

schools, 1,600 churches? That is, she has lost many more buildings than exist in the whole province in which I live. There are in my province, 1,200 post offices, many of which, as you know, have been established for the convenience of people scattered in the country districts, and at places where there are groups of only three, four or ten houses. In France no less than 560 city halls and 1,200 schools have been destroyed. You may say: "Yes, but how many of those are rebuilt—because we are interested only in future trade?" Very well, let us see how many have been rebuilt. At the beginning of the year there were only 60,000 houses rebuilt and 60,000 under repair. Therefore, at the present moment there are no less than 480,000 houses to build, leaving aside altogether the city halls, the schools and the churches. "But," you will say, "that requires only building material; what about the rest?" Here is my answer: The ten departments of France which were invaded comprised 85 per cent of the industrial production of France. Here is the list as briefly as I can give it. The products of these departments were: wool, 94 per cent; linen, 90 per cent; mineral ores, 90 per cent; iron, 83 per cent; sugar, 70 per cent; coal, 55 per cent; cotton, 60 per cent; electrical energy, 45 per cent.

The region invaded was utterly destroyed or stripped and its restoration will require years of strenuous efforts. But you will further ask: "How is our agricultural community interested?" Let me deal with that question. France has lost no less than 1,300,000 head of cattle. How many do you think have since been replaced? Two hundred thousand. There are still 1,100,000 head of cattle to be obtained by France somewhere. Why should we not furnish them? There are hundreds of miles of railway to be built, of canals to be repaired; there are no less than 504 bridges to be reconstructed.

With reference to the third point, the abrogation of the Treaty of Frankfort presents a great opening for us. What were the imports of France from Germany prior to the war? One billion sixty-eight million francs. And from Austria the imports amounted to 103,500,000 francs. Those imports include many articles which we are now prepared to supply.

What is the remedy proposed by the Government? It consists of an offer to France of our intermediate tariff, in exchange of special concessions on certain lines of goods. We are going to ask for favours and what do we offer? Equality. Equality with

whom? With the worst competitors that France has. Do you think we are going to get much? Do you think we are entitled to get much? Should we not shake off our fetters of old, free ourselves from the servitude of the most favoured nation clause and then say to France: "We are free; we will bargain with you; what will you give us for our agricultural implements? We sell largely to you in this line; cut down your tariff so low that we shall have an exclusive preference. You want to export silk? Very well, we do not manufacture any silk, and for your goods we will cut down our tariff lower than for any other nation." We could apply this method to a great many lines of merchandise. That is by far the best way to negotiate.

But let me go further. Should the Government succeed in obtaining from France special concessions in exchange for our intermediate tariff, how will it work out for France? Let me call your attention to a very serious state of affairs. How was our tariff applied to France by the Department of Customs? I thought the method of its application so extraordinary, I received representations from France so often, that I made an earnest effort to ascertain the facts. The duty on French goods is imposed on a fictitious value of the franc. How does this fictitious value affect the goods imported from France? Let me take a very small sum as an example, so that I may be better understood. Suppose you are a merchant and you have one dollar to spend. You send an order to France for goods worth one dollar. That means that you buy goods to the value of 10 francs 35 centimes, at the present value of French currency, which is worth 10 francs 30 centimes to the Canadian dollar. Very well, you go to the Customs Department and you say: "I have paid a good Canadian dollar for this article. The duty is 35 per cent on this; now impose your duty; you have a right to 35 cents." "Oh, no," says the Customs officer, "you have bought goods to the value of 10 francs 30 centimes in France, but an Order in Council has fixed the value of the franc at 5 francs 15 centimes to the dollar. Therefore the duty must be imposed on 10 francs 30 centimes; that is to say, on two dollars instead of one." Therefore the goods are charged, not with 35 cents, but with 70 cents. That seems very unjust.

But that is not all. As you are aware, it is impossible to obtain short deliveries for any goods ordered in France. If your order is placed to-day you may not receive the