

by this government. The late Conservative government put forward strenuous efforts to get our people to look towards the British market instead of the United States, while the Liberal party as a whole, including the members of the present government and their followers were pointing the people to the United States. The British market has been developed, and an important trade has been established there. We sell the great bulk of our farming products in Britain at the present time, but I fail to see where the present government have done anything to bring about that result. Then, in the settlement of the west, the Canadian Pacific Railway was built and every facility was provided for the influx of settlers in that country under the Conservative government. Experience was gained and a foundation was made which resulted in a larger number of settlers going in there in the years that have intervened since the present government has come into power, and I have no doubt that the influx of settlers from the United States and from European countries will increase in the future. Looking at the whole situation I cannot see that the present government is entitled to credit for any of these features of prosperity which the country enjoys at the present time. It would be just as reasonable to my mind if the old bachelors of Canada claimed credit for the increased population as it is for the government to claim any credit whatever for the prosperity which has come to this country during the term they have been in power.

The speech from the Throne refers in terms of gratification to the increase of trade.

It is very gratifying to note that the yearly increasing trade of Canada which has been so marked a feature of the past six years, gives no indication of any abatement, while the number of settlers seeking homes in Manitoba and the Territories is without a parallel in the history of the country.

Now, I have been looking at the Trade and Navigation Returns of last year, and I do not find in them everything to be pleased with. It is true that the volume of our trade is increasing; it is true that as compared with the eight months of the previous year the volume of our trade is greater, but there is also another aspect of this question, which is equally true and which is not so encouraging. I find that for the first eight months of 1903, our imports were

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\$139,199,618. In the same period of the present financial year our imports have increased to \$158,171,447. In other words, there is an increase of nearly nineteen millions in the imports of the country in the first eight months of the present year as compared with the imports for the corresponding months of last year. Now, that must be what gentlemen in the government must have meant when they found so much that was encouraging in the trade of the country. But I turn to our exports, and what do I find? I find that in the first eight months of the present year our exports of domestic produce amounted to \$144,599,291 against \$152,084,622 in the first eight months of the preceding year. There has been a falling off in the exports of Canadian produce in that period amounting to nearly \$7,500,000. To my mind, neither one or the other of these sets of figures is satisfactory or encouraging. The importation of such a large quantity of goods beyond what we have exported and beyond the importations of the previous year is to my mind evidence of over-trading, the evil effects of which we are sure to find in the years that are to come. The introduction of such a large quantity of foreign goods into Canada also leads to the supplanting of our own productions to a certain extent, and indicates that there is something wrong with our tariff, as we on this side of the House have been telling the country all along. It indicates that our purchasing power has been diminishing. Putting these figures together, I am very far from agreeing with the language of the speech from the Throne, that our trade at the present time is in a satisfactory condition.

We now pass on to some observations of the speech with regard to the Transcontinental Railway question.

These two very important facts lead irresistibly to the conclusion that long before the Transcontinental Railway, authorized by parliament at its last session, can possibly be completed, its urgent necessity as a medium for carrying the products of our west to our own Atlantic ports will have become apparent.

I notice that this language is not by any means as sanguine as the utterances of the Prime Minister and his colleagues when this measure was submitted to parliament last year. It appears now they are speaking with rather bated breath. They prophesy that long before a certain event will happen