

I was saying is this, that Mr. Laurier enunciated certain views at London, Canada, where he pointed out the great advantage that preferential trade would be to Canada, and at the very moment he set his foot on English soil he denounced the policy of preferential trade, declaring that Canada did not want it. I have occupied more time than I intended on 'his point. There are one or two others, nowever, to which I desire to call the attention of the House before I sit down. I notice in the address a reference to the giving of contracts by which the sweating system is to be abolished. I confess I am at a loss to understand what that means. Am I to understand that in giving out contracts for the manufacturing of articles for the government, that there is a clause in the contract instructing the contractor whom he shall employ, how many hours the workmen shall be employed and the wages they shall receive? We all know that the sweating system in manufacturing centres, both in the United States and Europe, is vicious in principle. How has that been adopted here? When did we hear of this before except through the press? And why is it of such importance that a reference to it is put in the Governor General's mouth in opening parliament? Now, I have it from the best authority that in some manufacturing establishments in Canada which have received contracts lately for the manufacture of police and militia clothing, and other things, there is no such restriction—that the contractors can employ women at all hours, make the girls work for starvation wages, and carry out in fact and in practice, that which is denounced as the sweating system. Am I correct in this, or does my hon. friend know, or is it one of those little dodges to get a little cheap popularity? We had announced in flaming letters during the Centre Toronto election that the foreign postage was reduced from five to three cents. Well, there was another evidence that those who were administering the affairs of the country had as little knowledge of what was contained in the Berne Postal Convention, as the Finance Minister and all the ministers of that day, had as to what would be the effect of the German and Belgian treaties upon the preferential tariff. It turned out that they knew nothing about it, until they announced the fact, and their attention was called to it by the Colonial

Secretary informing them they had no power; and then they had to do in that as in the preferential trade—back down most ignominiously. Is this sweating paragraph of a similar character? If not, I shall be glad to know what it means. But we have heard a great deal about paternal government. My hon. friend opposite has a dislike to paternal government. He thinks we have no right to interfere with the manner in which people should carry on their business. But here is a system without the warrant of law, as far as I know, I know of no law which justifies interference by the government with any man's manner of carrying on his business. There is, however, one important paragraph which reads as follows:

The extraordinary gold discoveries recently made upon the Yukon and its tributaries, appear likely to result in an enormous influx of people into that region, and we are glad to hear that the government has taken prompt action for the preservation of law and order in that distant and almost inaccessible locality; and we assure His Excellency that any measures laid before us for that purpose—

What those measures are it is impossible to tell, but any one who reads this paragraph will come to the conclusion that the present government were entitled to all the credit for taking steps to preserve peace and order in that country. It is on a par with most of their other professions. Before I left the late government and while I was president of the Privy Council and had the police force under my control, I took steps to send the first contingent of police into that country to preserve law and order, and looking at what might possibly occur, we took those steps for which the present government now claim credit and consider it of sufficient importance to put it into the Governor's speech. They have, it is true, gone a little further. They have sent an additional force of police to preserve law and order. How far that law and order will be preserved, with their gold regulations to be enforced, remains to be seen in the future, but they are not very likely to preserve law and order if the denunciation of the Liberal press in the North-west Territories and in British Columbia are to be taken as an index of the feeling of the people.

Hon. Mr. MILLS—Does my hon. friend object to those regulations?

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—I will tell my hon. friend when that