

## A Rising Statesman of the West.

Mr. McInnes, the young and talented member of Parliament and representative from the province of British Columbia, in his address in answer to his Excellency's speech, Aug. 24th, last, showed himself not only an able speaker, but a statesman as well. Many a day has long passed by since any man in the House of Commons has ventured to speak out boldly and declare his opinions on questions, which are too infrequently dealt with by those who call themselves Liberals.

It may be that Mr. McInnes will follow suit like the Western legislator spoken of by Hamlin Garland in his "A Spoil of Office," who when elected to the Legislature went with the firm intention to uphold principle, but soon found out to his sorrow that few were built that way, became disgusted and resigned his seat. But this course, we think Mr. McInnes will hardly adopt. He has the spirit and energy of the new Reformers that are rising up in all parts of the world, and nothing should restrain this able member from condemning the wrongs of the nation, on all possible occasions.

After referring to the magnificent resources of the Western Province and its great possibilities, Mr. McInnes continued as follows:

### CONDITIONS OF LIFE.

I spoke of the influx of population which will undoubtedly flow into the province of British Columbia. There can be no doubt about that, because there is nothing which draws population and immigration to a country like the glitter of gold. We rest assured in British Columbia that come what may we will have a large population, and because of this certainty we are not perhaps so much interested in the question of immigration as are other parts of the Dominion; for instance Manitoba and the North-west. Different policies of immigration have been spoken of, but it seems to me, Sir, that the best immigration policy is a policy which will promote our natural trade conditions. It seems to me preposterous to speak of introducing population into this country when the conditions of life are such that our population will not remain with us. When the conditions are such in this country that we cannot even retain our native-born population, what is the necessity for spending large sums of money in endeavoring to induce people from the old country to come here? We want to make the conditions of life in Canada easy for our people and so attractive that when immigrants come here they will remain with us. Our country is a grand country, capable of maintaining in prosperity millions of people.

### POVERTY WITH PROGRESS.

I started out to show what were the natural conditions in the west and in British Columbia particularly. I wish to show that the conditions which exist in that province to-day are a crowning proof of the inadequacy of the policy of the late Government. We have enormous natural wealth in that pro-

vince, but while that is true, it is unfortunately equally true that we have no great measure of prosperity. There are evidences of want and of poverty in the midst of all this abundance and plenty, and it seems to me that there must be some bad reason why these two conditions should exist side by side. I do not know why there should be poverty in British Columbia unless it be that the Government which has controlled the affairs of this country in the past has removed the natural advantages of the country from the grasp and control of the great majority of the people. What is true with respect to British Columbia is true also of the North-west Territories and Manitoba. There are in these parts of our Dominion immense opportunities for people to take up homes, and live a happy and prosperous life. They have rich and fertile prairies enormous in their extent and wonderful in their fertility of soil. But, Sir, as you know, Manitoba and the North-west Territories are not populated. You can travel for hours through the country without seeing the hut of a settler, and the whole of that vast domain is almost as virgin as it was when the buffalo roamed on the plains.

### STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE.

Ours is undoubtedly a rich country, rich in natural resources, rich in the fertility of its soil and rich in its mines. Our people are energetic, economical and persevering, and let me ask why it is, that in view of all this poverty and depression exists? Why have some of our people to make such a desperate struggle to gain a miserable existence? Sir, I think there can be but one reason, and only one reason, and that is, that while the opportunities of this country are great, and while our natural advantages are enormous, it has been rendered possible that these advantages should be cornered by a favoured few. While it is said by some that a Government cannot cause depression or prosperity, I consider, Sir, that in so far as the late Government has fostered a system of monopolies in this country, which turned from the grasp of the people the blessings which nature conferred upon them, they are responsible very largely for the depression which has existed in Canada for the last few years. Sir, some of us—and some of the hon. gentlemen possibly on the other side of the House—doubted a short time ago that there was any depression in this country; but since we have won our seats we can no longer think that, for I do not suppose that there is a member here who has not been deluged by applications—in many cases from men of culture, refinement and ability—for some miserable petty position. Is that not an evidence that the existing conditions of things is such that the people wish to flee from this struggle for existence?

### MONOPOLY THE CURSE.

But I was speaking of monopoly, Sir. I said that the Government had created and fostered monopolies in this country; and the placing of all the opportunities for wealth in this country in the hands of these few monopolies is the reason why prosperity has not been very general among our people. Just look at that for a moment. You will see that every condition to the gaining of an existence in this country

is characterized by monopoly, the whole land system—without entering into a discussion of Henry Georgism—is based on the principle of monopoly. We will not discuss that matter; but the late Government aggravated the prevailing condition of affairs by giving enormous grants of land to people to hold at their own sweet pleasure. For instance, in giving to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company that magnificent heritage in the North-west Territories, they have done an enormous injury not only to the present but to future generations. I say, then, that the land, as a condition of existence, is monopolized. Look at the different branches of trade, and you will find the same condition of affairs. The National Policy undoubtedly fostered monopolies which could not have existed but for the enormous protection granted them. Look at the means of conveyance in this country, and you will find them also in the hands of monopolists. So I say that every condition to an existence—land, trade, means of conveyance—is monopolized, and it is for that reason I say again, that the opportunities afforded by this country have not been enjoyed by the people as they should have been.

These monopolists have run this country so long that, like all people who rule a country for a considerable length of time, they have become impressed with the idea that it was their natural right to rule. They became so strong and powerful in the country that they not only controlled its commerce, but actually controlled the Government which in the first instance created them, and the Government, entrenched behind such a powerful influence, also became possessed with the idea, like the old king, that they had a divine right to rule.

### LIBERALISM AND REFORM.

On the 23rd of June last the people of this country most unmistakably declared their discontent and dissatisfaction with the condition of the country, and expressed a desire for a change. Sir, that change has come about; and it seems to me that the people on that occasion commissioned the new Government to inaugurate a new administration of affairs in this country—to tear down those monopolies which were in possession of rights belonging to the people, and to broaden out the opportunities for wealth, so that there would be brought about an era of more general prosperity throughout the country. That, Sir, I take it, is the work of the Liberal Government to-day. For what is liberalism if it is not relentless opposition to all class privileges—if it is not the spirit that declares every man to have an equal right to common opportunities at the hand of the state? That is the liberalism wanted in Canada to-day. That is the liberalism which makes a democracy possible, and which alone can make a democracy great. We want more of that kind of liberalism, that justice to humanity, which was celebrated by the young Scottish ploughman when he sang:

"A man's a man for a' that."

It is pleasing, therefore, to find in the Speech from the Throne an assurance that this new Administration realizes the importance of recognizing the interests and rights of the great mass of the people. With respect to the tariff, they give us an assurance that