

they were sent here with a recommendation of the local officers—they were detained a month, which made it impossible to forward the supplies to the Indian camps in time for their gatherings, thus necessitating enormous expenditure by the Government and discontent among the Indians, and destroying the confidence of the Indians in our good faith. I am informed also on the best authority that the special instructors, with the stock they had in charge sent to the North-West by the Saskatchewan River, in the Hudson Bay Company's boats, had not merely a longer delay than if they had gone overland by the usual route, but that this plan incurred more expense than the entire worth of the animals sent, while the cost by Winnipeg would have been little or nothing. I am prepared to admit that any Government would have some difficulty in dealing with affairs in a very remote country, but no Government is justified in endeavouring to make political capital out of a matter of this kind. This is what was pointed out on the appointment of those instructors and the despatch of the supplies. I am prepared to sustain the Government in any policy desirable in order to the settlement of the Indians and their instruction in the arts of peace, especially that of agriculture, but I am not prepared to sanction such measures as those of last year, coupled as they were in the Ministerial papers with the most gross, unfounded slanders upon the hon. gentleman formerly Minister of the Interior in the late Administration. With respect to the Intercolonial Railway, I am not in a position to discuss the figures and special information of the hon. member for Halifax, but I shall be able at the proper time to show his statements are altogether incorrect. It can only be shown to be managed more economically, when we have a precise statement of the condition of the rolling stock, the number of engines actively employed, the number built since the present Minister assumed office, the present condition of those locomotives, the number of cars of all kinds for freight, with their condition. I am informed that a very large proportion of the rolling stock is at this moment in a most deplorable state, and there is no doubt that, during this very week in which we are meeting there

have been a number of accidents to carriages conveying passengers, as well as engines and freight cars which have broken down upon the road. My conviction is that, in order to present an appearance of economy, the stock has been deliberately allowed to run down, and that the road-bed is not in the condition in which hon. gentlemen opposite found it. My duty, Sir, as the late Minister of Public Works, led me to enquire very carefully into railroad management, and I was satisfied, as every railroad manager must be, that the first duty of a railroad superintendent is to get his road-bed in thorough condition, and then his rolling stock in thorough condition. Everything about the Intercolonial Railway was in such a condition. At the time I left office, there was no better equipped road on the continent, no better road in any respect, and I venture to say no better managed road; but as I said last Session, if the hon. gentlemen could effect any economy in the way of reducing salaries and at the same time maintain its efficiency, I should be delighted. I should be delighted now. These remarks have been forced upon me by the very extraordinary course I complained of a moment ago in submitting cooked and partial papers to one or two individuals in this House to which other members are denied access. Now, Sir, about the state of trade. The Speech from the Throne informs us "that the effect of the Tariff of last Session in the development of the varied industries of the country has on the whole been very satisfactory." Well, in the first place, I have to complain that such a paragraph should be here at all. It has been usual to have the Speech from the Throne written in an entirely non-committal manner so that no member of the House, no matter how small the minority he represents, should be committed by any statements in the Speech. We are asked, however, to commit ourselves to that statement, and I have to complain of this statement that it is not true, and it is impossible for us to allow ourselves to be committed to a statement which we believe to be wholly inaccurate. I believe, Sir, that, but for the bountiful harvest that Canada had during the last season, and but for the deplorable accident of a serious deficiency in the harvest in Great Britain and Ireland,