

there exists a small minority of men whose abilities, high purpose, and energy of will, mark them out as in some degree leaders of men. These take the first steps in every public enterprise, counteract by their example the vicious elements of the population, set the current and form the standard of public opinion, and infuse a healthy moral vigour into their nation. In Ireland for three or four generations such men were steadily weeded out. Can we wonder that the standard of public morals and of public spirit should have declined?

But not only were the healthiest elements driven away; corrupting influences of the most powerful kind infected those who remained.

Sir, place Ireland for Canada, and you will have a very excellent illustration of what the policy of this Government for the last fourteen years has been employed in effecting. Sir, in the early part of the eighteenth century, to which these words refer, it may have taken five or six decades to do what, under existing conditions, has been done in Canada in ten or twelve years. And one of the chief counts I make against the policy of which these hon. gentlemen are so proud, is that, from first to last, the inevitable tendency of their policy has been to organize political corruption of the very vilest kind. The danger is vastly increased in such a country as ours by the exportation of the best of its youth, so that, while the danger increases, the resistance to it is diminished. In the United States it is different. There, whatever be the evils of their policy, at any rate the youth of the population remain, and it is to that fact very largely the success of the American people in emancipating themselves, as they have done, from the shackles of protection is to be ascribed. I have not time to-night to review our scale of expenditure. I will simply say that our general scale of expenditure for a population of 5,000,000 is monstrously extravagant. Our clothes are far too big. They were cut out for a population of 20,000,000 or 30,000,000. I need look no further than the benches opposite to illustrate this. What possible use can there be in a country like Canada for a Cabinet of fifteen Ministers, besides the Deputy Ministers? Why, Sir, 50,000,000 of people might be administered with the same staff. Look at the cost of administration and legislation. We have practically \$14,000,000 to expend, exclusive of charges for collection of revenue and interest, and it costs us every year \$2,000,000 to spend that amount. Turn to our Estimates, and review the number of clerks these gentlemen require. In Mr. Mackenzie's time, to do the same work, his Cabinet only required 480; hon. gentlemen opposite employ 826, and a whole regiment of extras besides. The hon. gentleman spoke very lightly of the consequences to Canada of the United States revising their tariff. I cannot agree with him there. If the United States do very largely reduce their tariff they will very largely cheapen the cost of living in that country. They will very

largely cheapen the cost of production. The United States farmers have to-day a very great advantage over ours in many ways. They get more for what they produce, and with the single exception of the article of woollen clothing they are enabled to purchase what they require at much lower rates, and even if we are fortunate enough to get our raw products admitted free, we will still be comparatively at a serious disadvantage compared with them. What is the part of true statesmanship, and what would be wise policy under such circumstances? Not, as these hon. gentlemen are doing, looking to Washington, and waiting until they know exactly what the United States are going to do before they proceed to bring down their tariff and annunciate their policy; but to anticipate the Americans, to give Canada, if they can, a little start; to give Canada the advantage of being made comparatively a cheap country to live in, which it is in their power to do by a reasonable and prompt readjustment of the tariff. Now, I have briefly to say this: I, for my part, indict the present policy of the Government, and I indict its present tariff on all counts. I say it is radically false in theory, and vicious in principle. I say that it is in the highest degree an unjust and an oppressive tariff. I say that it is most eminently unsuited to the genius and geographical position of the people of Canada. I say that it is in the highest degree an unjust and of the people, and that it discriminates against special sections. Practically, these hon. gentlemen reverse Robin Hood's good old rule, for whereas Robin Hood robbed the rich for the purpose of bestowing gifts on the poor, they rob the poor for the purpose of bestowing gifts on the rich. I say that these hon. gentlemen and their tariff are very largely responsible for the fact that a million of the best blood of Canada are now exiled in the United States. I say that their tariff directly fosters extravagance, that it is a veritable hot bed of corruption, that it debases and enslaves and is fast emasculating our people, and I say that we have no chance whatever of ever developing Canada, as it should be developed, until this thing is utterly and completely reformed, root and branch. And that there is no mistake about our intent and our policy, I move:

That all the words after the word "That" be left out, and the following inserted instead thereof:—"It be Resolved, That the present Customs tariff bears heavily and unjustly upon the great consuming classes of the Dominion and should be at once thoroughly reformed in the direction of freer trade, and that the amount of taxes collected be limited to the sum required to meet the necessities of the Government efficiently and economically administered."

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