

becoming unemployable. A number of them are still young men, although an attempt is being made to force them out on the farms. That is a situation that should be brought to the attention of the government.

Since coming to this city I have noticed that most elaborate arrangements are being made for the visit of their majesties. It would seem as if every department has been pressed into service. I recognize that the king of Great Britain is king of Canada. I recognize that he is the outward and visible symbol of the tie that unites us to Great Britain, and I think he and his consort should be given a dignified, though I would say a simple, reception. As a representative of one constituency and one who knows something of Canada, I would urge that lavish display need not be an indication of loyalty, and that the lack of such display is no indication of disloyalty. Lavish display may merely minister to the vanity of a comparatively small group of people in Canada.

I was a little perturbed in the last day or two upon reading an account in the *Montreal Gazette* of one of the functions here in Ottawa. I read:

Prologue to court functions anticipated during the royal visit to Canada in the late spring, this year's drawing-room assumed a more regal tone than those of former years.

Royal purples and blues, glistening diamante trimmings, and gold and silver metallic gowns in full-skirted styles were favoured by women attending. Bouquets gave way to feather fans, but dainty nosegays were carried by hoop-skirted debutantes who made their formal bows to society on this occasion. Conventional court weathers—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: I know it should be "feathers" but I am reading it as it appears in the *Gazette*.

Conventional court weathers were worn over piled-high coiffures.

I should like to compare that with a front page story from the *Winnipeg Free Press* under date December 20:

Meagre savings have dwindled away; clothes are becoming shabby and threadbare; household furnishings are in tatters; the bare minimum of food is all they have to offer.

There are literally hundreds of such homes scattered across Manitoba. Homes where, through no fault of their own, families are facing destitution. Perhaps the crops have failed or father lost his job; it may have been sickness or some other cause. But whatever it is, they have been left with nothing, not even hope.

Children in such homes—the future men and women of Canada—are undernourished and underclothed. They face wasting sickness every moment of their lives and there is nothing the

[Mr. Woodsworth.]

parents can do about it. They are helpless—entirely dependent upon the good will and generosity of those others who are enjoying better circumstances.

Or take another description of life as it is in Canada. I should like to quote from the introduction to Harold Dingman's articles. He is a staff writer on the *Globe and Mail*. Here are the headlines:

Life of Grim Squalor Lot of Fishermen on Atlantic Coast—Parents Helpless as They Watch Scurvy-Stricken Children Grow Weaker Day by Day.

No Relief Given Because Taxes Unpaid.

And then this paragraph follows:

This is a story of human degradation, and misery, and poverty, and despair, and starvation.

Here on the shores of the blue Atlantic, here in the garden of Canada, here in this tourists' paradise with all its rugged beauty, ten thousand people who live in tiny fishing villages along the Atlantic seaboard are on the verge of starvation.

Yes, starvation. This is a true story—a story of the inshore fishermen who are a forgotten group of men and women and children. They are hungry to-day, and they will be hungry to-morrow. They will be hungry in the coming winter months, when the icy winds whistle out of the North Atlantic and batter their wooden shacks on Cape Breton Island and along the barren shores of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Whether the Prime Minister's grandparents were poor is no great concern of this house, but we are concerned with the condition of the people I have spoken of. In view of such an appalling contrast as I have given in these different stories, some of the ministers of the gospel may well be asking whether the church has failed, and we may well be asking the other question, whether democracy has failed. I suggest that either democracy must solve these problems or democratic institutions as we know them must pass. In his well-known definition Abraham Lincoln said that democracy was government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Will anyone claim that we should have these social functions and elaborate displays, for any purpose whatever, while we allow these conditions to prevail year after year?

Several important events have taken place since parliament prorogued, and I should like briefly to call attention to them. The government have refused either to disallow the "padlock law" or to refer it to the courts. In my judgment the Minister of Justice side-stepped the issue. He speaks of the fundamental principle of local autonomy, but the Minister of Justice knows that the provinces have local autonomy only within a very clearly defined jurisdiction. In my judgment the decision was clearly a political decision.