

ister of the Mackenzie Government (Sir Richard Cartwright) to claim that something should be done to relieve the depression of trade, and in which they received the response that they might go to the father of all evil, was not reported in the press; but it strikes me that we are indebted to the hon. Minister himself (Sir Richard Cartwright) for the very interesting report of it which was made to this House and the country. The hon. gentleman seemed to me to evince an unreasonable desire to find fault when he charged the Ministers of Finance and Trade and Commerce with a great outrage in hearing business men in the absence of the press, and when he still more seriously complained that afterwards they went out and addressed a public meeting. He was profoundly dissatisfied with the secrecy of the interview, but still more dissatisfied that an open meeting should have been held under the broad canopy of Heaven. I am not surprised that my colleagues considered that it was impossible to satisfy the hon. gentleman, and consequently not worth their while to try. But I think he might have excused the reluctance of my colleague, the Minister of Finance, to do anything which might bring down upon him another inundation of set speeches on free trade and protection. My colleague had just come out from within the walls of this Parliament, where he had listened, I am sure, to everything that could be said on both sides by hon. gentlemen opposite. I am sure there was not an argument in connection with free trade that he had not heard fifty times over, expressed in every mood and tense and phase the English language will admit of, and after having escaped by the prerogative of prorogation, I am sure my hon. friend will be excused if he desired to escape for a further brief space speeches upon those subjects to which he had already listened so long and so often. But another point of view in which it seems to me my hon. friend, the leader of the Opposition, exhibited an unreasonable desire to criticize and an unwillingness to be satisfied was in the observations he made with regard to the Minister of Agriculture. He declared that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Angers) went to Manitoba and the North-west Territories, after leaving those conferences in the older provinces, and was guilty of making the statement to the farmers of the west that he believed that their burdens and grievances were principally due to circumstances over which the Government had no control, and with which the tariff had no connection, namely, the unusually low prices of their products, and the system of farming which had been carried on hitherto in Manitoba and the North-west Territories. If the hon. leader of the Opposition, instead of sneering at the Minister of Agriculture as being a lawyer, had stated that he told the farmers something which they had already found out by bitter experience, his criticism would have been better timed and better

placed. What the Minister of Agriculture stated to the people of the west was simply a bold and courageous statement of what he believed to be the truth as regards the condition of the country and the people whom he was addressing. He would have been a quack if he had told them that those low prices and the evils connected with farming one kind of product alone had been the result of any disease in the body politic which the Government or Parliament could cure. But when he gave to them the advice that they must seek to protect themselves in the future against the depression by resorting to mixed farming, he was proclaiming a doctrine which no sensible agriculturist, east or west, will deny. But I thought that my hon. friend was unreasonably dissatisfied in this respect, that after all this comment upon the Minister of Agriculture and his advice to the farmers of the west, the hon. gentleman still seemed profoundly moved with dissatisfaction at the idea of a lawyer being Minister of Agriculture. Why, I thought that he and I, if we could have anything in common, would be one in profound respect for the training of the profession, which those who admire and love it say fits a man for everything. I should have thought he would at least have recalled the period in which he was a worthy and eminent member of a Cabinet in this country, and when he made a not discreditable Minister of Inland Revenue, although he was and still is a lawyer. I thought that the hon. gentleman should at least have remembered another circumstance, that the Cabinet in which he sat had two Ministers of Agriculture. That Cabinet had two fine opportunities. We have had, in our short career, but one, and I think we have made an admirable choice. But that Government had two opportunities, and it chose a lawyer on each occasion. Their first Minister of Agriculture was the Hon. Luc Letellier, and their second the Hon. Senator Pelletier, the one an avocat and the other a notary. My hon. friend went a step further, and exhibited again an unreasonable desire to be dissatisfied when he made comment on that portion of the Speech which refers to the expanding and increasing trade of Canada. He took up that portion which refers with satisfaction to the circumstance that a large proportion of the expansion is due to the increase in our trade with the mother country. The hon. gentleman found fault with that, for the very extraordinary reason that a larger proportion still was due to the increase of trade with the United States. I thought if the hon. gentleman would be satisfied with anything, he would be satisfied with that circumstance; but he seemed to find more fault with us than ever, because, while our trade with Great Britain had greatly increased, there had been a still greater increase in our trade with the United States. Why, Sir, the hon. gentleman, exhibiting the same spirit of dissatisfaction, the same degree of unwillingness to be satisfied, commented, a few minutes afterwards,

Sir JOHN THOMPSON.