

five years, and have expended nearly \$20,000,000 in their construction ; when this Province is able to go further, and relieve a large portion of it which is suffering under a load of debt contracted under circumstances which were quite exceptional ; and when it still possesses a large accumulated surplus, and has also further expended the very large sums I have mentioned in the establishment of every kind of institution which an intelligent and civilized community ought to possess ; can any person conversant with the facts, can any public man, can any one accustomed to lead the public mind venture to say that in this Province there is not a self-reliant community ? (Hear, hear.) I go further, and I say that the advice which is given in this article—the advice that we should take up our freedom for ourselves and become independent of the mother land—is advice that is ignorantly given, and given by a writer who knows nothing of our true position. I say if there is a country in the world which has ceased to be in a condition of apprenticeship, it is Canada. (Hear, hear.) Do we not each and all feel that we are capable of protecting ourselves, and are we not ready to go forth, if called upon, to make that protection an actual one ? Is there amongst the millions upon whom we can rely in connection with our defence, a man who would not be prepared to die—the last man in the last ditch if necessary—in the defence of Canada ? (Hear, hear.) Nay, I go further and ask in regard to our freedom, can it be said that, in consequence of any possible change in our political condition, this Province can be more free than it is now ? Is there not an intelligent public opinion to influence and guide its people ? That intelligent public opinion has, it is true, been stifled by influences which I am glad to say are now fast disappearing—influences which have placed the Government of this country for years, and the Government of this Province until a short time ago, in the hands of men unworthy to control it—(hear, hear)—of men who know nothing of the aspirations of the Canadian people, and who were unable properly to control the destinies of the country. I say, then, there is a public opinion in this country, and that public opinion, so far at least as this Province is concerned, has been exercised in such a way as to show plainly and clearly that we belong to “that true north” of which the Poet Laureate sings, which is faithful in its position as a dependency of the British Empire, and that we are able and willing to assert our rights and to maintain them as freemen in the full possession of our freedom. (Cheers.)