

Manitoba does not satisfy extreme views on either side of the question it may perhaps be all the more reasonable on that account, and I believe it does satisfy the vast majority of the Canadian people who desire no more agitation of that dangerous character.

There has for many years been extreme dissatisfaction with the operation of the Dominion Franchise Act, and it seems fair and reasonable to return again to the provincial franchises as we had them up to 1885.

It is to be hoped that the vote which will be recorded upon the question of prohibition and the manufacture and sale of spirituous liquors will be sufficiently decisive to leave no doubt as to the wishes of the people. It cannot be denied that the immediate loss to revenue from the adoption of prohibition would involve at least a temporary increase in taxation, direct or indirect, and that point will no doubt be discussed in all its bearings, moral and financial, during the campaign.

The next paragraph in the Speech from the Throne to which I shall refer reads as follows :

A measure will be submitted to you for the revision of the tariff, which it is believed will provide the necessary revenue, and, while having due regard to industrial interests, will make our fiscal system more satisfactory to the masses of the people.

The importance to this country of the legislation foreshadowed by this paragraph cannot be overestimated. It is a matter fraught with consequences too serious to be influenced by the campaign speeches made by either political party under circumstances quite different from those that now exist. It should, if possible, be taken out of the political arena altogether, and approached by both political parties with due regard to the circumstances as they exist in Canada to-day. By the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Intercolonial Railway and many other important and extensive public works a large national debt has been created, the interest upon that debt and the cost of administering the government have increased out of all proportion to the increase in population. Not only these charges, but also the subsidies to the provinces must be raised by customs and excise, for the time has not come when the people of Canada will submit to direct taxation.

Not only have we built up a great annual outlay. We have created industries upon the

basis of protection, industries in which many millions of dollars of private capital has been invested, and upon the credit of which many millions more of working capital has been borrowed from our banking institutions. It is not necessary now to discuss the merits or demerits of the system under which these industries have been created, the fact remains that they do exist, that large investments have been made, large liabilities incurred and that legislation tending to embarrass important interests would be disastrous.

It has been the hope of the Liberal party to effect improved trade relations between this country and the United States. If the products of our manufacturers, our forests, our farms, our fisheries, and our mines had been admitted to the markets of that country upon fair terms our producers would have been glad to meet their competition upon the same basis, but judging from the tariff measure now under discussion at Washington it appears to be the settled determination of the American politicians to shut our products out of the markets of this continent, there can be no doubt that this action must tend to force Canada into cultivating closer relations with other countries who will admit our products upon an equitable basis, and to give some tangible recognition of our sense of the value and importance of the great free market of the empire. Our exports to Great Britain now exceed those to the United States by twenty-two millions, and, in fact, exceed our exports to the United States and all other countries together, and as we must find the chief market for our exports in the old land, so under a freer tariff we must increase our imports from England, and in thus improving return cargoes the tendency will be to reduce rates of transportation as well as to cheapen supplies to the masses of our people.

In this connection the plans of the government for putting our products on the British market in better condition by a system of cold storage, and by better transportation facilities is of great importance. Products from every corner of the world are seeking the great free market of the old land, and we can only improve our position in that market by improving the quality of our products, and in delivering shipments in as good or better condition than those of our competitors. Last year we sent \$14,000,000