

these extensions and modifications? Is it not proposterous that Parliament should be disturbed in a most unconstitutional manner—I say most unconstitutional, because until the voters' lists were revised, as the Government announced they would be, the elections should not have been held. What was the consequence of this untimely appeal to the people? Many who should have been voters last March could not vote, while people who had votes three years before were allowed to elect the representatives of the people. And who voted? Thousands came in from the United States to vote that it was disloyal to trade with the country where they earned their bread. That was the anomalous and preposterous position that things assumed. The men who are making Canada to-day had no votes. The active, vigorous young men were not on the lists, the men in the graveyard, who were personated over and over again, turned the elections. The men who came from the United States, who had long since left Canada and gone elsewhere to obtain a living came back, and, forsooth, voted that it was disloyal and unpatriotic to have trade relations with the United States, where they were living. That was the ridiculous position in which the Government placed this country by forcing on an election at so untimely a period, and when it was wholly unnecessary. Had Parliament run its due course of another session we would have had new lists that would have been fair to both parties. We should have had another year of the National Policy, and the people would have understood the position somewhat better, and we should have also had, which was an exceedingly important thing, the returns of the new census. Everybody knows that, not alone in this country, but in all countries where a census is taken at fixed periods of ten years, it is usual to re-arrange the electoral districts. It was made an excuse ten years ago to re-arrange the constituencies in this country, and what is called gerrymander them. Possibly the gerrymander had not been such a success as to induce the Government to wait another year to gerrymander the country, but it was announced that the change in the electoral divisions would be made when the census was completed; yet, on the very eve of the taking of the census Parliament was dissolved. That is another

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reason why it was improper, and contrary to the usual practice in all constitutionally governed countries, to invoke the opinion of the people at so inopportune and inappropriate a time. The other paragraphs are scarcely worth commenting on. Some of them had a place in former Speeches. The paragraph in reference to our shipping indicates that we had been comparatively free from accidents in transmitting cattle. However, we are told that legislation is necessary, and one can recognize, therefore, that Mr. Plimsoll's visit to Canada has not been without effect. The measures in reference to the foreshores of the Dominion is not a very important one: it was in last year's Speech, and it is repeated here. It went a certain distance through Parliament, and it is brought in here for the purpose, no doubt, of filling up and giving a little more stuffing for the Address. The codification of the criminal law was undertaken not long ago, in 1886, when the general law was codified, and we have been making some amendments since. I think it is unwise and uncalled for, and does not accord with the encomiums of the speakers who moved and seconded the Address. I think it is exceedingly unwise that we should be constantly tinkering with the criminal law. We made a considerable number of changes last session, and it is to be regretted that we did not finish it then, and not have to re-open it now. The Government take credit to themselves for having a surplus, and they are complimented by the mover and seconder on the exhibition they make of the financial affairs of the country; but it is an easy thing to get a surplus. If you choose to put your taxes high enough you can always have a surplus. This Government is spending from ten to twelve millions more than its predecessors spent, and it has a surplus, but it is because the people have to pay higher taxes. Governments that are carried on in the interest of the people have no surpluses. They have no right to take more than is necessary for the administration of public affairs. It is not my intention to move an amendment, and I believe it is not the intention of any gentleman who shares my views to interfere with the passage of the Address. I will say, that with considerable experience of Addresses from Ministers, this certainly is the most meagre one that it has