

the Imperial economic conference. I am sure that the right hon. leader of the opposition (Mr. Mackenzie King) and his party generally will support any measure of the government tending to the making of a treaty with the United States for the construction of the St. Lawrence waterway. There is one way in which we can help our farmers very beneficially, and that is to reduce their transportation costs. With the early completion of the facilities at Hudson bay and with the construction, I hope in the near future, of the St. Lawrence waterway, the great western part of Canada will be helped to find more easily and with less expense markets for our products, especially our wheat.

Now, sir, let me say a word in passing with regard to the Imperial economic conference which is to be held in Ottawa next July. There has been considerable debate as to the proposals made with respect to this conference, and during last session we were told by the opposition that the conference would never take place. Is it not remarkable, Mr. Speaker, that the British commonwealth of nations have agreed to meet here next July, when, as it were, the seat of empire will be transferred from London to Ottawa?

In the course of the studies that I have made in preparation for this session I have read diligently the Manchester Guardian, the London Observer and the London Times, and it is apparent from these journals that the people of the old land are serious about the approaching economic conference; there is no doubt about that. As evidence of this I should like to quote an excerpt from the Ottawa Citizen of the 5th instant containing a statement by the Right Hon. Neville Chamberlain, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is headed "Britain's Trade Bill Means the End of Free Trade." Mr. Chamberlain said:

There can be few occasions in all our long political history when the son of a man who counted for something in his day and generation has been vouchsafed the privilege of setting the seal upon a work which his father began, but which, perforce, he had to leave unfinished. Nearly twenty-nine years have passed since Joseph Chamberlain entered upon his great campaign in favour of an Imperial preference tariff reform, and more than seventeen have elapsed since he died without having seen the fulfilment of his aims.

Time and misfortunes of the country have brought conviction to many who did not fully agree with him then. I believe he would have found consolation for the bitterness of his disappointment if he could have foreseen these proposals which are direct, legitimate descendants of his constructions laid before the House of Commons, which he loved, in the presence of one and by the lips of the other of the two immediate successors to his name.

[Mr. J. H. Stitt.]

Surely there have been few more remarkable incidents in the British House of Commons. In the presence of his brother, the son of the late Joseph Chamberlain was able to announce that the dream of the great imperialist was about to come true. And may we not claim some credit for our leader that England has set her face in the direction of protection? I endorse the statement of Mr. John L. Garvin in the London Observer that Joseph Chamberlain had again become incarnate in the person of the Right Hon. R. B. Bennett, and I am proud to be a member of this party which has the advantage of such a great leader. For was it not the right hon. gentleman who proclaimed this policy to a reluctant England; was it not he who led the line?

I desire to congratulate the government on the ministerial changes announced last Friday. I think I voice the sentiments of my colleagues when I say that we are very pleased that the mantle of Minister of Labour has fallen upon the Hon. Wesley A. Gordon. Those of us who represent constituencies where there are many working men desire to pay a tribute to the excellent relief work carried out by the Hon. Gideon Robertson, Mr. Gordon's predecessor. If ever a man was a casualty to his country's need I believe the ex-Minister of Labour was, and I tender to him my humble thanks for the patience with which he always received the representations I made to him on behalf of the workers of Selkirk. We are also very much pleased at the elevation of the Hon. Mr. Rhodes to the office of Minister of Finance. With his long parliamentary and business experience we believe he will prove a worthy successor to the long line of great Canadians who have preceded him as finance minister of this dominion.

In this connection I desire to add a word with regard to the elevation to the Senate of Right Hon. Arthur Meighen, and to say that I am grateful that his counsel will be available as a member of the cabinet. When I went to the upper house to listen to the reading of the speech from the throne it struck me as rather remarkable that to the right of His Excellency stood Right Hon. Richard Bedford Bennett, while to the left of His Excellency stood that other great Conservative, that other great imperialist, Right Hon. Arthur Meighen. If I might venture a remark to the right hon. leader of the opposition, in all kindness I would say that when this double-barrelled leadership of which he spoke fires its guns he may have occasion to regret his statement. The greatest tribute