

may not be out of place to remind this House that even during the years of plenty, when we enjoyed not only reciprocal trade but the exceptional advantages to which I have just alluded; even during these years of plenty came the horribly lean year of 1857. There are probably some gentlemen present in this House who will remember the distress which prevailed during that year. I hope I will not be understood as imputing for one moment to the reciprocity treaty of that day the evils and misfortunes of the year 1857. I refer to that sadly memorable year in order to show that a reciprocity treaty is not a sovereign remedy against all the depression which may prevail in the country, and I merely wish to point out even among years of plenty under a reciprocity treaty, we had a year of terrible distress. Now, Sir, without referring longer to this question of unrestricted reciprocity, I pass on and call the attention of the House to the notice taken by His Excellency of the appointment of a commission in order to investigate the working of the Civil Service Act. That is a matter upon which I am sure the members of this House, Opposition as well as Government supporters, will unite in praise of the policy of the Government. It must surely be a matter of congratulation to all the people of this country, apart from their political convictions, that at a time when weaknesses were discovered in the Civil Service the Government saw fit to appoint a commission such as that referred to by His Excellency, composed of able men, to investigate the evils existing in the Civil Service, and to point out a remedy. I am sure that not only in this House, but throughout the length and breadth of this land, when the *personnel* of that commission is known, composed as it is, of men whose names are household words throughout the Dominion, I am sure that the names of the gentlemen composing that commission are at once a guarantee of the sincerity of the Government in appointing the commission, and of the completeness and accuracy of the manner in which the work of that commission will be performed. In due time the report of that commission will, I have no doubt, be laid before the House, and then all the members, Conservatives and Reformers alike, can agree in doing all that the commission proposes, or that their individual experience may suggest, to perfect the working of our Civil Service, in order if possible to avoid any friction or difficulties and any such unpleasantnesses as have occurred in the past. His Excellency also calls to the attention of the House "that the fishery regulations of British Columbia should be examined and revised so as to adapt them better to the requirements of the fisheries of that province," and he points out that a commission has been appointed with that object in view. It may be necessary only to remind the House that the fish in that part of the country are of a different character altogether from those in our eastern waters; and owing to the peculiar habits of the fish in that country it has been found, by experience, that the practical working of these laws which are suitable and proper in the east are unsuitable and unsatisfactory in the Pacific province. The fish of British Columbia are, I believe, not a sporting fish. They are a fish that flock in great numbers up the mouths of the rivers, and they differ in many respects from the fish in the eastern provinces. Therefore, the Government, profiting by the experience of the past,

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have decided to issue a commission to draw up regulations which will apply as well to the fish of the east as to the fish of the west. No doubt this commission will report during the present Session of Parliament. The attention of the House will also be directed to "measures for the redistribution of seats consequent upon the census returns, the establishment of the boundaries of the territories, and the amalgamation of the departments of Marine and Fisheries." It is necessary under our law that since the census was taken last year, there should be a redistribution of seats. I am sure that the members of this House will uphold the Government in an honest attempt to so carry out the law of this country as to apply the altered conditions which have arisen under the census requirements, to the law of the land, so as to obtain as honest and reasonable a system of representation as can be devised by honest men. The establishment of the boundaries of the territories is a matter, which, like the establishment of the boundary of Alaska, is properly taken up by the Government at the present time. The territories referred to are those beyond the North-West Territories, the boundaries of which latter are already provided for by law. The amalgamation of the Department of Marine and Fisheries is another change which is the result of experience. Formerly the departments were one and the same, but some years ago it was decided, while retaining one Minister in charge of the whole, to appoint two deputy heads. As a matter of practical experience it has been found that the working out of this system of having a double-headed deputy was not satisfactory, and the Government, willing, as they always are, to adapt our laws to the requirements of this country, are ready to profit by experience, and to give to the people of this country the benefit of the special knowledge they obtain. They now come candidly forward and propose to return to the old system, simply because by experience it has been found more satisfactory than the new one. His Excellency also states, "that a Bill will also be presented for the amendment of the Act relating to real property in the territories." The House, no doubt, is aware that in the territories the Torrens system has already been introduced, and however difficult it might be to introduce that system into an old settled country such as the Province of Ontario, I am sure that all will agree that it is desirable that in a new country, everything possible should be done to facilitate an inexpensive and easy transfer of real estate. In our own Province of Ontario, it has been found in the interests of the community, that the transfer of real estate should be as nearly as possible approximated to that of the transfer of personal property, and from year to year laws are framed in that province with a view to obtaining this desirable end. I believe that the members of this House will approve of the action of the Government in taking steps in the early history of these territories to see that the laws regulating real estate are settled on a satisfactory basis. Now, Sir, I am sure that the members of this House, on whichever side they may sit, will agree that there is a variety of topics suggested by the Speech from the Throne, sufficient to occupy this House in legislation during a session of ordinary length. I am sure that the members of this House, and especially those, who, during last summer, sweltered