

deal to some extent with this matter. It has always been a matter of very great satisfaction to the people of the Territories that Session after Session of the Dominion Parliament has found very advanced legislation placed upon our Statute Books to meet the growing wants and requirements and advanced views of the people of the Territories. Hence, I venture the opinion that the action of the North-West Council has been the result of that impatient desire towards a restless progression which is often so characteristic of the whole of western movements. I may state to hon. gentlemen that the situation is not at all serious, and can assuredly express the opinion that a moderate consideration of the problem will result in a satisfactory solution of the difficulty as foreshadowed in the Address.

His Excellency has intimated that the work of the Labor Commission appointed by royal commission to make inquiries touching the laboring classes promises to be productive of results which will be felt and appreciated by the laboring classes throughout the Dominion. Few questions of recent years have received greater prominence and attention from the leading Governments of Europe and America than the adoption of the best means for the improvement of the conditions of the working classes, particularly so far as legislation can touch the question. Particularly on this continent, where the spirit of democracy enters into and largely controls our national institutions, thus permitting the laboring classes to make their impress felt in moulding our national character, it becomes highly desirable on the part of the State to remove many of the abuses of which they have been the victims, and to conserve those rights to which they are intitled but often deprived by combinations of capital, with which the laboring classes cannot successfully combat. All legislation in this direction invariably leads to the higher education of the masses and to an improvement of their conditions, which afterwards finds its reflex in our own national institutions. Universal suffrage has now entered so very largely into government, and has been so recognized by the State, and so fully exercised by the masses, that practically government is very largely in their hands, so that it becomes incumbent and imperative upon the Government

to adopt every possible method—to enact wise and salutary laws for the improvement of that important part of the community known as the laboring classes. It is also a matter of very great satisfaction and relief to the public mind that the Behring Sea question at last is to receive that attention which is calculated to quiet public apprehension in respect to it. The public mind on this side of the international boundary line for some years past has been strung to a very high tension upon this subject. During the period of unwarranted interference by the United States with our rights, had not wise counsels and discrete deliberations prevailed on the part of our people and Governments, very serious consequences might have arisen under the affronts and provocations suffered by our sealers on the high seas. For more than three years our rights have been unjustifiably invaded by the United States Government; our sealers have been captured and their cargoes seized in a most piratical manner, and this by a nation which, previous to the acquisition of Alaska, denounced in the very strongest terms the assumptions and pretensions of Russia towards exclusive jurisdiction over that sea. We find that same nation, previous to the cession of Alaska, successfully combating the pretensions of Russia, and for fifty years previous to their acquisition of that territory enjoying all the rights thereon to the high sea. Yet after the cession we find that same nation for more than three years pursuing a course so inconsistent, contradictory and filibustering in character as to entirely exceed the autocratic policy of Russia, when the Czar, in 1821, issued his Ukase claiming entire jurisdiction over that sea and excluding all vessels from rights within 100 miles of the shore. Now I ask what ground has been urged by the United States for the unjustifiable course pursued? We find in 1887 the United States Government, admitting the error into which they had fallen, by the issuance of an Order of President Cleveland for the discontinuance of those seizures; but we find the United States Government entirely ignoring that Order and continuing the seizures up to last season.

There has been among the other great powers no such staunch or vigorous defenders of the equal rights of all nations on the high seas for all lawful purposes of