

us here and to the platforms on which we were elected, are forced to try to preserve the point of view of certain sections of the public that feel very differently from that section that receives the greatest publicity in our leading newspapers.

We are very glad to note that there is to be reintroduced the legislation we passed last year. In some of that legislation we have a particular interest and we would give the government full credit for having done its best during the past session to put these measures on the statute book. I would point out, however, that as a matter of fact the legislation which was of special interest to labour went by the board, as did a good deal of other legislation. It is not the law of the land. I know there was a sudden dissolution which abruptly terminated the business of the House, but I would point out that the old age pensions, amendments to the Criminal Code, and amendments to the Immigration Act actually passed the House but were rejected by the Senate. The same conditions, on the whole prevail at the present time, and I would submit very respectfully to the government that if they propose simply to reintroduce this legislation without taking some steps to ensure that it shall become the law of the land, they cannot very well hope to receive the continued support of the country. In this connection I would venture to call attention to a resolution which I have placed on the order paper and which I would commend to the attention of the government, namely, that we be permitted this year to have a special parliamentary committee to consider what changes might be made in the British North America Act, which, —while conserving the principles of confederation, would enable us more adequately to cope with the complicated problems which now confront Canada.

It would seem to me that if the government are really in earnest—and I have no reason to believe they are not—in having old age pensions and other social legislation placed on the statute books they should not allow the second chamber to continue to have powers which enable it effectually to nullify the will of the people.

The speech, using the customary phrases, expresses gratitude for a bountiful harvest. I should like to ask what this means in terms of the enjoyment of the good things of life by the ordinary Canadian citizen. Speaking particularly for the west I would call attention to the fact that that section of Canada enjoys only a little over half of the good things it produces. A very interesting study was made a few years ago by the Department of Trade and Commerce and

[Mr. Woodsworth.]

published by the Bureau of Statistics with regard to the economic position of the Canadian prairie provinces. The latest figures are for the year 1923 and I presume the proportions will be fairly the same to-day. In fact, if there is a more bountiful harvest at the present time, if there is a greater production on the prairies, it is quite possible that a larger proportion will be sent out of the country instead of being retained in the prairie areas. Owing to certain factors into which I need not enter to-day, it is exceedingly difficult for the statistical department to make a study of this character for the whole of Canada, but in view of our inland position on the prairies it has been possible to make a detailed investigation. Let me quote from the pamphlet:

Perhaps the outstanding result of the investigation is that it shows net exports from the prairie provinces amounting to approximately \$270,000,000, whilst imports into this area were approximately \$145,000,000. The "favourable" trade balance of this section of Canada was, therefore, in the neighbourhood of \$125,000,000.

Now, we may have had a bountiful harvest in the west, but the point to which I would call attention is that the greater part of that harvest or its money equivalent goes out of the country altogether and that we are left in the west to enjoy only a part of the fruits of our labour. Let me ask, where does this \$125,000,000 go? That is what is known as the "favourable" balance, though indeed I do not know why it should be a favourable thing for us to send more out than we get in. I have never been able to understand that point of view.

Mr. COOTE: It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Possibly; but we do not generally conduct business on that basis. I suppose we can find the explanation in what is known to economists as invisible exports. As the pamphlet itself says:

Some of the items, for example, which must be included in a complete statement of the "invisible" exports from the prairie provinces of Canada would include (1) payments of interest and sinking fund sent outside the area; (2) payments of dividends on securities of prairie companies to persons resident outside the prairie region; (3) remittances of cash by immigrant residents; (4) expenditures of travellers; students, etc., ordinarily resident in and deriving their income from the prairie provinces, made outside the prairie district; (5) payments to outside insurance companies; (6) the export of capital accompanying emigration; (7) capital sent away from the prairies for investment; (8) charges for transient labour recruited mainly from eastern Canada (harvesters' excursions).