

item of the protection necessary for its maintenance, leaving it open to the competition of our neighbours, with the result that it went into liquidation three years ago. The liquidator at once took steps to employ the most efficient help he could get and eliminated all unnecessary expenses, so that last year this concern operated to 97 per cent of its capacity. Consider this for a moment. That concern was providing employment; it was going for all it was worth, turning out more products than ever before and thus contributing to the railways, to the earnings of the banks, to the exports and imports of the country, and to every one of those indexes quoted by members supporting the government, to show the prosperity of the country. Yet the men employed in that industry, 3,000 strong, are poorer to-day than they were a year ago. Ask these men how the mortgages on their homes stand; ask them whether they have succeeded in paying off those mortgages. Are they able to live better than they did before, to feed and clothe their families any better? The answer is, no. Thirty-three cents an hour is the amount paid for ordinary labour in that concern.

Now, you will never have and never can have prosperity in this country until the great body of the people are prosperous; and the test suggested by my hon. friend from North Renfrew (Mr. Cotnam) this afternoon, in which he quoted from Sir Wilfrid Laurier, is after all the real test of prosperity in Canada. Go among the great middle class, the labouring class, the mercantile class and the professional class, and ask them whether they are prosperous, and seven or eight out of ten will tell you they are not. A few are making money; a few are growing wealthy. But apply the acid test to actual conditions and you will find that the statistical house of cards falls to the ground. So much with regard to prosperity.

The other chord which these eulogists strike is the question of surplus. The Minister of Finance has taken out of the pockets of the people \$69,000,000 more than is required to carry on the government of the country. Is any credit due him for that? Not unless he can put his finger on some policy, some piece of legislation and show that it has contributed to the surplus. Let him show that he has contributed thereto by saving, by economising. If he cannot do so he is entitled to about the same credit as is due the tollkeeper at the end of a bridge who takes credit for the traffic that passes over the bridge. With regard to the surplus test, the real point is this: Two things can be done. Either you can take a

[Mr. Finlay MacDonald.]

portion of the surplus to pay off the debt, reducing the interest two or three millions a year, or you can take that \$69,000,000 and use it for the development of the resources of the country, creating new wealth greater by many times than the three millions you will save in interest.

I am glad to see my hon. friend from Hants-Kings (Mr. Ilsley) here. I listened with a great deal of interest to his address the other day and I wish to congratulate him upon it. Two or three things he said I must take exception to, but he will not mind that. He referred first of all to the visit of our leader (Mr. Bennett) to the maritime provinces; so did the Postmaster General (Mr. Veniot). The hon. member also referred to the gypsum question and to agricultural implements. Now, with regard to the visit of our leader to the maritime provinces, let me say this. During some thirty odd years I have been more or less associated with receptions of different kinds to various leaders of all political parties, Liberals and Conservatives, Republicans and Democrats. With receptions to all political leaders in this country in the last twenty-five years I have had something to do, whether opposed to them politically or not, and I can say this, that no leader of any party, Liberal or Conservative, ever made a more profound impression upon the people of the maritime provinces than did the leader of the opposition in his visit last year. He came to his own; he spoke to his own; they understood what he was saying, and he was offering them something they understood. And from a party standpoint we have been more than pleased with his visit there.

With regard to the question of gypsum, to which my hon. friend referred, there is, as the house is no doubt aware, a very large gypsum industry in the town of Windsor. They ship all the gypsum in a raw state, but I should be very much surprised if the people of Windsor would not very much prefer to have that gypsum converted into the finished article if there were a market for it. The hon. member knows, however, as I know, that there is not a large market in Canada for the finished gypsum; that market is pretty well covered now. Consequently the raw material must be shipped out, and to that there is absolutely no objection on the part of this party. And none was uttered by the leader of the opposition.

I come now to the third point, I must say it struck me at the time as an exceptionally strong argument. The hon. member was dealing then with the duty on agricultural implements and he cited various implements—harrows, manure spreaders and other implements,