

this Government would have been recreant to the great fishing interests of the country had they made themselves hostile to the people of the United States, and disregarded these manifestations of better feeling on the part of the United States Government. I think our Government have acted wisely and well, although it has resulted in a temporary injury to our fishermen. The fishermen themselves feel that the Government have acted wisely, and in the interests of that great and important branch of the industries of the lower provinces. Our fishermen maintain a spirit of self reliance; they hold of right waters teeming with fish along 1,200 miles of coast. Half of the fish taken by the Americans have been within our lines. Hampered as the fishermen of the neighboring country will be for want of bait and supplies, they cannot for long hold a monopoly of their own fish market. Fifty millions of people will not for long consent to pay the increased price that the duty imposes on them, and ere long they will be asking, possibly in vain, for the concessions that they now refuse; and if we cannot now obtain by amicable means, and mutual concessions, mutual benefits—if our neighbors object to a continuance of the treaty, the greatest loss will be theirs, and our fishermen will, I trust, reap a harvest in the sale of their fish at enhanced prices. One thing at least is certain, our fishermen will not be robbed of their birthright. They have representatives here and in the other branch of Parliament who are alive to their interests. They are assured in the Speech before us, as well as by the action of this Government in the past, that their rights and interests will be firmly and efficiently protected.

With regard to the falling off in the trade with the West Indies, we know that it has been caused by the competition of beet-root sugar with the product of the West India Islands. When the people there could not sell their sugars, of course they could not buy our fish, and our trade suffered as the natural result. Other branches of trade, however, are fairly prosperous. Money is plentiful at low rates—in fact there is too much money at present throughout the Dominion at too low interest to please the banks. Discounts are low, and, consequently, the banks complain of poor times; but when

the banks complain it is not always a sign that the country is not prospering. My hon. friend complains that the condition of the Maritime Provinces is retrograding. For my part I do not believe it. If he compares the progress and the condition of the Lower Provinces to-day with the condition of the provinces before Confederation, he will find that there is no unfavorable comparison. The most sanguine expectations of the people of eighteen years ago have been surpassed. Take Nova Scotia for instance. At that time we had no communication with this continent except by water; we had no railways; we had no communication with the Western Provinces, and had to depend entirely on the United States and West Indies for a market. We then felt that without trade with the United States we could not exist. Happily—with Confederation—all this has changed.

As regards the Pacific Railway, my hon. friend, the would be leader of the Opposition here, has very little to say. He was one of the pessimists from the first; he decried everything; he contended that all the money we loaned to the Pacific Railway Co. was so much given to them. The Canadian Pacific Railway Company, I believe are now able and ready to repay their loan. The completion of that road has produced a new and mighty era in this country, fraught with benefits yet beyond our realization. My hon. friend alongside of me said that we went too fast and should not have built the road around Lake Superior. Contemplate, hon. gentlemen, what would have been the position of the North-West and Manitoba last spring if it had not been for the completion of the Pacific Railway round the north of Lake Superior. The necessity for that railroad was demonstrated when we had the trouble in the North-West. Had it not been for that railway what would have become of the settlers throughout the Territories? Had we followed the policy of the late Government with regard to the Pacific Railway it would not have been completed for many years to come. In fact, the Government had no confidence in themselves, in their country or in their party, and what they sought to do one year, they undid the next. Their railway scheme, half land and half water, certainly would not have been