

Sir John Macdonald and Sir John Abbott, died when they had finished their work. Unfortunately, Sir John Thompson died when he was only commencing his work, and I may say that the country has suffered a very great loss indeed in the sudden and untimely death of our late premier. It was a tragic death. He died at the feet of Her Majesty, and it brought prominently, not only before the people of Canada and the British empire, but before the people of the world, the close connection existing between this great country, the rest of the British empire and the sovereign; and I trust that the sympathy that was exhibited towards the late premier of Canada will bear just fruits in cementing more firmly that unity which should exist, that friendship that should prevail between the various colonies of the British empire and the heart of the empire itself. I regret, very much from a personal standpoint, the death of our late colleague, Mr. Tassé. He was, from the first, a friend of my own, and I shall miss him from this honourable House very much indeed.

The next subject that we are called upon to discuss in the debate upon this address is the question of the French treaty. Hon. gentlemen will recollect that last year I gave a considerable amount of criticism to the French treaty when it was before this House, and I think from the evidence that we have here in the Speech from the Throne, that that criticism was well-timed and just. I see that it is necessary to introduce legislation in order to make more clear the terms upon which the French treaty has been passed between France and Canada. The point that I made last year myself was that in giving France the right of entry into Canada at a certain rate of duty, we would open the door to all those countries to which Great Britain and Canada in so far as she is included in the treaties grants most favoured-nation treatment, but not necessarily to our sister colonies. It had that peculiar anomaly, and it is necessary to bring legislation down, as notified in the speech from the Throne, in order to give effect to the French treaty and make it perfectly clear that our sister colonies shall enjoy the same favoured terms as France in this country. All those nations that come under the Imperial clauses in most favored nation treatment will have exactly the same advantages. I pointed this out last year, and as the subject will

come before this honourable House when that legislation is brought down, we will have a further opportunity of discussing the question when we know exactly the terms of the legislation which we will be called upon to express our views.

The next clause in the address is :

We are pleased to be informed by Your Excellency that the recent action of the Imperial Parliament enabling the various Australasian Governments to enter into preferential trade relations with the other self-governing colonies of the empire, affords gratifying proof that the suggestions of the Colonial Conference are being favourably entertained by Her Majesty's Government.

Now, I feel that the conference that we had here last year has been, and will be in the future, productive of good results. The legislation here referred to is legislation which interferes with imperial legislation and interferes with the Australian colonies themselves—the various provinces that compose the Australian colonies from applying the principle of tariffs such as we have had in Canada—that is to say one province in the continent of Australia could not enter into a trade arrangement with another province. Great Britain was to have exactly the same treatment, and it is to remove that obstacle that imperial legislation is sought for. The present government is directing its policy towards increasing our trade relations with the Australian continent, the Cape of Good Hope and the other self-governing colonies of the Empire. It is doing that on the principle of reciprocity I have no doubt—I do not see how they could do it in any other shape. They propose to have a preferential arrangement in favour of one another as against the rest of the world. That is the only way I can interpret the policy now proposed by the present government. I would warn the hon. leader of the government of this, that as sure as we go on educating the self-governing colonies in the principles of protection, such as we have in force at the present moment in Canada, we may expect, when they are so educated, they will protect themselves and not do anything that is likely to help Canada at their expense. The same way with the people of Great Britain. If the people of Great Britain should be led, under adverse circumstances, by principles which may be enunciated here, to abandon free trade, which has governed them for the last 50 years, and to adopt the principle of protection, it will be for the