

the harvests should have been so uniformly good. The next paragraph of the speech is one that perhaps permits of some challenge as to its expediency. We are asked to rejoice over the evidences of increased activity in the various branches of commerce and industry. Now, considering that Canada has probably as many advantages as most countries in the world, if not more, that we have millions of broad acres that are unrivalled in their richness, that we have forests that are teeming with wealth and which add considerable to our income every year, that we have the finest fisheries in the world and that, as has been stated by the mover of the address, we have mines which give indications that they will be second to none in any country of the world—with all these advantages I maintain that we are not in a position to join in congratulations on our increased activity in these branches of industry and commerce. A country situated as Canada is should be growing and advancing continually, yet we find, that within the last 18 years, although vast sums of money have been spent to bring people into the country, we have not been able to retain even the natural increase of the population. We see to-day nearly 1,000,000 Canadians—one-fifth of our population—in the neighbouring republic, drawn there from some cause or another, by what are apparently greater attractions, and leaving their native land which certainly ought to present as many advantages as any country. There must be some cause for this. Our trade it appears, also, has not increased during the past year; on the contrary it has gone back. Since confederation we have purchased abroad on an average \$18,000,000 worth annually, over and above the value of our exports: that is to say, importations have exceeded exports to that amount annually, making a total of \$500,000,000 since confederation. It has been pointed out in the past that we have been rapidly progressing because our importations were so large. Singular to say, last year our importations were less by \$3,000,000 than our exports. Now it cannot be possible that both conditions are indicative of advancement, namely both an ability to purchase in excess of the amount of exportation, and the falling off in the amount of such purchases. There is an inconsistency somewhere. It will be argued, I suppose, that the people buy at home and that the national policy has done it all.

All I can say is, it is very strange that the national policy did not have this good effect in years gone by, when business was very much more inflated than it is to-day. Again, the reduction in our importations has had the effect of materially reducing our revenue, so much so that we have had what I am sorry to say has been so frequent of late—a deficit. The next paragraph of the Address is somewhat personal, as regards His Excellency, and we are glad to know that his observation of affairs in the North-west and British Columbia was so gratifying and satisfactory. His Excellency has taken a more than ordinary interest in the development of the Canadian North-west, and in British Columbia, as we all know, he has invested largely and has been able to produce ample evidence that the country is adapted to the production of grain and cattle. He is also conducting experiments to find out whether that province is not also suitable for the growth of fruit, and if he is successful we shall be glad to hear of it. Current report leads us to believe that British Columbia is admirably suited for horticultural industries, and we hope His Excellency's venture may prove a success. The next paragraph of the speech is what might be called the *pièce de résistance*, namely, the one dealing with the Manitoba school question. We certainly regret that the government of Manitoba has declined to remove the grievances of the minority. As we know, during the six years in which this question has been discussed, the difficulty of settling it has been increasing daily. The difficulty has developed and become greater during the past year than in previous years. Unhappily the press—and by this I do not mean the press of one political party alone but the press of both parties—particularly in the province of Ontario, has not sought to allay or diminish that feeling. The cry has gone forth that Manitoba ought not to be coerced, wholly ignoring that coercion of the minority which has already taken place. I repeat, it is much to be regretted that this question was not dealt with the first year in which it arose. It has been stated that in that session—the session of 1890—a resolution was adopted in the House of Commons that such questions should be submitted to the courts. Granting that it should have been so submitted, why was it not submitted then and there? It appears from the blue-books that this Act of the province of Manitoba was