

just as well as the Minister of Finance does what a complex thing this making of tariffs is. He travels around the country, just as I did in 1893, and we listen to manufacturers, and farmers and labouring men, and we think we are becoming awfully wise. We get long papers sent into us, and what does the Minister of Finance do with them? Well, he does with them the same as we did; there is a little hazy recollection as to the general view taken, but outside of that there is very little else. And when they come—just as the Minister of Finance, and the Minister of Customs did—to frame a tariff they do it by rule of thumb, or worse, and if they are honest enough they will say so. That is not the way a tariff should be framed, but that is the way a tariff will be framed until we have the body of information that is necessary to put us on a fair and scientific footing. That is why I favour a tariff commission. My friends opposite are very fond just now of admiring the United States; let them admire it a little in useful ways, and let them have a tariff board as the United States has. When they met you two gentlemen down in Washington they had the most elaborate tables of information that were ever got together by any government. When you went there you had nothing, absolutely nothing that was fit to cope with it, and you have not much more to this day. If you had it what right have you to keep it from parliament? We have asked you for it and demanded it, but you have not given it. You have looked wise and you were wise because you had not the goods to deliver, and you had not the goods in Washington, and so all you can do is look wise. But in that, our friendly opponents in Washington had the advantage of you, and that is an absolute proof of the necessity for a tariff board. Now, I have given you my views and there is more in them than at first appears, but at all events they are worth thinking over. The thing which it is almost impossible to keep in the mind of a practical legislator is that he is not dealing with his own money, or the party's money, but the people's money and that he ought not to make one single expenditure of the peoples' money that he would not as a trustee make for an estate which he had in his hands. That is a fair assumption. But, on both sides, we have been going on with the idea that the money we get into the public treasury is to be used for party advantage. What did the Minister of Railways boldly say the other night? He said: If I have advertising to give or supplies to buy, I will deal with a friend of the party. Reason that out, and put it into a general proposition, and it means that the money of this country is for the party and the government to do what it likes with: doing fairly well if possible by

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the country, but taking mighty good care always to help the party. I tell these gentlemen that this kind of expenditure will be the death of their government if they do not curb extravagance, and wastefulness, and expenditure made without warrant of any kind. In the matter of transport, you will get somewhere when you co-ordinate all your efforts in a uniform and systematic development of the trade routes of this country. Do you mean to tell me that anything like a Newmarket canal would ever have got a dollar of money from this parliament if it had to be reported upon by some such body as that to which I have referred; never in the world. Do you mean to say that the Port Colborne business would have gone on with an expenditure of now more than \$2,000,000, and a practical admission by the Minister of Railways last year that it was not going to be of very much use anyway. Sir, there is from one end of this country to the other a steady malversation of the public funds, a using of them where they ought never to be used, and a sad lack of check on extravagant expenditure. I do not see any other way to remedy it than to call to our assistance the best and strongest men, put them upon the work, and say to them: That is your business; leave politics alone, never mind whether one man is hurt or another hurt, your duty is to make an absolutely exhaustive examination, to make an honest and fair report. Such information would give us something to go upon whether we be a minister, or a government, or a parliament. I had intended to say something about the still wider subject of the conservation of the resources of this country, and I would have treated it on the same lines.

Mr. PATERSON. Take it up after six o'clock.

Mr. FOSTER. Whether you call it a conservation commission or not, it should be composed of the very highest and most resourceful body of men we can get in this country, men who would sit up higher than partisanship, higher than sectionalism, and who would have under advisement and under their constant supervision all the great resources of this country: Our lands, our forest, our fisheries, our mines, and our running waters, and who would use every resource of science and every exertion of human endeavour to give us adequate tabulation of them, the best plan of administering them, the best methods of renovating and rejuvenating them. Thus would they help us to keep for this country, protected from waste and safe from exhaustion, these great natural resources, which, if they are fostered and cared for, will make us a great nation and for long centuries, but the dissipation of which will be one reason why