

the fact that in 1892 England gave preferential treatment to our cattle over that which she accorded to the United States; in the face of all this, the most loyal man in the Conservative party asked for more advantages, before Canada would give anything to the motherland. These are the men who call themselves loyal. In contradistinction to that, we had the Liberal party then showing true loyalty. The present Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Mr. Davies) moved this as an amendment to that resolution:

Inasmuch as Great Britain admits the products of Canada into her ports free of duty, this House is of the opinion that the present scale of duties exacted on goods mainly imported from Great Britain should be reduced.

Now, this is not exactly the policy we have foreshadowed in our present resolution, but it is the same principle. We were under deep obligations to Great Britain for allowing our goods in free to her markets, and because of other advantages we have received from her during many years. Notwithstanding that, the resolution of Mr. Davies was voted down by no less than 99 Conservatives who sat in this House, and not a single one of them voted for preferential trade with Great Britain. Yet, they tell us to-day that in bringing in this preferential policy we have borrowed their clothes. It is no such thing. In 1892 the Conservatives wanted England to reduce her duties, or give some preference before they would do anything for her, while at that day we offered her preferential trade. I am proud to see to-day, from the various communications which come from the old land, that both the Conservative and Reform press there are united in lauding the Liberal party of Canada which has taken this beneficent step, not only in the interests of Great Britain, but alike in the interests of Canada and the Empire.

Let me tell the House how this preferential resolution will be advantageous to Canada, and probably I will quote some figures which will astonish hon. gentlemen opposite. I take no stock at all in the argument that this preferential offer to Great Britain is going to involve her in difficulty with Germany and Belgium. The Government after taking the whole matter into consideration, and after consulting probably the very best lawyers in the country, have announced boldly and above-board in this House, that it is not to be extended to Belgium and Germany and that in their opinion the most-favoured-nation clause does not apply in this case. Even if it did, that is a matter which has yet to be decided by the highest court in the land.

Mr. PRIOR. Did the hon. gentleman hear what the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright) said in regard to that?

Mr. MACDONALD (Huron).

Mr. MACDONALD (Huron). Yes, I did, and I heard what Mr. Laurier said this afternoon, that in the opinion of the Government this privilege was not to extend to Belgium or to Germany. Now, that means just this, that after due consideration that was the conclusion at which the Government arrived; and, therefore, they are of opinion that when this matter is tested before the proper tribunal, it will be found, that this offer, made in the manner in which it is made, does not violate in any way the favoured-nation clause in the treaties of 1862 and 1865. But supposing it did, may not this policy bring about the final settlement of this question more quickly than if we had left it alone altogether? Are we to be hampered in the making of our tariffs by those treaties, when England's opinion is that we should be released from the burden of them, if we are under them, and when the most eminent statesmen of England have said time and again that if we find that these treaties compromise our tariff policy, they will take the first opportunity of denouncing them and letting us free in that respect? And this departure may bring that question to a conclusion faster than that could be done in any other way.

We are told that this arrangement is going to be of no benefit. But those who have paid any attention to our shipping know that a large number of our ships crossing the ocean and carrying our produce come back in ballast. Therefore, if we can increase the trade between this country and the old country, we will give labour and profit to these ships and thus bring about a reduction in the transportation rates across the Atlantic. Because everybody knows that if a ship goes over loaded and comes back in ballast, she must charge higher transportation rates than if she brought back goods. Out of 1,541 vessels which left the ports of Halifax, Montreal and Quebec last year, only six left in ballast; while during the same year there came into those ports 1,414 vessels, out of which 358 came in ballast. Now, if we can increase our trade with the countries across the sea, some of these 358 vessels will come back laden, and will be better able to carry the products of Canada across at lower rates than at present. Therefore, there will be more work for Canadian shippers and lower prices for Canadian consumers. In this way we shall be benefited from both sides.

Now, I have placed before you no less than fifteen promises that we made to the people of this country, and I have proven that in every case these promises have been fairly and reasonably carried out. Although this Government has been only ten months in power, no other Government that ever existed in the country could have done more or done better. Nor has there ever been a Government in this country with a personnel of more honour, more integrity or more economy. They are men whose characters