

THE CIVIL SERVICE.

On the Orders of the Day:

Mr. WILLIAM IRVINE (East Calgary): Is it the intention of the government to take any action at this session on the recommendation in the report of the Civil Service committee of last year?

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): The report is a somewhat lengthy one. I may say that the government has had the report under consideration and some action will be taken on it; but I could not undertake to say at the moment to my hon. friend how far that will go.

THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S SPEECH
ADDRESS IN REPLY

Consideration of the motion of Mr. Kelly for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his Speech at the opening of the session, resumed from Monday, March 3.

Mr. ROBERT FORKE (Brandon): Mr. Speaker, in commencing my remarks, I should like to extend my congratulations to the mover (Mr. Kelly) and the seconder (Mr. Lapierre) of the Address who spoke yesterday afternoon. I can congratulate the mover of the Address upon his eloquence and upon the lucidity and, on the whole, the able way in which he presented his statements. I am not, of course, acquainted with the remarks that the seconder made, but I have no doubt he filled his position just as ably and well. I can quite sympathise with a new speaker who first rises to address the House, because I can well recollect the first time I rose in this place to make a few remarks. I am free to confess that I have not yet got over the nervousness that possessed me then; and, while I do not know how long my tenure may be I am beginning to become just a little afraid that that feeling is going to stay with me. I am not at all afraid of hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House, nor am I afraid of gentlemen to my right, and I know I have a great many supporters behind me; nevertheless I feel a good deal of nervousness in getting up to make an address. However, I have always been treated with kindness and consideration and I have no doubt I shall receive the same considerate treatment during the short time I shall engage the attention of the House this afternoon.

I was very much pleased indeed to see that His Excellency in the Speech from the Throne was able to make the statement that there were signs of returning prosperity in

[Mr. E. M. Macdonald.]

the affairs of our country. I doubt not that from a great many points of view this statement is true; and I am sure that every well-wisher of the country will concur in the statement I make now, that it is particularly pleasing that such should be the case at this time. I know very well that things are not as they ought to be, they are not as we would have them; but when we consider the number of Canadians who own Dominion bonds and who have savings bank deposits—which deposits have increased enormously in the last year or two—I think that we may infer from these facts, and from other conditions, that in some directions at any rate there is a returning prosperity. Unfortunately, however, this prosperity is in some respects sectional; it is evident only in some parts of the country. I am sorry to say that agriculture, the basic industry of the country, is not in a satisfactory condition. I am very well aware that world conditions have a good deal to do with the state of agriculture in Canada as well as in other countries at the present time. Nevertheless, I believe that there are certain conditions, certain disadvantages, under which agriculture is labouring to-day in this Dominion and which can be removed by proper legislation. Agriculture is perhaps in a different position from any other industry. It is our basic industry and its wellbeing affects every other calling, occupation and industry in the Dominion; and while, even with a depressed agricultural industry there may be a degree of prosperity in some particular places, in the long run the welfare and prosperity, or otherwise, of agriculture will react upon all these other occupations.

I have here a quotation which with your permission, Mr. Speaker, I shall read to the House. It is from the Montreal Gazette:

The greatest wheat crop in the history of the Dominion was produced last year. The wealth of Canada has been increased by this abundant harvest and a stimulus has been given to the revival of business. With all this, the producers in the western provinces are still dissatisfied; they are still reiterating the complaint that they are being unfairly treated, that they are compelled to buy in a dear market and sell in a cheap one. So far as the East is concerned, there is no disposition to accord the producers of the West anything less than fair treatment. The interests of the West are the interests of the Dominion.

I might add to that, that the interests of agriculture in every province of the Dominion are also the interests of the whole country. Let me read just another short extract, from an editorial article in the Montreal Daily Star.

Why do the farmers leave the West? The challenge of the West has got to be met. The immediate solvency of this country can only be preserved by insuring