

confine themselves closely to the question before the Chair, but I have noticed that hon. gentlemen on both sides have been allowed some latitude in that respect, and that it is not forbidden to treat of matters which have not been alluded to in His Excellency's address. Under these circumstances, I may also be allowed to refer to an event which has been omitted from the speech from the Throne, and that event is the election which has recently taken place in St. John, N.B.

Mr. CASGRAIN. It was an oversight to leave that out.

Mr. DANIEL. Perhaps it was. Under ordinary circumstances, I take it that a by-election at which a constituency changed its party allegiance, is not a matter that would be expected to attract any great attention, and more especially when the result of that election does not in any way affect the maintenance of a government in power which has already a very large majority. But, Sir, when we remember that the gentleman who preceded me as the representative of that constituency was returned by a majority of 1,000 votes less three, and that after a lapse of less than four years that majority not only disappeared, but the majority of the Conservative candidate on the other hand was very considerable. I should think that a circumstance of that kind may be considered by gentlemen on both sides, as worthy of at least some little consideration. It is an event that may cause us to think, and especially to give food for thought to the men who are to-day governing this country. It may be prudent for them to give this result a little attention, and to ask themselves why it is, that such a marked change has come over the opinions of the electorate of an important constituency in this country. Until the recent by-election the city of St. John was represented by the ex-Minister of Railways and Canals (Hon. Mr. Blair). He was returned in 1900 by a majority of nearly 1,000, a larger majority than was ever recorded for any candidate in the city of St. John, with one exception, since the first election after confederation. Mr. Blair was looked upon as a man of strong personal qualities and great ability; he was in touch with the government; he presided over one of its most important departments and so the people of St. John looked upon him as a most desirable representative. Taking that view, they elected him by such a majority that he could practically come to this parliament and say that he represented the whole people of that city. Well, Sir, as time went on, Mr. Blair found himself out of touch with the government. He could not endorse their transcontinental policy, and he made a speech in opposition to it that may well be called a celebrated speech; a speech which was read throughout Canada and particularly by his own constituents. Mr. Blair declared that

the Grand Trunk Pacific policy of the government was designed for no other reason than as a most unjustifiable and wasteful expense of the public money. He told us that scheme would result in the practical duplication and destruction of the Intercolonial Railway, and that so far as the city of St. John was concerned, it would be given the go-by. Those were serious considerations for the people I represent, and they were taken to heart by them. Every day we hear speeches in parliament which carry great weight, and until and unless some one or the opposite side is able to show that the arguments are faulty and the statements incorrect, such speeches are bound to have effect with the people of the country. Of course when one is able to refute such speeches, able though they may be, they fall to the ground. But, Sir, what has been the case in regard to the speech of Mr. Blair. I firmly believe that notwithstanding the powerful effect which that speech had in my constituency, what told against the government still more was the fact, that no one has yet been able to make an adequate reply to it. Neither I nor my constituents have heard any satisfactory reply to this date.

And now, Sir, as to the change of sentiment which has taken place in the city of St. John.

Ever since that election my opponents have been giving all kinds of reasons for the result. I have heard it spoken of as an accident. I have also heard it stated that there were two gentlemen each of whom wished to be the candidate of the Liberal party, and that the trouble which ensued when one of them was not selected was the cause of the overturning of the great majority which the late Minister of Railways had, and giving me my majority. Well, Mr. Speaker, I am quite willing to give full credit for all the results which these or any other circumstances which were peculiar at the time, had on the election; but after giving them all due credit, I must make the assertion, which is absolutely correct, that all these things put together would never have produced such a result as happened in the city of St. John unless there had been something of a more close and intimate character with which all the people of the city had to do. There is no doubt whatever in my mind, Sir, that the result of that election was caused by the dissatisfaction which was felt by the people of the city of St. John with the policy of the government, as crystallized more especially in the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Bill. Because, while they did not believe that it was going to be of any special advantage to the country generally, they certainly came to the conclusion that it was going to be an absolute peril to them instead of a benefit. That feeling was general throughout the city of St. John. As far back as last August the merchants of St. John met together and talked over this matter. They wanted to know