

we would not lose the fruits of our present sacrifices.

Among the most important items in the programme submitted for our attention I observe, in passing, those which relate to our sources of revenue, agricultural production, and the reform of the Outside Civil Service.

The Government is obliged to find the revenue necessary for the carrying out of the programme of which the people have just approved in no uncertain terms. The financial measures adopted since the beginning of the war, by the Government, under the wise administration of Hon. Sir Thomas White, whom I am pleased to see again in charge of our finances, have given all the results expected of them, and even more, without, however, retarding the development of our industries or causing serious inconvenience to individuals.

With the continuance of the war it will doubtless become necessary to find other sources of revenue or to increase the revenues already existing. I am convinced that the present Government, like its predecessor, will be able to make this legislation as wise, as prudent, and as efficacious as it ought to be. It will be our duty to study these measures, keeping in mind the resources and the needs of the country.

Since 1912 the Federal Government has asked Parliament to vote annually certain sums of money for the encouragement of agriculture. These sums are voted in the form of special subsidies to the provinces, and are expended through the respective provincial governments. Recently there was held in the Capital a conference of the prime ministers of the different provinces, to discuss, as I understand, the best means of increasing agricultural production.

An effective means of encouraging this production would be, in my humble opinion, to guarantee to the farmer a minimum price for his products, whether wheat or other cereals, cattle, meat, butter, cheese, or vegetables. Cultivation is more expensive now than before the war. The price of everything is higher—labour, farm implements, seed grain, etc. Is it more reasonable to ask the farmer to arrange at great expense for an increase in the yield of products the prices of which might be seriously affected by a sudden ending of the war, than it would be to ask the manufacturer to buy at increased cost materials for the manufacture of munitions without guaranteeing him a reasonable price for his output?

The Speech from the Throne apprises us that legislation will be introduced for the

reform of the Outside Civil Service; that is, to remove from political influence the appointments to the various departments of the Government. Those especially who have been members of the other House will properly appreciate this salutary reform. Competition for appointment and the pressure brought to bear upon members of Parliament had become really tyrannical. Moreover, the people's representatives were subjected to violent attacks, mostly unjustified, with regard to the exercise of this patronage. The reform of the Outside Civil Service will therefore have two direct results. The first and the more important will be the improvement of the Service by the classification and selection of employees, not according to political merit, but in conformity with the qualifications required by the Civil Service Commission; the other, which I have just mentioned, will be the relief of members of Parliament from a task which the majority of them accepted with resignation as one of the necessary evils of public life.

I desire, before concluding these few remarks, to express my appreciation of the Government's naval construction programme as announced a few weeks ago by the Hon. Charles Ballantyne, Minister of Marine. I can state without exaggeration that all true patriots were thrilled with joy and pride at the announcement of this bold policy, the realization of which will have a considerable influence upon our destiny. The development of our merchant marine will inevitably bring about the co-ordination of all our means of transportation, insure the maintenance and growth of our foreign trade, promote the prosperity of our seaports, and compensate in large measure for the material sacrifices we shall have made during the present war. I desire, therefore, to congratulate the Government, and more especially the honourable Minister of Marine, who was the man best fitted to give effect to a programme so extensive.

Not wishing to impose upon the patience of this honourable House, I pass over in silence several subjects mentioned in the Speech from the Throne, and not the least important. I leave to the honourable second order of the Address in reply the task of dealing with such questions as railways, immigration and colonization, which are of such keen interest to the Western Provinces.

I desire to thank you, Mr. Speaker, as well as my honourable colleagues, for the attention which has been given to my humble words, and before taking my seat