

*The Address—Sir Eugene Fiset*

but the whole country, in particular the west. We can but congratulate the government as to this initiative, and we are all convinced that the relatively small outlay required will be a hundred-fold recuperated by the material and economic advantages which will ensue.

A third point which I want to broach, Sir, is immigration. Let us bear in mind the principle that we have an enormous national debt, one incurred through the mobilization and demobilization of the Canadian army, sacred obligations and which cannot be disavowed towards those of our people who sacrificed their life, their blood, their health to rescue humanity in danger. This amounts to a preferential obligation on the revenues of the country. Such a liability is positive, unalterable, cannot be denied nor repudiated. Whatever be the principles of tariff reform that you may adopt, call them protection, free trade, preferential or tariff for revenue, we cannot hope, as long as our population will remain what it is, to reduce the capital of this debt. We are, therefore, forced to find new means of raising revenue, and these, Sir, are of three orders: the increase of our population, the development of our natural resources and production. These three factors are so closely related to one another at an economic point of view, that you cannot separate them.

To develop our natural resources, we need labour. To increase our production we need labour. But, Sir, in order to avoid injuring our industries, increasing the number of unemployed and burdening our economic life, we must apply to immigration those economic principles that we have embodied in our fiscal policy. Human energy that we intend to import must be considered as raw material. Our immigration must have but one aim: cater to the ever present needs of the development of our natural resources, and super-production. This immigration must be classified, grouped, selected, mentally as well as physically, and especially its absorption must be provided for. That is, Mr. Speaker, what the government has in view, and if the problem, as I have just outlined it is placed before the people you may rest assured in advance of its approval.

The fourth point that I wish to submit to the consideration of this House, is our relations with the empire. On January 16 last, before the Canadian Club of Quebec, the right hon. Prime Minister in a masterly exposé which raised the enthusiasm of his audience, defined in such a clear, precise and almost scientific way the government's attitude in regard to Canada's relations with the Mother Country, that I think it is the duty of

every citizen to seize every opportunity to place before the public which is so interested, the facts of this much discussed problem. The lecturer, proceeding by elimination, establishes first that the idea of an Imperial parliament, neither in principle nor in fact can no more be acceptable than that of a Council of the Empire, that such an Imperial parliament or Council of the Empire would undermine the very foundation of our constitution and destroy that principle of responsible government which is the "criterium" itself of our parliamentary institution. He showed the relative responsibilities of the Prime Minister to his colleagues; the government to parliament; and parliament to the people. He pointed out the impossibility of confiding to a parliamentary delegate, may he be Prime Minister or not, the power or authority to pledge the country without previously consulting, first the government, if necessary, parliament, and finally the people. He further defined the formula which was adopted at the last conference in regard to the classification of our treaties: treaties directly negotiable by the Canadian government after consultation with the Imperial government and treaties negotiable by the Imperial government after consultation with the Canadian government.

I have pointed out, Sir, in broad outline the scope of this economic conference which, coming from the lips of the Prime Minister, with its full authority, has made a deep impression on the people of our beautiful province and has contributed more than any other factor to attenuate this semi-anxiety, this uneasy feeling which seems inclined to spread amongst us.

There is no use concealing the facts, Mr. Speaker, a number of our large newspapers have for a year or so, been spreading through the country a message of pessimism, of discouragement and fear which fortunately has not attained its object and that our sound and energetic population has refused to accept. Unfortunately, Sir, if we no longer hear the "whisper of death" whirling around our ears, there has of late appeared new tactics, hushed rumours, carrying half-truths, vague assertions, insidious alarms, having for aim, as it seems, not only to inspire distrust, but I might even say to sow dissension. Are we to witness in this grand country of ours, this conflict between the wealthy and the labouring classes? Shall we see appear among us, a new prophet, preaching a new doctrine? Shall we, at last, witness a new regime composed of supermen, advocating most stringent measures of economy, and wanting to force the present generation to pay for the burden

[Sir Eugene Fiset.]