

and definite conception of the great W. P. The member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills) is the most conservative of all. He says he is not for revolution, he would not hurt an existing industry. He wants a custom revenue and would like to see the man who could be elected in any constituency on a policy of direct taxation. He wants no independence or annexation talk, and he thinks that man no friend of Canada who talks independence or annexation at this time. Yet he has sitting very closely to him a gentleman who has been talking independence in the last few months. And the hon. member for L'Islet (Mr. Tarte) has two planks in his policy. One is that legislation should be had to increase the profits of the farmers—

Mr. TARTE. I never said or wrote anything of the kind.

Mr. FOSTER. If my hon. friend—

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) Take it back.

Mr. FOSTER. No; let me have a little conversation with my hon. friend. If my hon. friend will turn up the "Hansard" and look at the report of his speech, and if he will look at the manifesto that he read and which he gave to his county, he will find these two statements in it, or else I cannot read French.

Mr. TARTE. Perhaps that is it.

Mr. FOSTER. Perhaps that is the reason. I will leave it to him. In that manifesto he said that he is going in for such legislation as will raise the value of the farmer's products, and that Mr. Laurier, if he comes into power, will leave two or three columns still standing in the temple of protection.

Mr. TARTE. I never wrote or never said anything of the kind.

Mr. FOSTER. Then it must be my bad French. I will look that up, and if I find I am wrong I will withdraw it with great pleasure. That is what my hon. friends say on the negative side.

WHAT THEY ARE OPPOSED TO.

Now, I want to draw the attention of the House to what these gentlemen say when they come to the positive side. Here there is no hesitation; there is no lack of definiteness. Their propaganda is plain and firm, and I want it to ring from one end to the other of this country. What is their propaganda? The hon. member for South Oxford says:

Our policy from first to last has been to destroy this villainous system of protection; I care not whether we cut its head off, or cut its tail off, or cut it in two in the middle—what I want to do is to destroy it.

There is no indefiniteness about that. The hon. member for North Norfolk (Mr. Charlton) says:

Protection, Sir, notwithstanding all that may be said in favour of it, is neither more or less than a

species of slavery. It is a system as indefensible, upon the broad principle of justice, as slavery. It is absolutely and unconditionally slavery.

That is plain; no round-about method in that. My hon. friend from Prince Edward Island (Mr. Davies) says:

We have been attacking this policy year after year. It is a cursed system, accursed of God and man. It must be cut down, and not allowed to cumber the ground.

And to make a long story short, the hon. leader of the Opposition declared to-night that his policy was the destruction of every vestige of protection, by bringing the tariff down to a simple revenue basis. Now, Sir, I am glad to have read these statements, and I am glad to have them so heartily applauded by hon. gentlemen opposite. They will not hereafter try to get away from these expressions of their opinions. Now, I ask my hon. friends in this House who believe in the principle of protection, but who may have some grievance now and then, and here and there, with the tariff; I ask them to weigh these assertions; for whatever the proposition that these gentlemen are putting before the House to-night for us to vote upon, it is with the spirit and the purpose of utterly destroying the principle of protection in this country. A man may have a grudge, may have an objection, to some particular exercise upon the tariff; but he may be at the same time a firm believer in the principle of protection, and may wish to see it survive in this country. I warn such men as those in this House and in the country from playing into the hands of hon. gentlemen opposite on the ground that their present proposition is a harmless one. By one way we have come up to our large commercial and industrial development in this country, we have in these last few years done wonders in the development of our industrial life. Strangers who come here, and people who study our history, acknowledge it frankly and freely. We who live in this country know the blessings that have come from this policy. It may be a fact that to-day there are excrescences upon this policy, that there are details which ought to be carefully examined, and which ought to be made right, that there are certain respects in which the tariff should be reformed. Hon. gentlemen opposite have cast a doubt upon the good faith of the Government in respect of honestly revising the tariff. I stand here to-night to say that what I stated in this regard was stated with the consent of all my colleagues, and in perfect good faith. I ask the country outside to watch carefully, and not be misled by any phrases that these gentlemen may use; but to understand that it is a struggle in which the existence of the principle of protection in this country is at stake. If hon. gentlemen opposite, having set the battle on these lines, push it to the front, and push it to the finish, this country may wake up some fine morning and find its industries destroyed, its factories closed, its employment of