

sion to visit Europe and to investigate the most approved means of catching, curing and packing fish. The report of this Commission will soon be laid before the House, and I am sure we will all agree that any reasonable expenditure which the Government may have made in the direction of gaining information on the subject of this great industry will be justifiable, especially when we take into consideration the fact that for the last five years the total aggregate of the fish catch has averaged \$18,000,000 per annum. It is stated that in British Columbia, as well as in the Maritime Provinces, there are still undeveloped fisheries of great value. It must not be forgotten that, besides the money which we obtain from the sale of the fish, this industry gives employment to a very large body of men at remunerative wages, who form practically an army of sturdy men who make their homes with us and cast in their lot with us under the flag that waves over Canada. They form a navy of industrious men who, if the time ever arrives—which God forbid should ever come—when this country may be engaged in warfare, will ever show their zeal for the honor and credit of this country and of its people, and who will defend their families and their homes. The next paragraph refers to legislation affecting the rights of the Dominion in its foreshores, harbors, lakes and rivers. While the autonomy of our provincial rights should be maintained, the rights of the Dominion should not be infringed upon, and it is well that, as far as possible, all vexed questions of this character should be settled so that there may be as little friction as possible between the different legislative bodies by which we are governed. Based upon the Report of the Royal Commission on Labor, we shall be called upon to consider legislation affecting the working classes, a class to which I am proud to belong. They are not only a very important body, but they are equally deserving of kind consideration at our hands the same as any other class or section of men. To a very large extent they are Canadian born; they are moved by the same sentiments of loyalty as their employers; they remain here not alone for the wages they get, but from the fact that Canada is their native country and the home of their friends and relatives. By some ordination of nature they are not rich, but they are of our kindred, and they are entitled to the kindest consideration from the members of this House. We have had timely warnings from other nations of the world, and we know that the workman deserves protection at our hands. We have all read the account of the great strike in England, and we are continually reading in every American newspaper of the war between capital and labor in the United States. It is a vexed question in that country to-day, and may be an unsolved problem in the future. Let us, in fair Canada, endeavor, by the character of the legislation that we place upon the Statute-book during the present Session, to prove to the workmen that their best friends are within these legislative halls, and that we are prepared to protect the laborer, the honest, industrious worker, and to appreciate his citizenship as much as the citizenship of any other class which exists in Canada. Another paragraph in the Speech is as follows:—

“The early termination of the Acts of incorporation of the principal banking institutions of the country necessitates a review of our present system of banking and an
Mr. POPE.

adjustment of the terms under which the charters of these corporations should be renewed.”

I am not going to say much upon this subject, because I think I may be trespassing upon dangerous ground; but there are one or two matters which have come under my personal attention and to which I would call the attention of the First Minister. For instance: I have been asked by my banker to sign a document purporting to be a bill of exchange at three or four or six months, and I have found him, at the termination at that time, presenting that document to me and demanding that I should pay it. I think that, in future, matters of that kind should be attended to by the Government. Another paragraph in the Address reads as follows:—

“Certain amendments to the Acts relating to the North-West Territories, calculated to facilitate the administration of affairs in that region.”

In a rapidly increasing and developing country such as the North-West, with a population which is increasing very fast, and with resources which have been hitherto unknown, it behooves the Government to give every assistance in the way of legislation that lies in their power. Then, it is also stated that a Bill further to promote the efficiency of the North-West Mounted Police will be submitted. I did not suppose, from what I had heard of the North-West Mounted Police, that it could be made more efficient, but, if it is possible to make it more efficient than it is, I am glad that the Government is going to take steps in that direction. There is then reference to a Bill relating to bills of exchange and promissory notes. I have already referred to that subject. A Bill is promised to amend the Act respecting the Geological and Natural History Survey. I am glad to see that our Natural History Survey is not to be forgotten, and I trust the amendment will be in the direction of developing our economic minerals; for I would not support any assistance to the natural history section, if it simply means to dig out of the bowels of the earth any more fossils than we already have on top of us here.

“The Accounts for the past year will be laid before you.”

It will be found a source of congratulation to this House—to the supporters of the Government I am sure, and also to hon. gentlemen on the opposite side of the House—that, notwithstanding the great sums we have expended in assisting our railways and canals, we have been able to find, at the end of the year, a surplus.

“The Estimates for next year have been framed with a due regard to the requirements of the public service.”

I trust, Sir, that while they have been framed with due regard to the public service, they have also been framed in the direction of a further extension of those public works which will aid us to become a great and powerful nation. I am not a howler of taxation, and I do not believe that the Government of the day or the people of this country are howlers of taxation. I believe we are prepared to stand a reasonable amount of taxation provided the expenditure is reasonably made. In conclusion, I may say that I am very sorry that the gentleman who was to have seconded this Address is not present here to-day, owing to sickness. I looked upon him yesterday, and when I looked upon his broad shoulders I felt a grateful