

under these favorable circumstances, we have been told that we shall have no joint commission to consider a reciprocal treaty of any kind, fisheries or any other subject whatever, shows how futile and foolish it would have been to have humiliated ourselves in the last three, four or five years, when under even these favorable circumstances we are told we are to have no commission. But, unless by the unwise and factious speeches of hon. gentleman opposite during the present Session, unless from something proceeding from here, we have still hopes. We have yet no right officially to declare that there will be no commission, because so far it is only a report from the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate. No action has been taken by the Senate itself or by the House of Representatives. We may have an opinion on the subject, and I have no hesitation in stating my opinion that that action of the committee is decisive, but, as it is a matter of international concern, we have no right to say so until it is communicated to us in some official manner by the Government of the United States. But I say that, unless by some unwise or factious language in this House, or out of this House, by a factious and unwise press, the Americans are told it is of so much consequence to us that, if these advantages are refused to us, if reciprocity is refused to us, we will eventually fall into their arms, I have very considerable hopes that the Morrison Bill, if not in its entirety, in many of the most important articles mentioned in it, will be carried by the independent legislation of the United States. I believe there is a great pressure from the central portion of the United States to have free trade, or rather to take off the duties on very many articles which Canada can supply. Now, Sir, the hon. gentleman took occasion, and it was not very courteous in the leader of a party to a new member, to sneer and to elaborate his sneers, at the speech made by the mover of the resolution. He stated what everybody knows, that a good many firms in the country, a good many industries, have failed for want of sufficient capital, and he made merry about that. The *Globe* and the Opposition press, whenever a blacksmith shop is closed, because the man has not capital enough to make a sufficient number of horse shoes, point to the fact as a proof of the failure of the National Policy. They gloat over it; they rejoice over it. Whenever an industry in any place, be it a village or be it a town, has failed to produce the result expected by its promoters, you find it flourished in the newspapers as a proof of the failure of the National Policy. Why don't the hon. gentleman come out then, and move in favor of free trade? Why don't they come out like men? Let them bring down a resolution to this House; let them have the courage of their conviction, and state that the National Policy has been a curse, that it has been a delusion and a snare, that the prosperity of Canada will never be ensured unless we return to the old ways of free trade and a simple revenue tariff. We will have some respect for the sincerity of the hon. gentlemen who take that course. But I defy them to do it; I dare them to do it. They will sneer and rejoice at the failure of the National Policy, but they will not venture to state by a solemn resolution that free trade is the panacea for all the evils from which Canada is suffering. Mr. Speaker, in the very discursive and desultory speech made by the hon. gentleman, I cannot well follow him. The most of it was irrelevant, the most of it was out of place, and much of it did not tend to promote harmony in this House, or the good feeling between parties which ought to exist. Why! the hon. gentleman has raked up everything. He has gone back to the speeches of the Hon. Wm. Macdougall. It is a new thing to see that hon. gentleman quoting him. Why! I thought he was the abandoned man, but any stick is good enough to beat a dog with, and so he must quote Mr. Macdougall, a man who has been denounced as altogether abandoned, and if abandoned altogether, as unworthy of credence—unworthy of quotation. He takes that up, and he quotes

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a pamphlet written, under feelings of great personal annoyance, by Mr. Macdougall. Then the hon. gentleman goes on to quote mere rumors—anything in a newspaper is good enough. He says that the Indians, he understands—he sees in the papers—are fed on half rations and are starving, and that he never understood before that the proper punishment was torture by starvation. Now, that kind of language will get into some of the papers, it will be read by some of the literate whites to the Indians; and the hon. gentleman can quite understand how language of that kind may be used to create a disturbance of the public peace. But I remember when, year after year, it was our duty to come down to Parliament with votes asking for money to feed the starving Indians, after the buffalo was swept away from the plains, and ceased to be the food of the Indians. How we were attacked for our extravagance; how we were told that a number of idle agents were appointed simply for the purpose of providing for political hacks, that we were wasting and plundering and throwing away the money of the country. I stated then, as I state now, that we could not, as Christians, allow these poor Indians to starve, but that we were not to pamper them, nor render them still more idle and unwilling to work than all Indians are; that when we found Indians loafing about the different stations, we could not allow them to starve. Sometimes the Indians will surround a police station, or an Indian station, or a land office, and they will deliberately say: "We will die, we won't go"; and such is the endurance of the Indians that they will hang about, and from mere humanity the officers of the Government are obliged to open their stores and feed these men to keep life in them. That, Sir, we did; and that policy we will continue until it is reversed by the order of Parliament. To the Indians who go upon their reserves we give food until they are able to support themselves, but we reduce them to half rations when they are simply wandering and demoralised Indians, who come not only to be fed themselves, but who bring their women to be a means of profit by prostitution. When these people are hanging about the Government stores and offices, we reduce them to as low a ration as is sufficient to keep life in their bodies; but we tell them: "Go to your stations and we will give you food to take you there, and you will get full rations until you are able to support yourselves." And they have the means, under their treaty obligations, if they are on the reserves, to raise roots for their sustenance, by a little exertion amongst themselves. When they are on the reserves they are fully fed, and better fed than they ever were, even when the buffalo ran across the plains. At that time it was either a feast or a famine. The buffalo food was good a portion of the year, but for another large portion of the year the Indians were starving and had to be fed by the Hudson Bay Company and traders who were competing with that company. So, Sir, this charge, this insinuation, was unjust, like most of the statements made by the hon. gentleman, gathered, as they have been, from a press sometimes unfriendly, especially known to be in the interest of white men, who are anxious for their own individual and sordid advantage to continue that state of disorder, or rather the state of unrest and disquiet that exists in the North-West. We have said in the first paragraph of the Speech, that it would be our duty to see that sufficient protection is given to the settler. We will do so, and, perhaps, to a greater extent than real necessity warrants. But, Sir, when we hear rumors started of risings, rumors of plots in the United States, rumors of arms coming across the lines, rumors started for, as I said, unworthy purposes, and promoted in order to excite the fears of the people—when we find that, we must be overcautious, for, although we may disbelieve many of these reports, we would be blood-guilty in fact if, from a mere