

the United States to the seaboard. What seaboard, may I ask? The nearest and the cheapest, that is, the St. Lawrence river. Whoever has the control of any railroad will administer it for the benefit of his company, in order to make it yield the best returns possible. In my opinion, in the matter of transportation, geography is altogether in favour of Canada; and far from frowning upon the investment of American capital seeking investment in these industries, I altogether welcome it.

I have only one more thing to say. My hon. friend anticipated a discussion on the tariff. My hon. friend knows that it is not the rule, nor is it good parliamentary tactics, to call for a discussion of the tariff on the address. We shall await that in the budget speech, and there is no occasion for anticipating it. When we bring down the tariff, my hon. friend will find a united party against him. Until that time, therefore, I think it well to reserve any comments on this subject.

I will only say, in conclusion, that the government have no great measures to introduce to the House. It is our intention, if possible, to have a short session; and in that I believe we shall serve the wishes of hon. members not only on this side of the House, but even of my hon. friend himself and his friends behind him.

Mr. F. D. MONK (Jacques Cartier). Mr. Speaker, I really believe that it is as much in the interest of gentlemen who sit on the treasury benches as of ourselves that some slight effort should be made on this side of the House to dispel the strange illusions of which my right hon. friend has just given evidence, and the cause of which, I regret to say, is to be sought for largely in the enormous and fulsome measure of praise given to this Speech from the Throne by my good friend the hon. member for West York (Mr. Campbell). But a moment ago my right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) claimed that he and his colleagues were the special instruments of Divine Providence in this country, and that any one who had any fault to find with the Speech from the Throne must necessarily be suffering from nervous prostration or a bad digestion. At the risk of dispelling this happy illusion on the part of my hon. friend, I can not refrain from pointing out the ghastly weariness of the ministerial programme. Even my hon. friend the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Fisher), the champion census taker of the world, who, like George IV., appears confirmed in the belief that he has been the leader in every important event since the dawn of history, would hardly care to assume the paternity of so insignificant a production as this Speech from the Throne. On each and every one of the important questions which this country is called on to solve, this speech is remarkable for its silence.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER.

One of the most important questions is that of transportation. Why have we not some statement from the government as to what definite policy it has formed upon this subject. Allow me to refer to a document from my hon. friend the Minister of Public Works (Hon. Mr. Tarte), who, though he is not my enemy, has written a book, or rather an article, signed with his own name. In this article he points out clearly the duty of the present hour; and at the risk of taking up a little time, but in order to justify the reproach which I make the government, let me quote a few words from that article published by the hon. Minister in his organ at Montreal, over his own signature. It is entitled: "What I would do if I were a member of Parliament." And in thus quoting the Minister of Public Works,—who evidently looks upon himself as a sort of Jekyll-Hyde in politics, to be dreaded as a minister and relied upon as an ordinary member—I am doing a service to the man by pointing out the laches of the minister.

'What I would do if I were a member of parliament. I would buy to-day the very best geographical map of Canada.' Have these gentlemen done so? Is it not possible for them to procure a map of this country? From a mere inspection of that map it will become evident to them that they have grossly neglected their duty by not announcing this session, at the very commencement, that they are determined to take some steps for the practical solution of this question and to save us from the destruction of our own trade which, indirectly, our neighbours to the south of us with energy, with strength, with pluck, which are deserving of all admiration, are gradually taking away from us. Well, after having, very properly, I think, suggested pointedly the purchase of a map as necessary for a beginning for these gentlemen, he continues: 'I would in the second place study fully, study maturely, the question of the means of transportation.' Have they done so? Not at all. There is not one of these gentlemen able to rise in the House to-day and tell us that he has studied this question, or to tell us what is the policy of the government which they will attempt to carry out courageously. 'I would,' says the article, 'make of this question my question, the important question.' That is right. It is for each and every one of us, from one end of Canada to the other, the important question of them all. 'The session,' continues the article, 'is approaching,' but what is the use of the session, if these hon. gentlemen have no scheme to lay before us; if they are afraid to tell us what is the policy of the government in regard to the question of transportation and help each of us, on whatever side of the House he may sit, to apply himself to the carrying out of some practical solution of this question. But, let my hon. friends listen to