

S P E E C H

DELIVERED BY

MR. E. M. MACDONALD, M.P.

Pictou, N.S.

—ON—

Administration of Timber Lands by Liberal Government **In the House of Commons. May 19th, 1908.**

The following is the speech of Mr. E. M. Macdonald, of Pictou, N. S., delivered in the House of Commons on 19th May, 1908, on the subject of timber administration by the Liberal Government. It is a comprehensive and logical presentation of facts, and contains not only a pitiless arraignment of the Conservatives for dropping the investigation and refusing to hear conclusive evidence, but it also includes a complete refutation of every allegation made, and demonstrates clearly that Liberal administration of timber lands has been characterized by integrity and prudence.

RESURRECTED DEAD ISSUE.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD (Pictou).—I am sure that every member of this House, with the exception of one or two who affect to take special interest in this matter, must have come to the conclusion that the attempt to discuss this question at the present stage of the session is nothing more than an attempt to resurrect an absolutely dead proposition. Ever since this matter was discussed in January and February the universal verdict of the House and the country was that the masterly addresses of the Minister of Interior and of the ex-Minister of the Interior, had entirely disposed of the whole question.

Mr. LANCASTER.—How was this verdict unanimous? Was there not a vote?

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD.—Well, my hon. friend sometimes votes differently from what he thinks.

Mr. LANCASTER.—If this hon. gentleman is joking I don't mind that, but if he means it seriously, he will have to take it back.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD.—My hon. friend is not serious if he concludes that there are many members on his side of the House who have not arrived at this conclusion long ere this that nothing in the shape of a serious argument has been brought forward to-day. Now, Mr. Speaker, following that discussion at that period of the session we had an investigation before the Public Accounts Committee of these fantastic theories and these unnatural insinuations. That investigation went to the point that the hon. member for Montreal, St. Antoine, became almost hysterical in his desire to have it stopped. The hon. member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Lake), who has just sat down, in alluding to me as having acted for the government before that committee, made a reference that was entirely unwarranted.

TORIES STOPPED INVESTIGATION.

His colleague, the hon. member for St. Antoine, took advantage of the fact that I, as a humble member of that committee, happened to be out of the committee one day to move that all proceedings should be closed and reported to the House when he himself had four or five witnesses subpoenaed who were still outstanding and whose evidence had not been taken. I leave it to the hon. member for Lincoln (Mr. Lancaster) whether or not in his experience in legal matters or in investigations of any kind it is usual that the gentleman who is initiating the proceedings, who is acting for the plaintiff, who is given every opportunity in the way of documents and evidence, asks that the proceeding be terminated in such a way.

Mr. LANCASTER.—Since the hon. gentleman has appealed to me, we all know that the hon. member for St. Antoine could not discuss the matter in the House until a report was made by the committee. I think the hon. member for Pictou (Mr. Macdonald) knows that that was his sole and only reason for wanting the matter closed. It was that it could be debated on the floor of the House. We all understand that anyway.

Mr. E. M. MACDONALD.—My hon. friend is very ingenious. He is always ingenious. What I thought that the hon. member for St. Antoine wanted was not to have a discussion in the House, but was to have an investigation and when he had an opportunity of having an investigation he tried to stop it.