

notwithstanding our protests, they did not put a single line into the statute which would enable them to have any more effective control over rates on the Transcontinental than they have over rates on any other railway in the country. And I suppose that, after the canal is complete, if they have anything to do with the matter, either in opposition—where they are most likely to be—or on the other side of the House, the story will be circulated that they will build an aerial line of some kind to control rates upon the canal; and so we shall have the railway controlled by the canal, and the canal controlled by the air line.

But I must ask the Prime Minister to get down in sackcloth and ashes before this House and apologize for his conduct judged from the standpoint of his own high-sounding declarations of 1908. It was bribery, according to the right hon. gentleman, to tell the people of British Columbia that they might have claims that they believed to be just referred to the arbitration of honest and impartial men. Bribery, was it? What, then, will you say of the profuse promises of public works handed out by every man who stood upon the public platform in this western tour, handed out to every community and handed out with one object, and one object alone, as the Prime Minister knows, that object being to influence votes in support of this government in the next general election?

Mr. Speaker, the west presses certain claims, and is entitled to have those claims considered by this government. It presses for the construction of the Hudson Bay railway. As I understand it, both parties in this country have committed themselves to the construction of this railway. But the west asks for something more. It asks that the construction of that railway should be by the government and that the operation of it should be such as to ensure absolute, thorough control of rates, effective competition and no monopoly, and that demand on the part of the west seems to me eminently reasonable. The west asks also the redress of grievances in the operation of the terminal elevators. They declare that the farmers of the west are shamelessly robbed through these elevators—that sometimes ten per cent. of No. 1 wheat goes in and thirty per cent goes out, and so on all along the line. They declare that this condition of affairs has existed to the knowledge of the government for many years and without redress. And I say that the government of this country ought to be responsible for knowing whether that condition of affairs does exist or not. If that condition of affairs does exist, it ought to be brought to an end without a moment's delay, and this parliament can devote itself to no better object

Mr. R. L. BORDEN.

than to bring to an end so disgraceful a state of things as that which is alleged by these western farmers to exist. And I say further that, if ownership by the state and operation by an independent commission is the only remedy, then, in my opinion, that remedy should be applied. But the farmers of the west say something more. They say there ought to be lower duties on agricultural implements, that they are paying higher prices for implements than are paid in the United States and higher prices for Canadian implements than these implements are sold for abroad. I say the government is derelict in its duty in not having brought down to parliament direct and positive information on this subject, and I say that if the claims that are made are true there ought to be a remedy. And I want to know from the government whether they believe them to be true or not. If they say that they do not know, I ask why they have not taken means to know; if they say that these claims are not true, I ask upon what evidence they base that assertion and what they propose to do in the premises. In the fourth place, as I understand it, the west demands that the government of this country should hand over to the people of the three western provinces their public domain to be administered by their own governments under control of their own legislatures. They say they are free men, and, being free men in a free country, they have as good a right to control through their own local legislatures and by their own provincial executive the administration of their public lands as have the people of any of the eastern provinces who enjoy and have enjoyed that right.

Now I come to another subject, that of the reciprocity negotiations now in progress between the government of this country and the government of the United States of America. I thought I observed a certain lack of logical sequence in the remarks of the honourable gentleman (Mr. McGiverin) who moved this address. He spoke of the wonderful development of this country and the great growth of our foreign trade. We are glad to acknowledge it and to congratulate the country upon it—though I do not know that the remarkable growth of the last fiscal year over the preceding year can be traced to any legislative or executive act of this government. The two principal Bills passed last year were the Bill for the establishment of the naval service and the Bill for the investigation of combines, and I do not know that to either of these can be attributed the very marked increase in our foreign trade which has taken place. Therefore, I should be hardly inclined to accept the view which impressed itself upon my honourable friend. I would not agree that this growth is due to anything else than the splendid resources of this country and the industry and ability of the people in deve-