

Now, Gentlemen, I am only stating what has been said quite frequently. It has become a commonplace, almost, may I say, as much as the preaching of the Gospels, so vital to humanity.

My connection with the proposed convention was through a request from the Minister of Trade and Commerce, who, when leaving for England early last summer, asked me to stimulate in every possible manner interest in his "Call to Action." At once, let me confess, that I know little about the trade and commerce of Canada. That, however, did not preclude me from trying to bring together the men who do know something about it. It has, I am aware, a political side, linked up with the tariff. It has also, however, something more fundamental than that, and represented by that hackneyed phrase, economy and efficiency. Without going into the methods adopted, beyond saying that an effort was made to interest the press in the movement, I may as well confess that I absolutely failed. Allowing a friend of mine to glance through the notes of this address, he questioned the propriety of my making such an admission. He said, "You may have sown a few fruitful seeds. Furthermore, do not lose sight of the fact that the public have little regard for men who fail." Gentlemen, I am of the opinion that the time is here when men appreciate those who have the courage to admit even failure.* Well, what did I find? All busy, busy, busy—some concerned about our rapidly growing tax-load, knowing that they will be severely hit in the future—a few willing to take up the subject, others indifferent, or, worse still—unwilling. Some wished to know what machinery Sir George Foster had created to carry through the movement; what money he had set apart for the work. These questions merely indicated a most imperfect knowledge of the situation. If the civil authorities call out the public to help to cope with a great conflagration, are we going to refuse to take off our coats and go forward with our assistance, simply because they failed to send around automobiles in which to bring us to the trouble?

Pray, do not misunderstand me. I know as well as you do that we have strong aggressive men in our industrial life. They have pushed their heads through the crust of the business world. They in their earlier activities developed confidence in themselves, gradually great force came to them, but as team play had no part in their making, they, as captains of industry see no necessity for it amongst themselves in furthering the national good. They are quite ready to go forward individually and give the government their views on any state issue. We are all willing to do that. If we could only pay our taxes in generous advice, the Canadian democracy would indeed be rolling in wealth. That in itself is an excellent sign—in fact, what is to be expected from vigorous people, developed in northern latitudes. And in passing may I say that Canada is several shades too cold in winter to give the best results in the production of human vigour unless we hermetically seal up houses, especially the smaller ones, during our long winters, in order to keep out frost, and incidentally that which is vital to our health—fresh air.

It is not the individual views of aggressive men our governments need so much as their collective and intelligent support, (though I believe governments occasionally make the mistake of encouraging them). We know that no two successful men ever cross the same street in the same way. It is only "drifters"

While confessing to failure, I do not admit that it was the fault of the plan adopted by myself and a few associates. If there is any criticism a few years hence due to inactivity today, it will, I think, be charged against the outline of procedure that was carefully worked out and made available for our captains of industry.