

cannot permit the vote to be taken on this important measure, without placing on record some of the reasons which induce me to give it my support, and to show why, to some extent, I have changed my views on a few of the leading details of the scheme. When, sir, the people of the first commercial city in Western Canada elected me to represent them on the floor of this House, I publicly stated that by every legitimate means I would oppose the construction of a railroad between Canada and the Lower Provinces—then, as I do now, believing that in a commercial point of view, that Intercolonial road would never pay, nor be even beneficial to Upper Canada. But at the same time, sir, I pledged myself to urge upon the Ministers of the Crown and this House the vast importance to the country of an enlargement of our canals and the extension of our canal system. Since then, Mr. SPEAKER, our political and commercial positions are very much changed. (Hear, hear.) Threatened with the abrogation of the Reciprocity treaty, a very serious loss will be entailed on Canada—if the threat be carried into execution—without any advantage accruing to the United States. Indeed, from the nature of our commercial relations with the United States—the natural result of a trade fostered and carried on between the United States and Canada for years—the abrogation of the Reciprocity treaty cannot be otherwise than attended with great distress and serious loss to the business men of this country. In addition to this, sir, we are threatened with the abrogation of the bonding system. Surely this is much to be deplored. To every thinking mind a resort to such measures must seem absurd, and what could induce a people so thoroughly commercial as the people of the United States, to desire the abrogation of a treaty which, while it benefits us by permitting the transit of goods through their territory, also benefits them largely by increasing their carrying trade, and fosters an immense trade in the purchase of goods of all descriptions in bond—I must declare my inability thoroughly to understand. But, however strange, Mr. SPEAKER, all this may seem to us, angry men, it must be admitted, frequently do indulge in strange antics, and it need not surprise us that a nation plunged in all the horrors of civil war should, under the excitement of some real or fancied wrong, do the same thing; as has been exemplified in the adoption of the despotic system

of passports, the abrogation of the Reciprocity treaty, and the annulling of the treaty for the extradition of criminals. Yet, Mr. SPEAKER, I cannot believe that the United States will abrogate either the one or the other, and I do not believe that the great and high-minded and honorable men who control the moneyed institutions of the United States will permit it. But, sir, it is only right on our part to do the next best, and only thing we can, to protect ourselves from the loss and inconvenience to our trade in winter, and that is, to build the Intercolonial Railroad—for we must have a highway to the ocean at all seasons for our mails and our merchandise. But, Mr. SPEAKER, while I admit that I have changed my mind with regard to the Intercolonial Railroad in voting for the scheme in which it is a prominent measure, I am more and more convinced of the paramount necessity of immediately settling about the enlargement of our canals. We hear of schemes to connect the Georgian Bay with Ottawa by way of the French River route and the Trent route, and sir, perhaps the only practicable and shortest route *via* Toronto and Lake Simcoe; but all these only divert attention from what really can and ought to be done, at a very trifling cost in comparison with any other scheme—I mean the enlargement of the canals we now have. (Hear, hear.) We have now nine feet of water in the St. Lawrence canals, and ten feet in the Welland, and the cost of increasing the depth of those canals to twelve feet, I am told by men competent to judge, would be trifling indeed—probably not over two or three millions of dollars. But if it cost as many pounds, I contend that it would not really cost the country one cent. If the toll of one cent per bushel on grain outward and a proportionate rate on inward merchandise were enacted, the canals would not only be self-sustaining, but would become a source of revenue to the provinces. Take for instance, what I believe a small estimate, one hundred millions of bushels outward, and an equal amount inward for other merchandise, and you would have a revenue of two millions of dollars—a sum more than sufficient to pay interest and working expenses. Then, Mr. SPEAKER, see the impetus it would give to our inland shipping trade, if we could—and we could then do so—attract to the St. Lawrence route the immense grain crops of the Great West. I might also refer, Mr. SPEAKER, to the ship-building suited to the wants of our country, and the immense advantage