

Government and Legislature, to foster and strengthen by skilful and able administration all the great and varied interests of this Commonwealth? If we search all the utterances of the leaders of the party now in power, how can we put any other interpretation, than that they are of opinion that they can do nothing to improve our present condition? Are we, as the people's representatives, to look on with passive indifference, upon the vast and endless number of enterprising men, oppressed with anxieties and impending disaster, before them?—and upon our banking institutions, whose standing may in general be regarded as a faithful index of the state of trade, sinking, gradually, under the general depression and wide spread insolvency? While nine out of ten men to whom you speak, wherever you go, solemnly and anxiously assure you that they are not holding their own,—that they are losing ground, and express despondency in regard to the future, the Government of the day have the temerity to declare in the speech from the Throne, “That they are glad to be able to say, that nothing beyond the ordinary business of the country requires our attendance.” Is the Senate of the Dominion prepared to declare this to be fitting and seemly language, considering the circumstances under which Parliament is at this time convened? Is this the spirit and policy of public administration, which a people, so remarkable for their industry and enterprise, have a right to expect from their representatives, and rulers? I wish to God that I possessed the health and strength, and power, to unfold upon the floor of this chamber all the means by which we could hope to restore to this country the prosperity which prevailed during the first five years of Confederation. Grave mistakes have been made in the past, by the Government and by the Municipalities in loading the whole country with debt, not unfrequently for enterprises which never should have been undertaken. The public debt of England is a source of strength and not of weakness, because chiefly owing to their own citizens, and the wealth is retained in the country. The annual interest of our public obligations, which is very large for so young a country, goes to foreign creditors, while the taxation in all our

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cities has become oppressively burdensome to all classes. I do not purpose upon this occasion to particularize the numerous instances of wasteful expenditure by the present Government, which, I am sure, have been sufficiently dwelt upon, by a portion of the Press. No matter what Governments profess, they seem to be carried away by the pressure and influence of their supporters and friends, to enter upon expenditures which no man can approve. The public debt has thus been unduly increased, while the commerce of the country and the taxpaying power have not increased in the same ratio. I am of the number who hold that the stagnation or depression, which we now experience, might have been greatly alleviated by a more statesmanlike policy upon the part of our Government. I cannot understand any enlightened man at the present day applying abstract theories of political science to a country of only four millions, lying alongside the great Republic with its forty millions, maintaining an extreme Protective Policy, which amounts to almost entire exclusion of everything which we manufacture. What justice or reciprocity is there in that? I freely confess that I am of the number who think that we should hold our own markets for our Canadian people, and that we need not be afraid, but that the competition amongst our own manufacturers in every branch of trade will be such as to bring down prices to the consumer. With such means of education and training, and so much enterprise as our citizens possess, we need be afraid of no monopolies enduring for any period. If we desire to see the Dominion hold its own and prosper, we must bring to the front our ablest public men, whatever party they may belong to. The interests of the country must stand above the interests of party. We want the blessing of a more frugal and able administration of our affairs. We must have a more judicious expenditure of the public moneys. We must endeavour to throw in a large additional population into Manitoba, by securing to them at the earliest moment, railway connection with the markets of the world. We ought to make the lands in the Northwest tributary to the carrying out of that object, upon the principle adopted by the Western States—that we ought to be