

forward it should be the goal to which we aspire. I propose to you from this day, although we cannot adopt the policy itself, to adopt the principle which regulates it, that is to say, that, though it should be our misfortune for many years to come to have to raise a revenue by customs duties, these duties should be levied only so far as is necessary to carry on the business of the Government. (Cheers.) I submit to you that not a cent should be extracted from the pockets of the people except every cent goes into the treasury of the people, and not into the pockets of anybody else. (Cheers.) I submit to you that no duty should be levied for protection's sake, but levied altogether and for the purpose of filling the treasury to the limits required. I submit to you that every cent that is levied should be levied, first and foremost upon the luxuries of the people.

That is a plain and a distinct statement; so plain and so distinct that an honest man cannot misunderstand it. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Laurier) states here that the interests of this country require that what is necessary to carry on the government of this country shall be raised by customs taxation, and that, unfortunately, it must be so raised, for many years to come. But, he said: The principle underlying the British tariff is a sound principle, and we should keep it as the goal we have in view, and which we hope some day to reach. But those hon. gentlemen opposite will have none of this policy, because it comes from the motherland. When they want a precedent for the liberty of free speech, or a free press, or religious liberty, where do they seek it? They go to the motherland for it, where civil and religious liberty has had its origin. They are glad to take everything of freedom from the mother country, but they shut down on the principle of free trade.

Mr. FOSTER. So do you.

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.) No, Mr. Speaker, we do not. We say that the principle of free trade is a sound principle, but we say that it must be applied with discretion in this country, and that the circumstances of the country do not permit us adopting it at present. I, for one, say: If the circumstances of the country did permit of it, it would be a good thing for Canada. We cannot hope to have it for years to come; but, Sir, we will eliminate, at any rate from the tariff, all that system of protection which the hon. gentleman (Mr. Foster) has inserted there, not to raise a revenue, but, as he says himself, to develop certain favoured industries in this country. I submit, for the consideration of hon. gentlemen opposite, a declaration made by that distinguished statesman, President Cleveland, in his inaugural address in 1893. I, for one, at any rate, endorse it. It is not necessary for me to go further than the Liberal platform and the definition given of it by my leader; I give to both my unqualified adhesion, but I say, Sir, that President Cleve-

Mr. DAVIES (P.E.I.)

land has, in his inaugural address, laid down the principles and the manner in which they should be applied, in a way which, at any rate commands my assent. He says:

They could not defy with impunity the inexorable laws of finance and trade. * * * While there should be no surrender of principle, our task must be undertaken wisely, without vindictiveness. Our mission is not punishment, but the rectification of wrongs. If, in lifting the burdens from the daily life of the people, we reduce inordinate and unequal advantages too long enjoyed, this is but a necessary incident of our return to right and justice. When we proclaim that necessity for revenue furnishes the only justification for taxing the people, we announce a truth so plain that its denial would seem to indicate the extent to which judgment may be influenced by familiarity with perversions of taxing power; and when we seek to reinstate the self-confidence and business enterprise of our citizens, by discrediting abject dependence upon governmental favour, we strive to stimulate those elements of American character which support the hope of American achievements.

Substitute the word "Canadian" for "American" there, and you have an admirable exegesis and explanation of the trade policy of the Liberal party in this country. We are not going to rush like a bull in a china shop to destroy vested interests and that kind of thing. We will proceed with prudence, with caution, and, I hope, Sir, with what is markedly absent from the Government's policy—with statesmanship.

Now, Sir, if we can get down to a calm and cool discussion; if these are the two issues which divide the two parties in this country, let us see what the arguments are, pro and con. The protectionists say that a revenue tariff is condemned by the results shown between the years 1873 and 1878. I think I am right in saying that because it has been quoted time and again, not by one, but by twenty of hon. gentlemen opposite. Let me ask is that so? Does our experience of the years between 1873 and 1878 justify that statement? If it does, then you condemn equally our experience of confederation from 1867 to 1873. During that time, when a Conservative Government was in power, you had a revenue tariff, just as you had afterwards when a Liberal Government was in power; and you had a measure of progress, which I think the Conservative party itself would acknowledge as gratifying. Therefore, it appears to me that, if the same tariff was continued from 1873 to 1878 which was in force from 1867 to 1873 and if there was depression and commercial trouble under it, during the latter four or five years you have no right, by any rule of logic to charge it to that system under which the country had progressed so happily in the previous years when the same tariff was in force. It must be remembered that the depression which existed between 1873 and 1878 was not confined in any sense or way