

*The Address—Mr. Veniot*

stated that he would recommend that no aid be given to the municipal authorities in the province, but that any federal grant for unemployment should be expended on the construction of roads and bridges, in winter time in the province, where there are four or five feet of snow at that season of the year.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Would the hon. member be good enough to tell the house when Mr. Stewart said anything of the sort, giving the time and place.

Mr. VENIOT: Yes. He said it at a conference at Bathurst in reply to a question I put to him myself, and there were fifty people present who heard him.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I referred a moment ago to the closing down of industries in New Brunswick. If I am not mistaken the hon. member for Stormont (Mr. Shaver) mentioned the great benefit Cornwall was deriving from the increased labour in the cotton mills of his home town, brought about by the increased tariff passed at the special session last September. What may have been a blessing for his riding has turned out to be a disaster for New Brunswick. Let me relate a circumstance connected with the closing down of the cotton mill in the city of St. John. A rumour got abroad that the mill was to close its doors in the month of December. The city of St. John, through its mayor, appealed to the premier of New Brunswick, and he in turn appealed to the Canadian Cottons Limited not to close the mill. As a result of agitation a public meeting was called in the city of St. John, to which Mr. Dawson, the president of the Canadian Cottons Limited, was invited. Mr. Dawson met the premier of the province, the mayor of the city and the aldermen, as well as members of the board of trade and a large number of the leading business men. He met also my friend the hon. member for York-Sunbury (Mr. Hanson). He was appealed to not to close the mill, but that appeal was in vain. He told them distinctly that that mill was closed and would remain closed. They were dismantling the mill and they would finish dismantling it. Apparently the appeal of the Premier of New Brunswick to the federal government had no effect on Mr. Dawson. What do we find? During the progress of the discussion at that conference there was also present the hon. the Minister of Pensions and National Health (Mr. MacLaren), the representative of the province of New Brunswick in the present government. And if one is to judge from the newspaper reports the meeting was almost

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a Donnybrook fair. But Mr. Dawson stood firmly by his guns; he took no backwater whatever. The St. John Telegraph-Journal, reporting the occasion, has this to say:

Mr. Dawson issued an ultimatum that he would not only not reopen the Cornwall cotton mill but that he would also close the York mill (the second mill in St. John) if its operation proved unprofitable. Mr. Dawson went further and said if the financial standing of the Canadian Cottons Limited did not improve he would also close the Milltown and Marysville mills.

The Marysville mills are situated in the county of York-Sunbury. In an editorial based on the result of the meeting the Telegraph-Journal has this further to say:

In other words, Mr. Dawson, speaking on behalf of his own company, has made a clear-cut statement that in his opinion, backed by his directors, the Canadian tariff is designed—

Now let hon. members from the province of New Brunswick listen to this.

--to benefit the central provinces, and should not concern itself with the maritime provinces, when the interests of the company are prejudiced. That is to say, he places the interests of his concern above the national interests of Canada, unmindful of the fact that all Canadians are taxed to create employment and not to benefit industrialists. If Mr. Dawson is sincere in his convictions, he has made one of the finest contributions to a free trade campaign in this country that has been offered by any manufacturer for a good many years. As a group who has long sought protection, the president of the Canadian Cottons Limited and his directors have taken a position which may react on them in a manner which may prove their undoing.

Premier Baxter obtained from Mr. Dawson the information, that in sixteen years the mills had broken even. He then demanded to know why they were closing this mill. According to the report in the press, and according to Mr. Baxter, Mr. Dawson had tried to place the blame on the federal Prime Minister. Premier Baxter contended that:

It was not for the government to run cotton mills, but it was for the people to see that no group shall have the benefit of tariff and at the same time pick and choose what parts of the country were to benefit. It would be better to bring cotton in from Lancashire free of duty.

That phrase comes from one of the strongest protectionists and high tariff men in the Dominion of Canada. The Telegraph-Journal then comes back in another editorial and says:

Mr. Dawson for the third time expressed the opinion that the closing of the St. John mills must be laid on the doorstep of the Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Hon. R. B. Bennett. He told his listeners that Mr. Bennett's policy provided that efficiency and the consequent maintaining of present price levels was the essential of the recently adopted tariff.