

upon the localities they visited. I trust that at an early date the Minister will lay these reports upon the Table of the House.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. Mr. Speaker, in the ordinary course I would have asked that this motion should stand for to-day, but I presumed that the hon. gentleman wished to make some observations upon it, and, for that reason, I thought it was more courteous to him that the House should hear him. I ask him now not to press the motion for adoption to-day. The reports of these farmer delegates, which he referred to, are not in Canada, and the Government has really no information as to what they contain. The report of Mr. Davey has never been in Canada and has never been submitted to the Government, the other report was in Canada under circumstances which the House debated the other evening, but both reports have been telegraphed for and they will probably be here within a few days. If the hon. gentleman, therefore, will let his motion stand until the reports arrive, I have no objection at all that the matter should then be taken up in advance of any other business. And we will consent at once to the motion being carried, provided we have no good reason to the contrary.

Mr. McMILLAN (Huron). Can the Minister give any idea when the reports will be here?

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. Within the next week or ten days, perhaps. Unless I can give some reason to the House to the contrary, and I have no cause to anticipate any reason to that effect, the reports will be brought down at once when they arrive; but we would prefer to have an opportunity of seeing them before the Order carries. If the hon. gentleman will allow his motion to stand, it will meet the case, but failing that, I will move that the debate be adjourned.

Mr. LAURIER. Could not the motion be carried now?

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. I do not want to be put in the position of disobeying the Order of the House and not have an opportunity of giving reasons.

Mr. LAURIER. I am sure the hon. gentleman would not disobey the Order of the House, but I am sure also that if he did, he would communicate his reasons to the House. I can see no reason at all why these reports should not be before the House whatever may be their contents. They are the reports of gentlemen who were selected by Sir Charles Tupper on behalf of the Canadian Government. They are men of position, they visited this country, and whether their opinions be right or wrong, it seems to me there can be no reason why they should not be laid on the Table of this House.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. There is no reason that I am aware of at all. I merely ask an opportunity to see the reports in order to ascertain if there be any reason. If any reason exists, that will be submitted to the House, but otherwise the reports will be laid on the Table immediately. If the motion for the Order should carry now I would have no opportunity of making explanations to the House.

Mr. LAURIER. Very well.

Mr. CASEY. The Minister of Justice objects to the motion passing now, because some reason

Mr. McMILLAN (Huron).

may occur to him, after seeing the reports, why they should not be submitted to the House. No constitutional reason can exist why these reports shall not be submitted to the House.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. In that case they will be brought down.

Mr. CASEY. In that case, if the Minister admits my contention that there can be no constitutional reason against producing them, there is no reason on earth why he should not let the motion pass now.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. I cannot admit it in advance.

Mr. CASEY. The general principle is that any document, not a confidential state paper, which this House orders to be produced, must be produced. The House has a perfect right to order the production of these reports, especially when we have paid for them by a vote of the House. The Minister knows well there can be no constitutional reason for not producing them. It may be that the Government after seeing the report may think they are prejudicial to their trade policy. Even should that be so, it is no reason why they should not be brought down. It is evidently for that reason the motion is denied now, in spite of the peculiar roundabout way in which the Minister has chosen to come at the point, a way quite consistent with his ordinary method of handling such questions. Evidently that report, as the Minister says, was before the Government at one time, and was sent back, and not treated as it should have been. The whole treatment of these delegates has been detrimental to the immigration interests of Canada at large. In the first place the Government showed they were afraid to let them see for themselves how things were in the Maritime Provinces. They were afraid to trust them in the hands of the Local Government, and they sent down a man or a delegation from Ottawa to take them in charge. But after they had done so, after the delegates had seen what the Government wished them to see, after they had stated their opinions, the Government were afraid to allow them to be made public, and their reports have been suppressed. Now, this in the first place was distinctly unfair to the Maritime Provinces. There is no doubt whatever that those reports contain a great deal that is favourable to the Maritime Provinces. Those delegates could not look over the Maritime Provinces without reporting very favourably upon their natural resources, and it is distinctly unfair to the people of those provinces that this favourable report should not be laid before the people of Canada and the people of Great Britain. Representatives of those provinces, if they have any vestige of provincial feeling, or any notion of protecting the interests of their provinces, should protest against the suppression of this report. It is also unfair to the whole of Canada. Here are a number of delegates who have been sent out to report upon the capabilities of this country, and whose expenses have been paid by this country. A certain number of them have been allowed to report; another certain number have not been allowed to report, and it has been admitted that those two delegates were prevented from reporting because they chose to pass reflections upon the trade policy of the Government. Now, Sir, what is the impression that will go abroad in Great Britain in regard to the reports which have been