

unfavourable condition will be temporary and that the illimitable resources of Canada and the world-wide recognition of them give us ample guarantee of continued material progress.

I have examined this speech—it is very lengthy—and up to the present time I have not discovered in it a statement of any immediate or effective remedy. Perhaps, if I yielded the floor my right hon. friend would explain to the House why that omission occurred. We did not put the word 'unfavourable' into our speech on this occasion. The Government of that day seemed to take a very gloomy view of the situation. We do not take a gloomy view of the situation. We do really believe that the resources of this country are so great and so widely recognized that any slight restriction in business is not to be seriously regarded and that this country in 1914, as in 1908, will make it manifest to the world that the check, if any there be, is only for the moment.

My right hon. friend has alluded to the inquiry which the Government has directed into the increase in the cost of living. We have thought it wise to follow the British example in this regard, and to select civil servants of ability and experience to make an examination into this question. We have selected them without regard to what may be supposed to have been their political views, knowing that they are all men not only of ability and experience, but of integrity as well, and that they will bring to this important task the best that is in them, and give to the country the very best of their services in coming to a conclusion.

My right hon. friend has moved a resolution on this subject. He desires that the Address to His Royal Highness shall not pass in the words proposed, but that the following shall be added thereto:

We regret to have to represent to your Royal Highness that in the gracious speech with which you have met Parliament, whilst it is admitted that business is in a depressed condition, yet there is no indication of any intention on the part of your advisers to take any steps towards relieving such a situation.

When I said that my right hon. friend had forgotten the speech which he put into the mouth of His Excellency the Governor General in 1908, I evidently made a mistake; he was thinking of that speech when he drafted this resolution. His Royal Highness has not stated in the Speech from the Throne that business is in a depressed condition. I would like to observe in regard to this amendment that it does not quite come up to some of the speeches which the right hon. gentleman has been making in the

[Mr. Borden.]

provinces of Ontario and Quebec; there is a remarkable difference. When my right hon. friend spoke at Hamilton on the 26th of November last he was ready with a policy. Why is it that the policy which he announced at Hamilton is not embodied in the terms of his resolution? Have some of his friends expressed the opinion that he was a little hasty? What is the reason for the marked difference? In the one case he shouted loudly; in the other case he whispers softly. My right hon. friend did not wait until the opening of Parliament to change his policy. His policy as expressed at Hamilton was this:

The policy I give you at this moment; the policy I believe every patriotic man in Canada ought now to support, and the policy I believe it to be the duty of the Government immediately to inaugurate, is a policy of absolutely freed food—food free from customs duty.

That was on the 26th of November, and on the 9th of December he reached Montreal. But in the meantime, he seemed to have received a new light and wisdom. His proposal when he reached Montreal was to have a few perambulating commissions of ministers such as he had in 1897, and in 1907, if I mistake not. That was a remarkable change, but he has not suggested either one or the other of these policies in the resolution which he has introduced to-night—a resolution of the vaguest character, which permits my right hon. friend to retire within the lines of Torres Vedras whenever he finds it convenient to do so. Let me point out to the right hon. gentleman—because he has insisted, outside of this Parliament, if not within, that the high cost of living is due to the customs tariff—that a perfectly impartial observer and writer, and one whose opinion would not be influenced by any lack of sympathy for him, has made a rather remarkable pronouncement on the tariff of 1897, which was not materially altered in 1907. In his recent work published in the latter part of 1913, Professor O. A. Skelton, in dealing with the general economic history of the Dominion, says at page 201, with regard to my right hon. friend's tariff of 1897:

Yet, with all this tinkering, the tariff remained substantially the National Policy tariff of the old régime.

I do not intend to-night, especially having regard to the fact that a commission is investigating this question at the present time, to deal at any length with the causes that have brought about the increase in the cost of living. My right hon. friend himself has admitted that the increase in the cost of