

*The Address—Mr. Slaght*

sonal character of those ministers of the crown he has selected to assist him in governing Canada. It may be truly said also that no political leader ever sought office on fewer preelection promises. No overnight policies were issued next morning; the Prime Minister in his campaign adhered steadfastly to the policy of his party. It was no one-man policy but the considered policy of the party enunciated by him as its leader in February, 1933, and adhered to by him throughout the campaign.

With equal truth may it be said that no political leader ever entrusted with office has made such a remarkable record of accomplishment in four short months or less. May we pause for a moment to see what I mean by that. The government has successfully concluded a reciprocal trade agreement with the United States of America, which is to be of far reaching benefit to our basic industries and to Canadian primary producers. The conclusion of this treaty is, I suggest, a personal achievement of our Prime Minister, of which he may be justly proud. I cannot but remind the house that he has brought to pass a measure which was very near the heart of a beloved former leader of my party. Just before entering this chamber I passed before the portrait of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. I bowed my head, and the thought came to my mind that if he had been spared to see this day, and the consummation of a measure which with his clear prophetic vision he declared twenty-five years ago would come to pass, what warmth of emotion would stir him to know that his pupil in public life, his chosen successor as leader, if I may be so bold as to say so, had as a personal achievement brought his cherished dream to reality.

Next, the government has brought to a successful conclusion the trade dispute with Japan; normal trade relations between the two nations have now been restored. This is bound to be of great advantage to all of Canada and perhaps particularly to the great province of British Columbia.

Recently the government convened the most important federal-provincial conference in history, at which questions of profound national importance were considered, including methods of amending our constitution, our financial relations and responsibilities, the great problem of unemployment, problems of agriculture, problems of mining development, and the development of the tourist traffic. Then, again, a very important conference, one not so widely known, has been held in Ottawa. This was a conference of departmental experts convened to consider the possibilities of

[Mr. Slaght.]

developing a system of transatlantic airways transportation. The experts of Great Britain, Ireland, Newfoundland and Canada agreed on representations to be made to their respective governments, and a subsequent successful conference was held in Washington. In other words the government has realized the national importance to Canada of this new and wonderful development, and due to the foresight of the right hon. gentleman's government we are taking our place and recognizing Canada as a pivotal point in the air transportation of the world.

Continuing committees have been set up by the federal-provincial conference. Under the guidance of the government many of them have come to well defined conclusions with respect to financial problems and constitutional amendments.

Reference of legislation passed at the last session has been made to the Supreme Court of Canada. Hon. members will recall that several measures as to the validity of which doubts had been openly expressed were placed on the statute books. The supreme court was directed to deal with these measures at the earliest possible moment, and they are now before that court for determination. Surely it should be a principle of law making that at least parliament be assured of the validity of its laws when they are enacted, no matter to what extent legitimate difference of opinion might arise as to the desirability for such laws. The present reference therefore is to remove uncertainty and to make for stability.

Again, a royal commission was promptly appointed and speedily solved a very serious unemployment situation in the textile industry.

All these matters have been actually accomplished in less than four months, and accomplished in addition to the heavy departmental business of the country, which is being carried on by sixteen instead of twenty-one ministers of the crown. Am I not therefore fully justified in pointing with pride to these achievements of the Prime Minister and his cabinet?

But hon. members have not yet heard the whole story. The speech from the throne outlines several important matters to be dealt with at this session by legislation—because they can be dealt with only by legislation. May I refer only briefly to these matters of unemployment and relief? One would expect no difference of opinion concerning the statement in the speech from the throne indicating that unemployment continues to be our most urgent national problem. There can be little room for difference of opinion when I state that heretofore the difficulties which beset this problem have been