

only to the fishery question, whether in Behring Sea or the Atlantic? We do not know, and, if I speak my own mind, I do not believe at the present moment hon. gentlemen opposite know their own minds on this subject. They may agree on the question of retaining office, but when they come to deliberate on this question, confusion worse confounded will arise in their councils. A confusion of tongue will prevail, because we have heard all sorts of language from members of the Administration on this subject. We have heard the Secretary of State at one election speak of unrestricted reciprocity in a manner which cheered and delighted the heart of every patriotic Canadian. We have heard the Minister of Finance upon the floor of this House declare that the only policy of the Government was the National Policy; and, as regards the Prime Minister, sometimes he advanced and then receded, then he advanced again and again receded. We know, for instance, that during last summer he offered reciprocity in coal, but, at the remonstrance of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, he had to swallow that offer; and if members of the Administration cannot agree even on an offer of reciprocity in coal, it is not surprising that they should fail to agree upon any programme to be submitted to their Commissioners. But whatever may be the policy of the present Government upon this question, I assert that the people of Canada to-day want a change, and a change there must be. In 1878 the hon. gentleman (Sir John A. Macdonald), in the most emphatic manner denounced the Government of my hon. friend to my left, because at that time there were 500,000 Canadians in the United States. He declared it was a shame, a burning shame, that with our good climate, equitable laws and fertile soil, the Government could not retain our own people. I believe the hon. gentleman on that occasion did not speak mere empty, idle, unmeaning words. I hold that he spoke the sentiment of his heart, and if he was not speaking simply as an intellectual device, I wish him to look at the record of his work for the last ten years and see whether it has borne good fruits or not. The evil of which he complained then has been intensified tenfold. Sir, we must have a change, and it must be in the direction of greater freedom of trade. This is admitted on all sides, by all parties, and it is admitted even by the staunchest of all Tories—the Imperial Federationists. While they commit the mistake of basing their trade policy upon uniformity of allegiance and a mere sentiment, we of the Liberal party maintain that the policy of this country must be based not upon sentiment but upon business principles; and, fresh as we come from the people, I say that the only policy which will benefit this country is unrestricted reciprocity and continental freedom of trade. Sir Charles Tupper says in an article published a few days ago in the *North American Review*, that the delusion, as he calls it, of unrestricted reciprocity was dead and buried. Dead and buried! I am as good an authority on this subject as is Sir Charles Tupper, and I say it is more alive than ever. I am prepared to say much more. I am prepared to say that when Sir Charles Tupper went to Washington a few days ago, in company with the Minister of Justice and Minister of Finance, he was ready to offer the American Government unrestricted reciprocity. Sir, I am going to break the hearts of

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men who are loyal and true, who have been led to believe that the Liberal party want to give up this country to the Americans by carrying out a policy of unrestricted reciprocity; but they must be prepared for a greater shock still, because this abomination of desolation has entered the holy of holies. The hon. gentleman (Sir John A. Macdonald) shook his head a moment ago when I said Sir Charles Tupper was ready to offer unrestricted reciprocity. Does the hon. gentleman not read the *Montreal Gazette*? I read it every day. On 10th April, the *Gazette* published an article, in answer to the *Globe*, which had asserted that the visit to Washington had been a failure. The *Gazette*, the organ of the hon. gentleman opposite, spoke as follows:—

“The *Toronto Globe* speaks of the failure at Washington as though the Canadian delegates were in some unexplained way responsible for it, and asks: ‘How could the Canadian Ministers hope to negotiate a treaty of reciprocity with the Washington Administration?’ But the failure was on the part of Mr. Blaine. No negotiations were afloat; the matter had not yet reached that stage. Indeed, Mr. Blaine flatly objected to the appointment of a formal Commission until he learned upon what basis the Canadians proposed to treat, and it was to assure the American Secretary of State that the Canadian Government is willing to discuss the question on the broadest lines, even on the basis of unrestricted reciprocity, that Sir Charles Tupper returned to Washington with Sir John Thompson and Hon. Mr. Foster.”

Have the pure fallen from grace? Here is treason rampant, and who is to indict the traitors when the Minister of Justice himself is either a traitor or connives at treason? Reciprocity dead and buried! It is only three years ago since we commenced this agitation, and already we have triumphed in the two leading provinces of the Dominion. Already we have the fact that many American statesmen are prepared to treat with us upon that basis. We have the opinion of Mr. Blaine, we have the opinion of Senator Sherman, we have the opinion of Mr. Hitt, and we have the endorsement of the Boards of Trade of New York city, of Boston city, of Chicago city, and of several others of the northern cities in the United States. Reciprocity dead and buried! Why, Sir, we never yet have been met with arguments from the Government against reciprocity. The right hon. gentleman has never himself dared to offer any argument against us. In the manifesto which he issued he never discussed the question, but simply appealed to the prejudices and passions of the people. He appealed to their prejudices and passions, and he stated that unrestricted reciprocity would lead to annexation. I deny that proposition. Of course, Sir, I know very well that there are men in this country who believe, and who honestly believe, that, perhaps, unrestricted reciprocity would be the first step towards annexation. I do not dispute any man's conviction; but I ask these men to exert their reason. If we have reciprocity at any time, as we shall have it, I believe, before very long, these men will not then be denied the right of suffrage, for they will have the right to vote against annexation, if annexation is proposed by any person, the same as they would have the right to vote against annexation, if it were proposed to-day. Shall we be so diffident of our manhood that we dare not do what we think best for our interests, because, forsooth, some one might be dragged away from his allegiance to his country in favour of American citizenship? Whatever may be the fears of the Conservative party on