

contrary to the truth, as I will show before I resume my seat. When Sir Charles Tupper made a remarkable speech in Montreal during the winter of 1896, upon this question of preferential trade, the *Toronto Globe*, the organ of the gentlemen opposite me, asked "why should Sir Charles Tupper waste his time and breath in advocating preferential trade, when it is a policy that every one in this country will hold up his hands in support of. The battle has to be fought in England." Here was the declaration of the organ of the party that there were no two opinions in Canada on this question of preferential trade. Now, I will show the other side of the picture. The premier went to London last year to attend the great Jubilee celebration. On landing he was met by the Duke of Devonshire, who made the remarkable speech from which I have quoted. The Duke of Devonshire is better known as Marquis of Hartington, and he was leader of the liberal party on Mr. Gladstone's retirement, but is now leader of the liberal unionists. He is one of the most powerful men in the public life of England, and when he met these delegates and made the important statements which I have read, one would have thought the premier of Canada in rising to respond would have uttered the sentiments which he expressed in Montreal, when he said a commission was going to England after the elections to push and advocate the question of preferential trade and to get it too he said because the reform party had the correct principle working at home. But what did he say :

I claim for the present government of Canada that they have passed a resolution by which the products of Great Britain are admitted in the rate of there tariff at 12½ per cent and next year at 25 per cent reduction. This we have done, not asking any compensation. There is a class of our citizens who ask that all such concessions should be made for a *quid pro quo*. The Canadian government has ignored all such sentiments. We have done it because we owe a debt of gratitude to Great Britain. We have done it because it is no intention of ours to disturb in any way, the system of free trade which has done so much for England.

This was before he landed, or just on his landing, before mingling with English people at all, before anything could have occurred on that side of the Atlantic to change the views he had previously expressed here.

What we give you by our tariff, we give you in gratitude for the splendid freedom under which we have prospered. It is a free gift. We ask no compensation. Protection has been the curse of Canada,

we would not see you come under its baneful influence for what weakens you must weaken us.

Here we have this gentleman claiming to represent Canada as the premier of the country, going back on the declarations he had made before he had crossed the Atlantic, and while he was seeking popular favour here, and giving away this important question in this ignominious manner. What did Mr. Chamberlain say when he found that Sir Wilfrid Laurier had abandoned preferential trade. He said :

It would have been hard enough to carry through the idea had all the colonies been persistent and enthusiastic advocates of it, but Canada does not favour it, and New South Wales opposes it. These are the leading colonies, and with them in practical opposition, it becomes impossible, and I would not now touch it without a pair of tongs.

In the bitterness of his heart, he uttered these words, finding that the advance he had made in the citadel of free trade, where he had rallied around him the ablest men in Great Britain, was being checkmated by Sir Wilfrid's backdown. He found that all the work he had done was trampled under foot by the premier of Canada, who spurned the olive hand of commercial friendship which he—Mr. Chamberlain—was stretching out to all the colonies on behalf of the people of Great Britain. If there could be any doubt as to the effect of the speech of Mr. Laurier, see what Mr. Rosebery said. He was the opponent of Mr. Chamberlain, and he was perhaps enjoying the discomfiture of his opponent, although there is reason to believe from Mr. Rosebery's utterances that he was not very far from sympathizing with some of the views Mr. Chamberlain had been giving expression to. He said :

Mr. Chamberlain had a proposal which had some force and gained some strength, but now it must be approached with the reverence due to a corpse, for Canada's premier has said that if the British Empire is to be maintained it can only be on the condition of the most absolute free trade.

Now I will read an extract from the *London Trades Journal*, a very important commercial organ in Great Britain as hon. gentlemen will admit. It discussed this question a little later, and the *Trades Journal* said this :

From the day he (Sir Wilfrid) landed in England until the day he left he seems to be oblivious to the fact that in his mission he was the representative of all Canada. He seems rather to have imagined that he was sent there for his own self glorification and in the interest of his party * * * When he