

not due to, but in spite of, the Tariff. It is quite true that good harvests, a long continuance of economy, the circumstance that the export of lumber is at very much better prices, as well as in increased demand, and the circumstance that our good harvests are paying us by reason of a fair price for grain, have produced a revival in the business of the country. But it is to these circumstances that such a revival as has taken place is due; and that revival, I believe, would have been much more marked if our people, during the last few years, had been freer to trade where they would have liked to trade, and to buy where they would have wished to buy. I believe that the restrictive, or so-called protective, influence of the Tariff has been to delay and to diminish the advancing tide of prosperity, instead of promoting it. If it be true, as I hope it is, that we are entering upon a period of prosperity, it is our duty to be wise in time, to remember that we have had periods of prosperity before, and that they have been followed, and will, according to all past experience and to obvious reason, be followed by a period of reaction. It is our duty as a Parliament, particularly, to be cautious with reference to our permanent commitments. We must remember that at a former period, while the tide was on the flow, hon. gentlemen opposite calculated upon its permanent advance, and that they made lasting commitments which it was found difficult, or impossible, to meet or to break, when the tide began to ebb. Our permanent commitments ought to be based, not upon the progressive increase of revenue during a time of prosperity, but upon the reasonable average progress which we may expect, taking the flows of prosperity and the recurrent ebbs of depression altogether. And if we neglect that consideration, and if we impose burdens upon this country incommensurate with its average rate of progress, a temporary period of prosperity will have injured more than it will have improved our situation. This applies to us all. Every man of us in his private affairs would act upon these views, and as a nation we must act upon them or suffer the consequences. The first duty of the Administration, in my opinion, is, if the revenue does show a surplus, to diminish the excessive burdens of taxation. Those burdens of taxation have been imposed contrary to pledges made by the hon. gentlemen before the elections, because they said that the financial condition of the country required them, because they said they found its financial condition was so much worse than they had expected, that it was necessary to impose burdens which they regretted. Those burdens are onerous in the extreme, and if the imposition of those burdens has produced a surplus, it is contrary to the duty of the hon. gentlemen to pretend to a fictitious prosperity based only on receipts from excessive burdens, and it is their duty to relieve the country from some portion of that taxation the moment it has been found unnecessary. And, in relieving the country from that taxation, it is our duty first of all to consider which are the most odious, the most partial, the most sectional, the least productive taxes, to take away those taxes and to leave our people unburdened by them, the freer to promote their individual, and by promoting their individual, to promote the national prosperity. The hon. member for West Toronto (Mr. Beaty) took, in my opinion, a somewhat questionable view of the political situation. He said that we were all perfectly contented, that there was no sectional difficulty, no feeling of annoyance, that the Tariff was no longer the Tariff of a party, but of the whole country. Did the hon. gentleman read the resolutions passed the other day at a large meeting in British Columbia, which is going to have its railway, it seems, but which nevertheless declares that the Tariff has been very injurious to that country, that it is a burden and not a benefit? Will the hon. gentleman invite, I do not say upon the floor of this House, but to a private conference, such of his colleagues as come from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, and discuss with

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them the effect and operation of this Tariff, and find what they have got to say about it,—about the feeling of their people, its effect upon their provinces, and its proximate effect upon the future of this whole Confederation, if some of its iniquities be not removed? After the hon. gentleman has had those opportunities which he may open to him during this Session, I venture to say he will not find himself able to revel any longer in that dream of universal happiness and contentment produced from one end of the country to the other by the Tariff which he adores. I hardly dare to hope—yet hope I will—that our discussions may be characterized by the spirit of caution and moderation which I have suggested, that it may not be proposed to-day, as some years ago it was proposed, to take advantage of this temporary tide of prosperity to plunge the country into permanent commitments which its average rate of progress will not permit. I hope, I say, that moderation may characterize our counsels, and that our decisions may be such as will redound to the honor and conduce to the advantage of the country whose interests are committed to our hands.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I must begin by congratulating my two hon. friends, the mover and seconder of this resolution, upon the able manner in which they have addressed this House—a manner which must have been pleasing to the House. I must also congratulate my hon. friend who has just taken his seat upon the vigorous manner in which he performed the duties of the rather forlorn position of leader of the Opposition in this House. He has spoken well and vigorously, but while we receive him and listen to him with pleasure as the leader of the great Liberal party, I must say that his practice, as shown by his conduct to-night, has not been that of a Reformer. Why he should return to the old-fashioned way of talking *de omnibus rebus*, and attempting to introduce into the Speech from the Throne a discussion upon every possible subject that can engage the attention of the House, I do not know. We have had coal and coal oil, the sugar duties, my Manchester speech, my hon. friend the Finance Minister's visit to Bowmanville, in fact every possible subject, with all sorts of suppositions and rumours, introduced into the debate. "It is rumored here;" "it is stated in the organ of gentlemen opposite, there;" and "we have heard so-and-so so frequently that it must be true." These rumours have formed the bases of the speech of the hon. gentleman, who, in consequence of his having accepted such rumours, has built up a series of card castles, which he will find 'ere the Session is closed, will fall to pieces. Sir, the hon. gentleman, though he had taken this course, cannot expect, and I am sure the House cannot expect, that we will follow him by taking up the several points to which he has addressed himself. The hon. gentleman has, however, attained his object. He has pleased the House on both sides. He has given us the opportunity of listening to an admirable and eloquent discussion of public affairs; and he has given great satisfaction, no doubt, to the gentlemen behind him. But I decline, for one, to be drawn into a debate upon any specific matter, until a bill, measure or resolution dealing with that subject is before the House. The practice in England, and in this country, which was adopted with the approbation of both sides of the House, is that in the formal acceptance of the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne such remarks as may occur to the leaders on both sides may be made, and the Address be then passed in order that we may place ourselves in a position to go on as early as possible with the work of the Session. What good can the dragging in of a discussion on the Tariff question, to-night, do? We have discussed it for two Sessions. Whether it is to be ultimately satisfactory to the country, is for the future to say. Its discussion to-night can answer no good object; and if we do not conclude its discussion to-night, we will in fact lose a day, and be prevented from entering as early as