

matters. In other words, this is a body which ought to be able to give a lead to the Government of the country by way of constructive criticism, comment and suggestion, and the opportunity is afforded us at a period in the Session when we are not overburdened with work from the other House. It is with those facts in view that I express the satisfaction that I have had, and we all have had, in the discussion which has so far taken place.

I associate myself with honourable gentlemen who have already addressed this Chamber in paying a compliment, well deserved, to the two new members of the Senate who respectively moved and seconded the Address. Knowing their business experience and their affiliations, we expected from them a fairly good contribution, and I do not think we have been in any way disappointed. With reference to the new Senator from Essex (Hon. Mr. Lacasse), over and above the matter of his discourse, I want to congratulate him on the possession of a fine voice, which he was not ashamed to use to its utmost. In that way, I am sure, he contributed very much to the comfort and satisfaction of the members. Though the youngest member, he has given probably one of the best leads in that respect to many of the Senators who are much older and have had longer experience.

It is entirely proper also to add, what has been mentioned by some who have preceded me, that this Chamber as it is constituted, with its traditions and practice that have grown from year to year, occupies a position for reasonable and non-partisan criticism and suggestion which is denied to the other Chamber to a marked degree. Fortunately we do not have to look forward to the pains, penalties and labours of an election upon which the maintenance of our position depends. Probably the best of us, with an election contest before us, might be tempted—whether we should fall or not I am not sure, but we might be tempted to a little bias in the expression of our views, owing to the prospective advantage which we hoped might accrue to us when the final day of testing came once more. We are in a position to express views on a more independent basis and in a more reasonable way on account of the non-partisan tradition and practice of this Chamber, which to me, coming from the more heated atmosphere of another chamber, were somewhat of a surprise and at the same time a great satisfaction.

It is allowable, even in this Chamber, for the mover and the seconder of the Address to show a little optimism in the expression of their judgment with reference to the Govern-

ment which appointed them and had been supported by them before they became members of the Senate; and I noticed that even the moderate and reasonable statements made by our two honourable friends, the mover and the seconder, yesterday in this Chamber, had just the least tint of that sort, for which they are entirely excusable. The two points which seem to have been relied upon most in commendation of the work of the Government in the past and which have been mentioned particularly are the expansion of our trade on the one hand and the increase or expansion of our revenues on the other, and with these two strong supports they absolve, or are quite willing to absolve, the weaknesses and failures. They point to the immense trade and large revenues of a comparatively small country like Canada as evidences of progress and prosperity of a solid and permanent kind.

I think it might be well for us, while giving all the weight that is reasonable to these two indicia of advancement, to consider whether there are not some other points which we ought at the same time to bear in mind. Let us take first the expansion and the volume of our trade as measured by exports and imports, especially by exports. The agricultural exports and the exports of the mines and the forests constitute the preponderant bulk of our trade. But we cannot blind ourselves, nor do I think we should blind ourselves, to the fact that these three great items on our list of exports are items which vitally cut into the natural resources of Canada, which natural resources are either not reproducible or are very slowly reproducible. This fact ought to make us thoughtful on the subject of the conservation of those resources.

With reference to the products of the soil, we all know that every crop diminishes to a certain extent the power of the soil to reproduce an equally good crop; and it is only when, by fertilization and other scientific methods, we return to the soil a part or the whole of what has been extracted from it, that we keep the resource available in due proportion for ourselves in future years, and for the generations that come after.

But, when we come to the exports of the mines and forests, we are dealing with two resources of quite a different nature. That which is taken out of the mines cannot be replaced in whole or in part. The most we can hope for is the discovery of something that may take their place.

In dealing with the forests, which are showing a wonderful contribution to the trade expansion of the country, we become a little more thoughtful and serious. Despite all that