

in the carrying out of this gigantic project, and it must be admitted that it is warranted in the belief that, under the present Administration, that prudence of conduct will be exercised. The next reference in this speech is to that gradual lifting of the cloud of gloom and depression that has settled over this country for the last few years, which has resulted from the late abundant harvest. One happy effect of this has been an increased revenue. So far as the present Government is concerned, I might here appropriately indulge in a word as to hard times. It has been said, probably by way of a joke, that these hard times were to be attributed to the shortcomings and misdeeds of the present Government. It should require nothing but the assertion to carry belief, in these times, that the hard times under which Canada has laboured did not originate in this country; were not due to any shortcomings, either sins of omission or commission on the part of any Government or any public movement in this country. I might, Sir, reasonably take the ground that the hard times and the depression which has existed in Canada, were due to the injurious effect of an extreme policy of protection in a neighbouring country, which, suffering first, under the evils of war, secondly, from the evils of an inflated currency, and, thirdly, from the evils of undue protection, has brought itself to the verge of ruin, and in doing that, has necessarily involved all commercial nations, to a greater or less extent, in the consequences. How was it possible for a country, having such intimate relations as Canada with the United States, to escape the consequences of the derangement of that country. Why, Sir, the fact that the lumber trade has fallen to 4,500,000 from 13,500,000 annually, will show that Canada did suffer most severely from the depression in the United States, and the hard times under which we have laboured, and which are fortunately improving, were almost entirely due to the existence of those causes over which we have had no control; the removal of which will bring relief which cannot be expected before. Reference is also made in this Speech

to a proposed change in the system of auditing the Public Accounts. Although not in the secrets of the Government, I presume the intention is to copy the English system and make the auditor more independent of Government control. Reference is also made to the prospect of obtaining, at an early day, greater facilities for reaching the North-West. The importance of the rapid settlement of that country, Mr. Speaker, cannot be over-estimated. It is a fact to which I should call the attention of hon. members, that our public domain is just becoming available when the public domain of the United States is becoming exhausted, and we may reasonably hope that the ratio of increase in this country will from this time, for many decades to come, be much greater than the ratio in the United States. The importance of a simple and effectual method of registration of titles in reference to it, and a measure to effectually insure them, is referred to, and we are also promised a Homestead Law. The benefits to be derived from the Homestead Law have already been demonstrated by the experience of the United States for many years, and such a law will satisfy a great need in Canada. Railway facilities in the North-West have also been foreshadowed, and no question can be more vital to Canada than such a policy. Owing to physical causes, intercommunication in that region must, to a very large extent, be furnished by railways. Its rivers flow to the north; it has no natural outlet to the sea; and I have no doubt that a wise and judicious measure on the part of the Government for the promotion of railways in that important section will prove of immense service. Reference is also made, Mr. Speaker, to a measure for better securing the Independence of Parliament. I suppose experience has suggested to every member of the House modifications and improvements that might be made in the present measure. Reference is also made to changes in the Departments of some nature which, not being in the secrets of the Government, I cannot definitely explain. However, Mr. Speaker, changes securing efficiency of management, without increase of cost, are always desirable. The experience of