

*The Address*

tical promises. It indicates that once they have got their reward, once they have reaped the fruit of their professions, those professions and promises go into the discard and are forgotten. It indicates that when the hour for bringing down those "some changes" in the tariff comes, there will be about as much resemblance between the actual legislation and the pledges of the past as there is between darkness and light. The hon. member for St. Lawrence and St. George (Mr. Marler) declared his tariff faith as follows, and upon this he was elected:

That the tariff should be framed with the assistance of such scientific or other board acting in collaboration with a committee of Parliament, with the object in view of providing the revenues required for the administration of the country—the maintenance of established legitimate industries, the encouragement of new industries—the promotion of trade with other countries, consistent with the above objects—and with due regard to the economic rights of the consumer.

As clear and unequivocal a declaration of the principle and practice of protection as any candidate for Parliament ever made. By those means the government now in power obtained office. While their candidate in North Winnipeg was publishing the promises of 1919, while their candidate in Centre Winnipeg—and I have his declaration before me—was casting far and wide a circular in which he pledged himself, and declared his party was pledged, to put into effect the pledges of 1919, while every candidate that supported them in all the provinces of the West right to the Rocky Mountains was binding himself and his party to those pledges and getting votes upon the strength of those pledges, these hon. gentlemen, now elected to this House, were pledging themselves and their party to exactly the opposite course, and by that means they were elected. So the Government is bound to betray those who supported the present hon. member of St. Antoine (Mr. Mitchell), it is bound to belie the declarations of the present Minister of Justice (Sir Lomer Gouin), it is bound to take his electors into camp and deceive them; or it is bound to carry out the pledges they made to the whole people—pledges that were ratified, confirmed, repeated and voted upon by immense sections of this Dominion. That is the position hon. members supporting the Government are in, that is the position the Government itself is in. Far be it from me to make the claims of a prophet, but I know something of the preponderance of influence in the present administration, I know some-

[Mr. Meighen.]

thing of the source of the momentum that put them into office, I know something of those who bought and paid for a programme and who expect delivery of the value thereof, and in my own mind I have not very much doubt as to what will be the measure and character of the "some changes" referred to in the customs tariff paragraph of the Speech from the Throne.

I pass from that subject to refer to the declaration as regards railways. Of that I have less criticism to make. On the subject of railways it is declared, as though it were a matter requiring the attention of Parliament—and as I understand, speeches from the Throne are intended to lay down a programme for the consideration of Parliament during the ensuing session—that there will be co-ordination of the railways owned by the people of this country. This is the paragraph:

In order that government ownership and operation of our national railways now extending through every province of the Dominion may be given a fair trial under the most favourable conditions, it is intended at an early date to co-ordinate the Government-owned systems in the manner best calculated to increase efficiency, and to effect economies in administration, maintenance and operation. The whole transportation situation is one which will require your best attention. It weighs heavily upon our national finances. To assist in obtaining the information essential to an exact understanding and an adequate appreciation of the problem in its many bearings, it is proposed to supplement the work of co-ordination by a thorough inquiry.

A Speech from the Throne, written by a Prime Minister, who, within a few months of writing that speech, had declared to the people that an inquiry is only suggested by a government that has no policy at all! It will be noted how sedulous the draughtsman of the Speech from the Throne has been to use the most evasive and nebulous terms at his command. He does not say there is to be unification of the roads owned by the Government; he does not say there is to be amalgamation; he does not say all are to be brought together as one system, as was the intention of the last Parliament, and, is the intention of the law to-day. He says: There is going to be "co-ordination,"—a word chosen because of its elasticity, because its exact meaning is at least capable of more interpretations than any other word that could have been used. I hope, however, that the meaning that will appeal to most of us is intended, namely, that there will be actual unification, in order that the advantages and economies incident to unity will be provided; in a word, that all intended by the statute of