

with the matter we had to consider vested interests, because many contracts had been made in view of the tariff and rebate complained of. The proposition which we made is before the public. We proposed that at the close of navigation the alleged grievance should be removed if the concession which we considered as its counterpoise in the treaty of Washington were made on the other side. That, unfortunately, was not acceded to. The hon. gentleman says that we should immediately have withdrawn. I think that good faith to our own people, at least, justified us in asking that any action towards a change in the tolls and rebate should be postponed until the season of navigation which had then commenced had closed, and I think the hon. gentleman will not find, when the correspondence comes down, that the attitude of Canada upon that subject has been unreasonable, or such as the hon. gentleman suspected it was, unfriendly towards the neighbouring Government. Now, Sir, the hon. gentleman will remember that this subject of the canal tolls and the mutual privileges accorded to the citizens of either country in the canals in the other country, is not by any means a new thing. It was as fully discussed when the hon. gentleman's friends were in power as it has been by us, and the expressions which appear on the public records then are no more favourable to the United States' contention than our own have been. The hon. gentleman's own Government felt called upon, time after time, to remonstrate with the United States Government upon the ground that American citizens were getting privileges in the Canadian canals, while the use of the United States and the state canals was practically refused them, or extended to them under restrictions which absolutely prevented their being of any benefit whatever to the Canadian people. While it was professed that a Canadian had the right to enter a state canal, he was met immediately by a customs regulation which declared that he should debark his cargo before he entered that canal. The treatment of Canada by the United States with regard to the canal question was felt to be just as unreasonable then as it has been since, and was just as strongly remonstrated against by the associates of hon. gentlemen who condemn us now for not giving way as soon as the concession was asked for. The hon. gentleman made a number of allusions to subjects which are not in the Speech from the Throne. I am exceedingly sorry that we could not afford the hon. gentleman ample room for criticism, ample room, even, for the enlarged gift of imagination which the hon. gentleman has exhibited this afternoon. But I am glad the hon. gentleman has made the allusion he did to subjects which are not mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. I really cannot believe it possible that the hon. gentleman, coming from the province of Quebec, passed through the city of Montreal and saw

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with his eyes the Prohibition Commission at work there, and came to Ottawa to look for its existence in the Speech from the Throne. Sir, I doubt very much indeed that the hon. gentleman was at all surprised to see that another commission, which he mentioned, was not referred to in the Speech from the Throne, when he knew that the labours of that commission had been concluded, that the commissioners had discharged the duty assigned to them under an order of this House, and when he knew that as a matter of law and ordinary practice, the report of the commission would be immediately brought down. I fancy the hon. gentleman was aware that the report simply awaited the meeting of the House in order to be laid upon the Table of the House. I shall not follow the hon. gentleman in his allusion to the report upon the question which has arisen in Manitoba, because at a very early date, I am sure, we shall have an opportunity to discuss that question more at length and with more satisfaction than we can, in the absence of the papers, and when it is not directly before the House. Therefore, I will not, at the present moment venture to express at length my dissent from the hon. gentleman's views as regards the treatment of that question by a sub-committee of the Privy Council. I am not at all in sympathy with his view that any want of courtesy was shown to the House of Commons by giving the report of the sub-committee to the press. We shall be prepared to defend that report and the principles on which it is founded when it is brought here, or when it forms the subject of discussion here, whether that discussion shall arise before it is brought down or afterwards. But I think the House must have been surprised at the unusual criticism and the unusual policy adopted by the hon. gentleman as leader of the Opposition, when he referred to the fact that there was no mention of tariff changes in the Speech from the Throne. My recollection may be very much at fault indeed, but I shall be surprised if the hon. gentleman is able to point to more than one, or two, or three occasions, in which tariff changes have been announced in the Speech from the Throne, during the twenty-six years of the existence of this Parliament. I think it would be singularly unfortunate that the Government, two months before tariff changes could possibly be made in the ordinary course of the business of Parliament, two months before they could go into effect, should indicate to the people of this country that they were going to make important changes in this or that item of the tariff. At any rate, I think that the hon. gentleman will find no precedent in this country for the motion which he has made, and I doubt very much if he will find any precedent for it in any other country. While tariff changes were announced at the time when the present fiscal policy was established in 1879, they were announced in a manner which