

all. In looking at the way in which this business has been conducted, we are obliged to consider what has been the conduct of the Government of Canada with regard to its relations to the United States. The Government have told us, through the mouth of His Excellency, that they have caused the Administration of the United States to be reminded of the willingness of the Government of Canada to join in making efforts for the extension and development of the trade between the American Republic and the Dominion. That is a most extraordinary statement. It will sound very extraordinary, indeed, in the minds and the ears of those who have paid the slightest attention to the conduct and policy of this Government during the last five years. What has been their course ever since 1885? I am not going to enter to-night into a discussion of the technical merits of their conduct in respect of the fisheries, but I have to say that, whether that conduct was right or wrong, if they had any desire or the slightest hope or intention of making any friendly reciprocity with the United States, their conduct in 1886 was ill-advised to a degree. We know, from the testimony of their own colleagues and the Ministers themselves, that it had the effect of exciting and annoying the whole people of the United States to an extreme degree. It had the effect, according to Sir Charles Tupper himself, of bringing us to the verge of non-intercourse with the United States—of bringing us within a few hours of commercial war with that country. And one would have thought that the knowledge that Canada had escaped so great a peril and injury would have brought these men to a better mind. But how did these men, who have dared to tell us that the Government of Canada have reminded the United States of their willingness to treat with them, meet the proposition from this side of the House, inviting, begging, praying the Government to endeavour to ascertain on what terms we could obtain reciprocity with the United States? How was this proposition met? Why, in 1888, I myself moved that it was highly expedient we should enter into negotiations with the United States. It was open to these gentlemen, if they thought my proposal too broad, to have amended it. Did they commence negotiations with the United States to see what could be done? Did they raise their little finger or make the slightest exertion to obtain reciprocity? No; they met us with the explicit declaration that they would have no reciprocity with the United States unless the interests of the small minority of protected manufacturers were first considered. That was their *sin qua non*—to protect our good friends the monopolists and the combines. Do not let our paymasters be disturbed. Do not let those worthy gentlemen who supply the funds for election purposes in disputed counties be disturbed. We must be sure that these worthy gentlemen are not in the slightest degree to be interfered with. Then there is also our policy as enunciated in 1889. They met us at that time with a blunt negative, and they backed up that negative by even refusing to entertain our proposition that we should have a representative of our own at Washington who might save us from such intolerable and disgraceful fiascoes as those in which those hon. gentlemen have taken part lately. In 1890 what did they do when I brought forward for the third and last time a proposition of that kind? They voted it down, and they

appended to their vote a declaration which was made on the floor of the House by Mr. Colby, the President of the Council, who appeared as the spokesman of the Government, for whose utterances they are responsible, for they did not disown them—a statement made by him that reciprocity in natural products would be the greatest misfortune that could befall the people of Canada. These are the evidences of the desire of the Government of Canada to develop our trade relations with the United States. I ask this House, I ask especially hon. gentlemen who have not had seats in this House before—for those of us who have had seats before do not need to be told—to look at the records of the debates of the past few years and then to look at the tone of the speeches and at the language used by Ministers and by their supporters. They will find that, all through their speeches, there was, to say the least of it, a tone of veiled hostility towards reciprocity with the United States, that they considered it in any case a matter of insignificance for the people of this country, that it was almost unnatural, if not wicked and disloyal, for us to trade with a people whose boundary line runs for three thousand miles along our own. What was their attitude when the McKinley Tariff Bill was introduced, which they profess to deplore? They were warned from this side as to the result. They were told that there was a party in the United States opposed to the provisions of that Bill. They were told that, if they chose at that moment to inflict increased taxation on agricultural products coming into this country, they would destroy all chance of that party succeeding in ameliorating the terms of that Bill and would simply rivet the chains on the people of Canada. What was the result? Before the Bill became law, more than six months before that Bill received the President's sanction, our Minister of Finance, our Government, and our Parliament, enacted a tariff inflicting very heavy duties on large quantities of American produce which previously had come into Canada at moderate rates or free, and by that act they told all the friends of moderate tariffs in the United States that they could not count upon them for assistance, and they rendered it impossible for that party in the American Republic to obtain any modification of that McKinley Bill. If that Bill is on the United States Statute-book to-day, if any of the people of Canada suffer from its provisions to-day, they have more reason to thank the Government of Canada for that result than any other cause. This action was taken against repeated warnings which were given to the Government from this side of the House. Everyone knows how the English Government responded to the assurances that these hon. gentlemen had not feared to give to us that they were in perfect line with them in the action they took in regard to the fisheries. We know very well why Mr. Chamberlain was sent across the Atlantic, and we know very well what he did on the commission to which he was appointed. He made it evident that his instructions were that, *coûte que coûte*, whether the Canadian Government chose, or whether it did not, some such measure was to be adopted as was indicated in the *modus vivendi* which was put in force. I do not object to the *modus vivendi*; I never did object to the *modus vivendi*; but, if it was proper for the