

would appear to be exceedingly decent as matters go, without respect to the past. The Liberal party must bear with the mistakes of their past, as the Conservative party must bear with theirs, and any issue raised between the two parties that can be said to indicate the character of both parties seeking the suffrages of the country for its government, must, of necessity, be raised in order that you can intelligently form your opinion, from the past, as well as the present, as to the ability of either party. But, the hon. member for Addington had another answer to it, and he said that the fact that the hon. member for North Wellington had not done all that he spoke about in connection with superannuation, was an answer. I was rather surprised that the hon. member for Addington forgot the Act that was passed in 1898, relating to superannuation. That very Act has changed the whole character of superannuation in this country. Previously superannuation was given by the country, a small amount being taken off each party. Now, the superannuation is of such a character that all those who come under it, and that will be all, who are hereafter appointed, as well as a large number who have taken advantage of it in preference to the old system, will pay into the public treasury, every dollar they receive, so that, when the present beneficiaries under the old order of things have all died, this country will have an excellent system by which it will not need to pay one dollar to the parties who receive the money, who in the place of receiving a gratuity until they die, will have the sum total of the amount they paid in, with interest added, and they will receive this for the benefit of themselves and their families. The old order of things only looked upon superannuation as something to keep a man alive after he left office. The new order of things, looks to the man as a living being with his wife and family. The amount that the hon. member referred to as being paid in excess of that which was paid previously, is too large. It is less than he stated it to be. The hon. gentleman must have forgotten the facts, or he ought not to have forgotten the facts, because he posed as one of the fairest men I have ever heard. A better character for fairness he could not have given himself, but it was only sustained by his own evidence. He should have mentioned that the added amount which was paid, was counterbalanced five times over by the lesser number of people employed by this new superannuation system. I think the Act that has been passed, will eventually be one of the best Acts passed by the present government, and will lessen the payment that the people of this Dominion have to make to their public servants. The hon. gentleman was not fair in saying, that the policy of the Liberal party, as laid down in the Ottawa platform in 1898, was a policy of free trade. It was not a policy of free

trade. Our Conservative friends everywhere state that the Liberals are in favour of free trade. Personally, I am in favour of free trade, but the resolution adopted at the Ottawa conference did not say anything about free trade. Let us hear what it said :

That the customs tariff of the Dominion should be based, not as now, upon the protective principle, but upon the requirements of the public service. . . . That to this end the tariff should be reduced to the needs of honest, economical and efficient government.

That was not a pronouncement for free trade, but it was a pronouncement for a freer trade than existed before. Let the hon. gentlemen opposite criticise that if they like, but, for goodness sake, let their criticisms be confined to the actual facts. Here is what the Premier said at the Ottawa conference :

I say that the policy should be a policy such as they have in England. But I am sorry to say that the circumstances of the country cannot admit at present of that policy in its entirety.

That was the policy of the Premier laid down.

But I propose to you from this day henceforward, it shall be the goal to which we aspire. I propose to you from this day, although we cannot adopt the policy itself, to adopt the principles which regulate it.

How can any sensible man say that this language means free trade ? It was a pronouncement in favour of eliminating from our fiscal policy as quickly as possible the elements of protection to be found in it ; nothing more or nothing less. In view of that, it is right that gentlemen opposite should say in this House and in the country that the Liberals, in their Ottawa platform, declared for free trade. Let us have the facts, and I ask for nothing more. I was amazed at a statement made by gentlemen opposite, to the effect that an article that was made free of duty became dearer in price than it was when it bore a duty. Do they honestly think that an article would be cheaper if there was a duty on it, than it would be if it was free of duty ? Neither this government nor any government in the world can regulate the price of an article. For example, oranges are dearer in England than in the United States, but England has free trade and the United States has protection. These oranges are grown in the United States, and the freight and other charges is saved on them. But, would it be fair to say that because they are cheaper in the United States than in England that, therefore, protection is better than free trade ? No gentleman on the other side would argue that, although they are practically arguing the very same thing every day in this House.

Now, Sir, when the Liberal government came into power in 1896, they found they had to meet three annual deficits of the Conservative government, in the three pre-