

guiding the footsteps of some of the economic reasoners opposite in the primeval paths of protection, but we on this side believe in progress, and that progress can only be made in the broad sunlight and with the best possible illuminant.

Something has been said about doing as well as we can and letting well enough alone. That was all right under the National Policy but they did not even manage to do that because the trade of Canada was shrinking. That is what happens a people who let well enough alone. We all know that for a young organism, whether it be an individual or a nation, growth and progress are the absolute necessities of continued existence, and all progress implies change and change may bring, does bring temporary, discomfort and inconvenience to sections, but it ever works out for the benefit and the prosperity and the wealth of the masses of the people. We heard this afternoon something about some one being sick and ashamed. I am perfectly certain that in a few years' time my hon. friends opposite will be sick and ashamed of their attitude and their arguments in this discussion.

There can only be one result to this arrangement. The government would have been guilty of one of those blunders which are almost as bad as crimes if they had not received the advances of the United States and made this arrangement on the high ground of showing to the people of the world how two nations can live in friendship together, on the more material ground of promoting the prosperity of the country and on the ground of Canada being in the forefront of movements that are making for the real progress of the world. On all these grounds this is a splendid arrangement, and I have not the remotest doubt that, just as the extension of freedom of trade helped Canada in 1897, this will help us still more. It is a policy in keeping with the record of the right hon. gentleman who is at the head of the government of this country (Sir Wilfrid Laurier); it is a policy which makes for the prosperity of the country, it is a policy in accordance with the best traditions of that Liberalism which has built and maintained the British Empire, that Liberalism which spells freedom, freedom to buy and sell, and in a few years' time, those who have opposed it will be ashamed of the thoughts they have entertained.

Yet I doubt not thro' the ages, one increasing purpose runs.
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns.

Mr. R. BLAIN (Peel). The House, I am sure, has been entertained by my hon. friend from Red Deer (Mr. Clark) for the last half hour since eight o'clock, and for one hour prior to the recess for dinner.

Mr. CLARK (Red Deer).

The hon. gentleman has stated among various things that he does not know what the opposition would have done in this discussion had it not been for the word annexation, and if I wanted to be jocular with my hon. friend I might safely say that he had not the leader of the opposition and the hon. member for North Toronto as a text there would have been very little left in his remarks. I am not unkind when I say that the hon. gentleman did not touch upon the question before the House at all, or did he make any suggestion of value from a Canadian standpoint. Of course, he told us all about free trade as they have it in England, and in that respect his remarks must have been directed more to the government than to the opposition. We have heard that same speech several times in this House. True, the hon. gentleman revamps it occasionally, but it is one and the same old story: I am a free trader, and as such I am alone in this House. But, if he is so eloquent in the House and so powerful in the country one would have thought he would have had a few converts by this time. However, he is still alone, and if I mistake not he will be alone in his free trade professions for a long time to come. We once had a free trader in this House supporting the government but he sought and found a place in the Senate, and may be my hon. friend from Red Deer is aiming that way. For several years the hon. gentleman has directed our attention to what he regards as a better fiscal policy for the Canadian people than that which they now have. For my part I would rather take the votes of the people of Canada on both sides of politics than the trade expressions of the member for Red Deer, when I seek a true index of the feeling of the people. What has the hon. gentleman (Mr. Clark) done since he came here to perpetuate that policy which he says is dear to his heart, and which he advocates in the House and out of the House? Did he ever vote against this government upon a single item of the tariff?

Mr. CLARK (Red Deer). Does the hon. gentleman ask a question?

Mr. BLAIN. Yes.

Mr. CLARK (Red Deer). In voting on the tariff in this House I only have a choice between—

Mr. BLAIN. I would like to be courteous, but I would prefer an answer and not a speech.

Mr. CLARK (Red Deer). I can only vote two ways in this House, and having only that alternative I vote for freer trade in preference to protection.

Mr. BLAIN. The old story. It is well that the hon. gentleman has told the House that he only came to Canada in 1896, for everybody knows that the ques-