

practically so as to suit the needs and interests of the country from time to time. By a large majority the Canadian people, not so long ago, gave evidence in a manner so marked, so decidedly expressed, that no one can gainsay it of their confidence in the ability of this government to deal with the question of the tariff along the lines I have indicated.

Another item of great interest to our people is the announcement in the speech of the appointment of a commission to act with one similarly appointed by the United States government with regard to the preservation of the rivers and other waterways which are common to the two great countries. That is a declaration which I am sure, in this land of mountain and the lake, and this land of rushing rivers, this land in which our immense water-powers and waterways are destined to fill so important a place is one which will be welcomed by the House; and the labours of that commission which was originated by an Act of Congress passed in 1902, will no doubt be watched throughout this country with deep interest and I am confident will result in good to both nations. No one will gainsay the statement that Canadians generally regard the maintenance of friendly relations with the great English speaking people to the south of us as of prime importance, and without exception hope that the time will never come when those friendly relations may in anyway be impaired or unsettled; but while that is the case, and while we are prepared to discuss with them such matters of common interest as I have mentioned, I am sure that we all cordially endorse the declaration of the right hon. the First Minister that we will send no more delegations to Washington just now, to look for trade favours. We have now reached that stage when we have become self-reliant and confident in our own resources and great future. We have implicit reliance in the capabilities of Canada, and while prepared to favourably consider any proposition in the interests of both countries, looking towards an improvement in our trade relations, we do not feel disposed to-day to send any more delegations on the question of reciprocity.

The policy announced in the speech of granting provincial autonomy for the Northwest Territories marks an important epoch in our history. It is thirty-four years ago since the province of Manitoba was admitted into confederation and given all those rights, and that status in the federation which is enjoyed by every province in the Dominion, and at this moment it may be opportune to indulge in a retrospective glance and recall some of the advances and developments that have occurred since confederation. Thirty-eight years ago when confederation was established it embraced but four provinces and covered a territory stretching between Lake Superior and the sea. Each one of these provinces was then imbued mainly by local prejudices and limited by provincial aspirations. Each one was

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unacquainted with the other. There was no common tie save that of the constitution which bound them together. Our total trade then amounted to but one hundred and thirty one million dollars. Our railway mileage was but two thousand miles and our postal revenue but one million dollars. Our bank deposits amounted to but thirty-eight million dollars, and our people generally had but a limited appreciation of the resources and possibilities then awaiting development. Our outlook was purely provincial and the aspirations and ideas of our people were almost exclusively limited by the boundaries of the provinces in which they lived. It is but just to bear tribute to the foresight of that great statesman who presided at the inception of Canada's birth and who watched over this country when in her swaddling clothes. We can all, irrespective of party, regard him as one who did great things for Canada and whose name will always be embalmed in the history of this Dominion. In 1870, when the Northwest was a seething mass of rebellion and discontent, the Territories were brought into confederation. In 1871, British Columbia entered the union. In 1873 the little island of Prince Edward followed her example and in 1875 the Northwest was placed under the jurisdiction of a lieutenant governor. Then in 1880 all the British possessions in North America were placed under the Dominion of our federal parliament with the exception of Newfoundland. Then followed the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which bound all the provinces together and gave to the eastern provinces a common interest in the western heritage, and gave birth to that newer patriotism which has shown such rapid development in the last few years. Following the building of this railway, came new settlements. From all portions of the habitable globe came settlers into this new country, so that no less than three hundred and twenty-four thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight people during the past four years have gone into this new land—a number exceeding the population of some of our provinces and equalling that of others. When we stop to consider the fact also, that during the past four years 94,791 homesteads have been taken up in that country, we can form some conception of the rapidity of its growth. In those western territories, which are to be given provincial autonomy, there exists a country which exceeds in extent the countries of France, Germany and Italy taken together. This is indeed a precious heritage, this great Northwest land, which to-day forms part of our territory and in which we are about to inaugurate a system of government which will place that country on an equal footing with the other provinces in confederation. Realizing the advantages which Canada offers to new settlers, we have men from all lands and every clime taking up homesteads in that vast territory, where they will enjoy constitutional rights and privileges from