

such a degree as the young and sympathetic prince whose democratic tastes have appealed to the whole Empire.

Therefore he was cheered by the people wherever he went. In our own city of Hull, which he honoured with his visit, I never witnessed such enthusiasm among the people. But he actually won the hearts of my fellow citizens when he replied in French to the address which was presented to him by the mayor of the city. We have heard so often politicians say and so often read in the newspapers that there should be but one language in Canada; we have witnessed so many endeavours on the part of lodges to deprive us of the privilege of having our own schools, that it is comforting and bids well for the future to hear our future sovereign address us in our beautiful French language. Because he recognizes that labour is a necessary factor and that the worker should be treated as well as the capitalists, he accepted the invitation which had been made to him by the president of the Labour Association of Hull to pay them a visit where they assembled for the Labour Day celebration.

Mr. Speaker, such are the facts with which our population was much pleased and it is with regret that we saw His Royal Highness leave us. Long life to him!

The only thing mentioned in the speech from the Throne is the ratification of the Peace Treaty which was signed at Versailles. I do not intend to discuss the subject at great length; let others, who are possessed of more experience than I am, criticise this Treaty, but anyway, even if it were not ratified by the Parliament of this country, what would be the result? Would the treaty be nullified as regards the allied nations? Certainly not. Would it be nullified as regards the British Empire of which Canada is a part? I say: No. Would it cancel obligations imposed upon Great Britain of which we are a colony? I contend that would be ridiculous. Therefore we are going through a mere technicality. If that be so what was the use of calling a special session, of taking hon. members away from their activities in private life, and of spending a million dollars to cover the cost of this session, since the Government would not deal with any other legislature as stated in the speech from the Throne. However, it seems to me that there are many more matters which require our attention. What about the reconstruction scheme which the Government had

[M. Fontaine.]

promised? What are they doing in behalf of agriculture, which is the basis of our national development and wealth? What assistance is being extended to the farmers? They are compelled to pay duties amounting to twenty-five and even thirty-five per cent on agricultural implements which they require to cultivate the soil; they have no access to the American markets, because they are denied reciprocity, which would increase their returns. Is the Government doing anything for the returned soldiers? We owe a debt to these gallant men. The Government made all kinds of promises and now they pay no attention to them. What is being done for the labouring class, which has to bear all the burden of the taxes? Nothing is granted the workers; not only that but the Government put them in jail when they happen to strike in order to secure living wages. Meanwhile, they allow the trusts and profiteers to accumulate wealth and to pay dividends of one hundred and two hundred per cent, as was shown during the inquiry held by the Public Accounts Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest that during the present session the Government should legislate toward securing the repayment of that money so shamefully obtained. It is contended that the number of millionaires has increased during the war. It is a shame. In other countries the profiteers are sentenced to prison, but here they are knighted.

The time has come when we should reduce the cost of living by fixing maximum prices for the essential commodities. I avail myself of the opportunity to ask the Government to legislate towards providing an eight-hour working day such as was enacted in France. I reiterate my request for old age pensions. I urge the adoption of an elections' Act which will be fairer and more equitable than the War-time Elections Act, and which will not enable the Government to remain in power against the will of the people. I ask that the country be no more governed through Orders in Council, but that we may have a Government by the people. I ask also that no legislation be passed which would affect our autonomy.

In conclusion, I ask that a general amnesty be proclaimed and pardon granted to all the defaulters and evaders of the Military Service Act.

Before resuming my seat, let me say that I shall vote against any Bill aiming at depriving us of any of our prerogatives or calculated to curtail our autonomy.