

that direction were even more pronounced. I am particularly pleased to be in this corner of the Chamber—this Progressive corner. We are the second largest group in the House. It is true that we have, so to speak, sat back and let the smallest group sit nearer to you, Mr. Speaker,—we have done that for their mutual encouragement. They were pretty badly dilapidated on December 6th last, and if their opponents in other constituencies had done as much to bring them to a state of dilapidation as I did in mine, there would be none of them here to tell the tale. The electors of my constituency gave me over 82 per cent of the votes cast. My opponent was a Conservative; he got the rest of the votes.

I am particularly pleased, too, that we, the Progressive group, have the first lady commoner sitting amongst us. I am well aware that some of the hon. members on the opposite side of the House have not fully learned that it is not well that man should live alone, and I think that the Progressives will have to pay particular heed to the hon. member of the gentler sex and see that she is not induced to cross the floor to form a stronger Liberal Government.

As you are possibly aware, Mr. Speaker, I am from the West, that country with the reputation of being wild and woolly; but I assure you that the wildness has fairly well all vanished and the woolliness as well. Even the wild buffalo that used to roam the prairies are now behind fences, and the former wild Indians are pretty well pacified and living on the reserves. I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that we who are here representing the West are fair specimens of that country, and just as tame and as docile as the average human being. Of course in the recent election we were classified as Bolsheviks, Seditious, Annexationists and several other kinds of "ists." Well, we do not merit all these designations, but I must say that I am an annexationist myself, a very strong annexationist—I believe that we should annex the United States right away.

I was pleased to hear our Premier remark in his speech that he wished to hear the western opinion—wished to have it expressed in the councils of the nation. I think you will agree with me, Mr. Speaker, that it is being expressed in no uncertain tones and I think it is right that it should be.

There is one part of the Speech from the Throne that appeals to me, and I wish

[Mr. Carmichael.]

to consider it, perhaps, from an angle of vision somewhat different from what has been emphasized before. A paragraph in the Speech states that it has been decided to hold in Genoa a conference with the object of securing a concerted effort to repair the grave dislocations in the economic and financial field that have everywhere followed the war. That is the point, Mr. Speaker, I wish to stress in the few remarks that I shall make to-night. As the hon. member (Mr. Lewis) who preceded me intimated, it perhaps is not good policy for a westerner to say anything derogatory about the province in which he resides. I felt somewhat loath to do so, but picking up a copy of *Saturday Night*, published in the city of Toronto, dated March 11, 1922, I found in the first column on the first page an editorial the reading of which caused me to throw aside my reluctance to speak about conditions in the province of Saskatchewan. Here is what the editorial says:

A situation has arisen in Saskatchewan that will bear close watching. As is well known, quite a number of western towns have, owing to the absurd land boom of years ago, been obliged to default on their bond interest. Among these places are Swift Current, Prince Albert, Sutherland, Watrous, Battleford, Scott, Canora, Melville and Humbolt.

That looks pretty bad, Mr. Speaker, for Saskatchewan. I think if I bring to your attention, and to the attention of the House, some of the conditions as they actually are in that province I shall not be publishing much more than has already been given out to the public. I also have before me a letter from the secretary-treasurer of a rural municipality in the constituency which I represent. As you are aware the rural municipality is our small, local sub-division out there for governmental purposes. In part here is what the official referred to says:

Last Fall those who were indebted to the banks for advances—which was practically everybody—were induced to repay wherever possible their notes before the end of the year and assurance was given verbally that those who did so would be financed during 1922. Now the banks are closing down on credits altogether. The municipality is in the same boat as the individuals.

Mr. Speaker, that gives us an idea of the conditions that the municipality I refer to is up against. Here is another extract from a letter written by the reeve of another municipality in the constituency I represent: