

with reference to this policy—when I am now able to submit, after an experience of less than three years, its results—I trust that I will be able to convince them even that this policy has had much to do with bringing about the present state of affairs in this country. I regret, Sir, that I was not in the House either on Tuesday or yesterday afternoon (circumstances preventing my being present) to hear the speeches delivered by the hon. members for South Brant and Norfolk. I recollect, last year, that the hon. member for South Brant led up, as on the present occasion, a discussion of the policy of the Government, and the effect of the Tariff, in advance of the statement of the Budget Speech, and I called the hon. gentleman's attention, on that occasion, to the fact that it was not usual to pursue such a course. The hon. member told me we had been so long in bringing down the Budget, six weeks having elapsed, he could wait no longer; yet, on the present occasion, though not a fortnight had elapsed since the opening of Parliament, the hon. member was again to the front, anticipating, as on a former occasion, the discussion that usually takes place after the financial statement. Sir, he was followed yesterday by the hon. member for Norfolk on the fiscal policy of the Government. I could not help thinking that the hon. member for Centre Huron may, by-and-bye—when the time arrives so much hoped for by hon. gentlemen opposite, when the present Opposition shall change places with us—find some rivals for the position he formerly occupied; but the hon. members for South Brant and Norfolk—provided they adopt our policy, which, as I have stated on previous occasions, is the only course for them to pursue in order to get on this side of the House—will have the advantage of the hon. member for Centre Huron, because they can point to the emphatic, impressive and admirable speeches they delivered some three or four years ago in favour of a protective policy. Sir, the position of the Government when they introduced what is called the National Policy was a difficult one, because they had a difficult question to deal with. There was necessarily a great deal of speculation with respect to the effect of the adoption of that policy, even in the minds of some of its friends and advocates. There was a question in their minds, as well as in the minds of hon. gentlemen opposite, whether, if it proved to be a protective policy, we would obtain sufficient revenue;