

Cape Breton North and Victoria (Mr. Kelly), if I caught a portion of his address, I should congratulate the government too. I observe that he is filled with ardor and enthusiasm over the many evidences of prosperity abroad in our land, and equally does he compliment the country on the excellence of the administration which now presides over it. I am sure partisan adulation could scarcely reach a more exquisite perfection.

I welcome other hon. members to this House who for the first time are among us; and may I extend my congratulations this afternoon to the hon. member who has lately become Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Mr. Cardin) and as well to the Solicitor General (Mr. McMurray) on having attained cabinet rank. Cabinet rank is, of course, the legitimate ambition of all who look to progress so far as their personal positions are concerned in this House of Commons, and its attainment is a matter that calls for the congratulations of us all. Nor do I think that the Minister of Marine and Fisheries and the Solicitor General are to any great degree responsible for those conditions and that state of government which makes the grounds for congratulation so limited at this time. Those are circumstances into which they come and of responsibility for which they from this time on will have to assume their share.

I noted of course, in the Speech from the Throne and still more after listening to the hon. member for Cape Breton North, that the government is extremely anxious to convince the House and the country that Canada is in a state of very satisfactory prosperity. The first sentence is a verdict and I am sure it has been read with curiosity and amazement by many scores of thousands of people in this country. The government in coming to the conclusion, had I think, chiefly its own interests in mind. I do not just know what these evidences are; much less do I know what the government has contributed to such evidences as may exist. I have noticed in official pronouncements, that great credit is taken for the comparatively large figures of our import and export trade. This is constantly pointed to as in itself sound and conclusive evidence of a wholesome and healthy national life, I want to examine for a moment—because this is of maximum importance—these trade returns with a view to inquiring whether or not they disclose such a proper choice of policies as tend to develop our country and increase our population and our wealth. I want to dissect some features of them in order that we may know just what their

significance is, just what they do reveal and what lesson they teach as to the proper policies for our country.

It is true that for the fiscal year last past our import and export figures are greater than two years ago, greater than one year ago—and I propose in the comparisons I make not to go back beyond the three years. For, be it remembered, in the years that preceded, the total trade of our country in almost every line, exceeded the figures of the past three years in such vast proportions that comparison now is impossible. But, after the larger returns which were in the main the outgrowth of war conditions and which followed for a time after the war closed, the inevitable reaction came, here as in every other country. In 1921 that reaction was at its worst—at its worst up till then in the Dominion, in the United States, and in other countries as well. From that date on, we had a right to expect an improvement. Countries similarly situated to our own expected it, and countries similarly situated to our own realized that expectation. We have to look only to that one great nation which most closely in all geographical and commercial respects resembles our own, with which comparison can always most fairly be made: we have only to look to the republic to the south to ascertain how great has been the realization of their dreams of revival. The progress of the United States since 1921 has been phenomenal. Their country has increased in wealth: their trade has multiplied, their internal trade far more rapidly than their export trade; their financial condition has vastly improved. Instead of struggling the world over to induce people to come among them they are actually spending millions to keep people out. In this Dominion of Canada our returns show no such favourable condition. While we have exports now of about \$1,014,000,000, as against \$802,000,000, in the calendar year 1921 and \$884,000,000 for the calendar year 1922, and while our imports show an almost equal advance, the nature of these exports and the results on the country, and the nature of these imports and their results on the country are such to give serious ground for reflection.

We are all aware, of course, that the year 1922 witnessed in this Dominion a grain crop production the greatest in all our history. The Speech from the Throne, of last year stated a just conclusion, that never had Canada been blessed with so bountiful a harvest as in the year 1922. What we saw in 1922 has been surpassed in the year just ended. The