

our manufacturers to see what is done elsewhere when they attend with their own exhibits, and, therefore, I think the money expended in this way is well expended. We have heard from time to time a good deal said about the political confederation of the Empire; now, I believe, that to be successful, it must be preceded by commercial federation. I do not look upon commercial confederation as being chimerical; on the contrary, I think if deputies from the Mother Country and all the colonies met together in London, and discussed their various interests, and told what each required and what each produced, and could spare, it would be found that a very much larger inter-imperial trade than exists now would rapidly grow up—that very intimate and beneficial commercial relations could be established, and that the creation of such material interests might be followed, and certainly would be followed by more intimate political federation, and I believe it is the only way in which political federation can be brought about. I think the present time is propitious for suggesting a scheme of this kind. The commercial depression which is felt so much in this country, is felt more or less in almost all the colonies and in the Mother Country. The time is propitious for the further reason that I regard the present Prime Minister of England, Lord Beaconsfield as, of all men in the world, the most likely and the best able to grasp and develop the important and grand national and Imperial features of the project. In my opinion it would be worth the while of the Government of this country to propound such a scheme. I confess I do not expect them to do so, because they tell us they cannot do anything to promote the interests of the country—substantially that is what they say. Now if a scheme, such as I have given but the roughest outline of, could be carried out, the prosperity of this country would be enormously increased, and there would be little left for us to envy in the condition of any other country. It would advance the prosperity of all parts of the British Empire and unite them in indissoluble bonds. In speaking on the subject of trade I may state, as I have often stated, that I, myself, am a free-trader, but I cannot help feeling that our one-sided freetrade relations with the United States have not answered well.

*Hon. Mr. Macpherson.*

We have failed to get real freetrade, and the one-sided one has not been successful. One of the maxims of freetrade is "that the proper policy is the one that yields the greatest good to the greatest number." That is sound, but it is always difficult or impossible to ascertain what does really afford the greatest good to the greatest number. Now there is no doubt in a country like this, which is chiefly agricultural, that if our people have to spend all their savings in paying for imported necessities—and in the payment of interest upon our debt, it will be impossible for Canada to become rich, and the country is not enriching as it ought, and our public debt is increasing at an alarming rate. It has been increased by the present Government thirty-two millions of dollars, and I think that the opinion of the country must be that Canada has very little to show for it.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Do you include in that the amount taken over from Ontario and Quebec?

Hon. Mr. MACPHERSON—No, I am speaking of the money borrowed in England.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Part of that was to pay old loans.

Hon. Mr. MACPHERSON—I repeat the Loans negotiated by the present Government amount to thirty-two millions of dollars.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT.—Oh, no.

Hon. Mr. MACPHERSON.—That is the amount. I need scarcely say that I join cordially in the expression of regret in the visitation of the City of St. John, and sympathy for the sufferers. It was a fearful calamity, unparalleled in this country, and I am sure Parliament will readily approve of the grant which the Government made, and would do so even if it had been larger than it was. With respect to what is said in the Address on the subject of extinguishing Indian titles to lands in the North-West, there is no doubt it was wise to do so. It was necessary to secure the peace of the country, but a great deal of unnecessary expenditure has been incurred by the Government in the North-West. The establishment of the North-West Government itself was perfectly unnecessary. Nothing could be more so. The Governor of Manitoba could have administered the affairs of the North-West for a great many years to come, and probably