported from the United States, in 1875, of cabinet ware and furniture, \$328,000; of wood manufactures, \$426,000; of paper, \$46,000; of stationery, \$121,000; of small wares, \$371,000; of iron and hardware, \$1,925,000; which he merely singled out, as a very few items, to show the extent to which our own domestic industries are being sapped by our neighbors, our mechanics, thus thrown out of employment, and our country becoming impoverished. If the American Government had to deal with our position, lying alongside a foreign country, they would soon restore activity to our workshops. I freely confess that I am of the number who believe that we shall secure as low prices to the consumer, through competition in our workshops, as through foreign competition, while we shall be affording a large amount of employment to our own citizens, and retaining the wealth in the country. I now desire to observe, that it is to be hoped that the present deficiency in the revenue and general position of public affairs will lead our public men, and the Government of the country, to be more careful in future of all public expenditure. Our present position, while not such as to cause any gloom or despondency is a position requiring the greatest care and statesmanship. We may be led to entertain too sanguine expectations of the future revenue of the Dominion, from the extraordinary annual

increase, during the first six years after confederation, when it reached in 1873 \$23,000,000. But it behoves us to remember that during those years we were still developing fertile portions of our larger provinces, where the expenditures produced corresponding wealth and revenue. We were also then making large expenditures for railway extension in those parts, which had the effect of swelling the excessive importations of those years—whereas, in the future the work of further development must involve a large further increase of the public debt, with little prospect of corresponding returns of revenue. While we have to carry out the projected improvement of our Canals involving still a very large outlay, we must be prepared to make up large annual deficiencies in running the Intercolonial and other Government railways. We have further undetermined what are our obligations to British Columbia which contains a very sparse population. But the development of this whole region, west of Lake Superior, is surrounded by so many difficulties, climatic and geographical, that it will require more than ordinary statesmanship to accomplish it without placing excessive burdens upon our people. We ought to make the fertile lands of the Northwest, along with reasonable subsidies of money, carry a railway into that distant portion of the Dominion, which ought in no case to be constructed and operated as a Government work. Such a principle extended, can only prove more and more unsatisfactory and disastrous in its results. This whole future of the country now depends upon the care and ability with which the work of further development is carried out. If we adopt a wise and sound policy to build up all our own industries at home, and carry out the proper principle of securing railway extension into our great northwest, we have a bright future before us. If, on the other hand, we permit our industries to be crushed and our men of enterprise to be discouraged by fallacious principles of trade, we may retard the onward progress of the Dominion, and darken for a time the bright hopes and prospects of our people.

Hon. Mr. READ—The first point in the speech is the reference of His Excellency's visit to British Columbia. No one can doubt of the popularity of His Excellency, and all must have been pleased at the manner in which he was received there as the representative of the Sovereign. I for one should have been much delighted if, in his business intercourse with those people, he had satisfied them in a measure for the time being, but so far from that being the