

relations of the two countries, should have marked the speech of the leader of the Government. What does he say here? He says:—

"Well, we cannot accept the advice of the hon. gentleman; we cannot admit that we are wrong, because we have not been in the wrong; and what is still more remarkable, all he has to do, while advising us to admit that we are wrong, is to look at the treaty made last year with the United States, and he will find in it that the President of the United States, and the commissioners appointed by that president, and the gentlemen who signed that treaty, admit that every one of the pretensions of Canada, every one of the arguments used by Canada, every one of the positions taken by Canada, were just and right. Without one single exception, that treaty admits that all our pretensions, and all the course we have taken under the Convention of 1888, were justified by their acceptance of the *modus vivendi*."

Sir, a more audacious statement or one more inconsistent with the facts never was made in Parliament or out of it. The hon. gentleman knows that so far from the contentions of the Government having been acceded to, they surrendered every contention they made. I read to the House to-night the contentions the Minister of Justice made and Minister of Finance made, the contentions endorsed by the minute of Council which the Government sent home to the Imperial Government; I told you what they did in 1886 with regard to the practical working out of those contentions; and in the treaty everyone of those contentions was surrendered. The hon. gentlemen did not pretend to say when they came down and asked us to agree to the treaty, that the construction they had put on the Treaty of 1818 was to be carried out in the new treaty. No, Sir, but the right hon. gentleman when he spoke the other evening went on to make still more clear what he meant:

"Canada has never set up a pretension under the Convention of 1818, that the Americans have not now finally admitted; Canada has never exceeded her rights and her claims under that convention, and I defy hon. gentlemen to point out one instance in which Canada can be obnoxious to that charge."

Well, Sir, I was astonished. I remember a year ago, when the Finance Minister, speaking as the mouthpiece of the Government on the floor of the House, and recommending that that treaty of his should be accepted by the House and the country, declared that he was bound to say that in negotiating that treaty he could not hold by the contentions which the junior Ministers of the Government had put forward. He said he would have been criminal if he had resisted the application of the United States Government for a modification of those contentions. He told us that the Treaty of 1818 was marked all through by concessions on our part from what he had contended for before, but that it was proper and right, and the only way of arriving at a satisfactory solution. I do not want to exaggerate one word of the language that the hon. gentleman used. I will read what he said and then hon. gentlemen can see how much ground there was for the proud boast the leader of the Government made the other day that every practical contention his Government had made with respect to the Treaty of 1818 had been yielded by the United States Government. Sir Charles Tupper, said:

"Our concessions did not stop there. I am quite ready to admit, and I think it might as well be stated in the outset, that the Canadian Government would find it, I would find it, quite as difficult as our friends the plenipotentiaries of the United States would find it, to justify this treaty if it was to be examined in the light of the extreme contentions maintained on both sides previously. I need not inform the House that in diplomatic intercourse it is customary, it is right for the representatives of a Government to state the strongest and most advanced ground that they possibly can sustain in relation to every question, and I would not like, I confess, to be tried before the House by the ground taken by my hon. friend the Minister of Justice and by the Minister of Marine and Fisheries."

And yet in the face of the language of his own plenipotentiary, the right hon. the leader of the Government states that we made no concessions, but that the Americans yielded every contention that we had made. Sir Charles Tupper went on:

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"Looking at the question in that broad and national spirit, looking at it with a desire to remove the possibility of what I consider would be the greatest misfortune that could happen to the civilised world, a collision between the two great English-speaking nations, looking at it from that broad standpoint, it would have been criminal on my part and on the part of those who represented Her Majesty's Government and the interests of the people of Canada if they had by making fair and reasonable concessions, not endeavored, to find a common ground that would present a solution of those important and serious questions."

We find, therefore, that so far from the hon. gentleman's boastful statement being agreeable to the fact, it is at direct variance with the fact as stated by his own Finance Minister, the man who framed the treaty, and who ought to know something about it. Their contentions were blown to the winds by the treaty the hon. gentleman agreed to and asked this House to agree to. They yielded up to the Americans at the point of the bayonet concession after concession, right after right, which they had declared to be necessary to the maintenance of our fishery interests. I told them then, as I tell them now, that I did not condemn those concessions so much in themselves, but I condemned the men who made them. The right hon. gentleman the other day pointed across the House to me, saying that I had condemned the concessions made by the Government in that treaty. His words were:

"How justly was his appreciation of the situation we can now see, because even limited as it was, reasonable as that treaty was, so reasonable that the hon. member for Queen's, P.E.I. (Mr. Davies), denounced it as an unworthy concession made by Sir Charles Tupper, on behalf of Canada—

"An hon. MEMBER. No.

"Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Read the hon. gentleman's own speech and you will see. He denounced the unworthy concessions that were made then."

I did not denounce as unworthy the concessions in themselves, but I denounced the men who made them as unworthy. It is not pleasant to quote one's own speech, but when my statement has been challenged in this way, I shall be pardoned if I refer for a moment to what I did say. I pointed out that the concessions made were concessions on points which the Minister of Marine and the Minister of Justice had declared to be vital points, and necessary for the maintenance of Canadian interest, that any surrender of them would be an ignoble surrender, and that the people of Canada would call seriously to account the men who made any of those concessions; and I said it did not become the men who made any of those concessions, after having used the language they had used in the previous year, to come down and recommend the House to accept them. If the concessions had been made voluntary, Canada would have reaped great advantage, but made as they were they might in themselves be right, but they throw discredit upon the men who made them. The language I made use of then was this:

"I am not, just for the moment, contending that these concessions are unjust in themselves, but I am contending that the men who declared a year ago that they were unjust, and that they could not possibly concede them, and that the concession of them would prove ruinous to Canada, stand to-day in a position the most unenviable that any statesmen can possibly occupy, when they ask us now to accept this treaty, which concedes everything which they said before could not possibly be conceded because it would be ruinous. They should step down and let other men make the concessions."

Further on I remarked:

"If we had voluntarily ceded to them these concessions which have been wrung from us under this treaty we would to-day be standing in a proud position."

So the hon. gentleman will see he was entirely wrong in stating that I had condemned the concessions in this House. I did not. I condemned the men who made them, and the manner in which they were made. What was the object of the *modus vivendi*? Does that object still exist? After the treaty had been concluded between the plenipotentiaries of both countries, they agreed upon a *modus vivendi*. The offer was made by the Imperial plenipotentiaries to the United States plenipotentiaries for the purpose of finding