

Lawrence for many years. He is a thoroughly practical man; he has been here three times himself; he has looked into this question, and I am perfectly satisfied he would not risk his steamers here, as he has agreed to do up to the month of February, if he was not perfectly satisfied that the scheme was feasible and could be carried to success. I must not forget to draw attention to the vote for the bridge at Quebec, and in this connection let me give an example of what I call a political promise. How lightly it must sit upon the minds of conscientious men. In the year 1891, the hon. leader of the opposition went to Quebec and delivered a speech in Tara Hall. There he distinctly promised that the bridge should be built, and although his party remained in power five years from that time, not one dollar was voted, even for preliminary surveys to enable estimates to be made for its construction. Directly we came into power work of this nature was begun, the bridge company was met with the serious difficulty, because instead of finding rock bottom in the St. Lawrence, which previous surveys had indicated, they found that they would have to go sixty feet below the bottom of the river to get a proper foundation, and this increased the cost of the bridge very materially. Notwithstanding this, the government voted the bridge company a million dollar subsidy, and have extended to the company no idle promises, but sympathy and practical assistance.

I will only add one word more, and that will be with reference to preferential trade. I maintain that the words uttered by our Premier when he landed in Liverpool struck the keynote of all the future success which will attend our present fiscal policy. England has given us so much, and is giving us so much that we should do for her all we possibly can. She takes everything we can send her almost free; and if we make an effort to extend to her these preferential advantages, whether she asks for them or not, it will benefit us, and it will, I believe, eventually lead to Great Britain entertaining some scheme which will give us what we all want, which we shall get, not by bargaining for it, but by meeting her liberally and openly; that is, trade within the empire. And in saying that, I would wish that we could embrace in that trade a still larger empire. In such an arrangement I believe we ought to embrace our neighbours in the United States, and I believe that we shall live to secure fair reciprocal relations with that country, notwithstanding the fact that in the past they have treated us so selfishly, so ungenerously and so unfairly. But the very fact that we are drawing so close to Great Britain and that our trade with Great Britain is increasing at so great a ratio will, I believe, make the United States desirous of joining in such an arrangement. The United States are acquiring responsibilities in other

countries, the Imperial spirit is growing among their own people, and they will be desirous of having not only closer trade relations, but better relations politically and otherwise with the British Empire than they have ever had before, and the advantage of that will accrue to Canada; and not only the advantage, but I believe also the credit and the thanks of the mother country will be given to Canada for making the effort to bring about such a result. Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Mr. W. J. ROCHE (Marquette). Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman (Mr. Dobell) who has just taken his seat must have imagined that he was working off some poetical quotation when he repeated that portion of Scripture which says, 'Whereas, I was once blind, now I see.' But it was very strange that the hon. gentleman had not his sight improved until he was honoured with a portfolio by the present government. From the way he discussed questions to-night from a party standpoint, one would imagine that he had been a Liberal of the old school all his life, whereas, I believe, he was a Conservative, upholding the policy which he has been opposing to-night, up to the time the Liberals came into power. While not desirous of prolonging the debate, and recognizing the difficulty of contributing much that would prove of an original character after the able and eloquent speeches we have heard from members on both sides of the House, still I desire for a short time to avail myself of one of the two opportunities occurring during the session to discuss the general policy of the government, without any restriction being placed on debate. The debate on the address in reply to the speech from the Throne was a very curtailed one, the opposition being desirous of getting down to business, were perfectly satisfied to rest their case as presented by the hon. leader of the opposition and the ex-Finance Minister, and they allowed the address to pass without further criticism. The government, however, not having their work prepared were caught napping, and so put up man after man to prolong the discussion on the resolutions to provide for the payment of the contingents, until they could whip something into shape to place before the House. It seems, though, utterly impossible to please hon. gentlemen opposite. Last session when the opposition in the exercise of their right subjected the speech from the Throne to a month's criticism, the government, the members supporting the government, and the Liberal press throughout the country raised a hue and cry that the opposition were pursuing a policy of obstruction. This session when we allow the debate to come to a close with but two speeches on this side of the House, we are derided, accused of having no case, and that the opposition had utterly collapsed.