

leader of the then Opposition, the late Sir John A. Macdonald, complimented the member for North Norfolk upon the ability he displayed on this occasion. This was among the most noteworthy of the speeches made by Mr. Charlton during the Liberal régime. The most important legislation with which his name was associated was a bill for the prevention of cruelty to animals, a well-considered measure which has continued since then with some amendments first proposed by Mr. Charlton himself at a subsequent period. Mr. Charlton also performed the duty of unearthing the scandal of the retention of a large sum of secret service money in the hands of Sir John A. Macdonald after he retired from office. He presented a full and exhaustive report on the subject, which was adopted by the committee of public accounts, and by the House. The report was strongly condemnatory of Sir John Macdonald's government. With the return of the Liberals to the opposition side of the House, the duties expected of such men as Mr. Charlton were very laborious. The record of his work since 1878 must, therefore, be confined to only a few of the more prominent points. There are two general divisions of parliamentary work in which Mr. Charlton has been equally prominent. In the first place, as a critic, he is keen, strong and incisive. He not only states clearly and forcibly what he believes to be the fault, but he presents his remedy with decision and with much persuasive power. He is known, also, as the promoter of a number of important bills, and he has made a fine record by the success he has achieved through hard, persistent parliamentary fighting. First, as being most important from a political point of view, the trade question may be mentioned. On this point Mr. Charlton's position has, in some respects, changed. He began as a protectionist of a moderate kind, but is now one of the strongest advocates of a pure revenue-tariff policy. He has always been enthusiastically in favour of reciprocal free trade with the United States. On this question, so long ago as 1869, he publicly advocated a Zollverein or customs union with the United States. In 1881 he referred the question to a convention of the Liberal electors of the riding of North Norfolk, and by that gathering his position was endorsed, and instructions were given him to continue his advocacy of the policy. Before the general election of 1887 he urged the adoption of this policy upon the leader of the Liberal party, Hon. Edward Blake, but that gentleman did not see his way to proposing it as the party platform. Nevertheless, after the general election, in the first of the several bye-elections in Haldimand in 1888, Mr. Charlton squarely advocated Commercial Union, as the proposal came to be called, and also addressed a large meeting of his own constituents at

Waterford, his utterances on the subject being received with favour by the people. At a later date the Hon. Wilfrid Laurier, who followed Mr. Blake as leader, formally made reciprocity the principal plank in the party platform. Mr. Charlton tried hard to induce his friends to make a declaration for a customs union, representing that only in this way could the revenue difficulty be met. Notwithstanding that the party's platform is Unrestricted Reciprocity, Mr. Charlton makes no secret of his personal opinion that the clearer and more easily explained system of customs union, which obviates the loss of revenue difficulty that will attend Unrestricted Reciprocity, is the true policy for the country and for the Liberal party. In no speeches that he makes does Mr. Charlton display more ability than in those he makes upon trade and fiscal questions. As a leader in the denunciation of extravagance and corruption, whether in high or low places, Mr. Charlton has rendered his party and his country signal service. In the session of 1885, he called for a return showing the applications for timber limits, with notes as to what had been done in each case. The papers were brought down in 1886, a tremendous collection of thirteen or fourteen thousand foolscap pages. With a perseverance, worthy of all praise, Mr. Charlton went through the whole of this material, and having mastered its contents, he presented in a powerful speech a summary of what he had learned. He showed that about twenty-five thousand square miles of territory, a large portion of it in the disputed territory, had been granted by the government by private arrangement and without calling for tenders. Of the grantees a score or more were members of Parliament and senators, and there were, besides, a hundred or more applications granted to outside parties on the application of legislators. Upon the facts thus presented, Mr. Charlton based a resolution declaring that the practice of thus using the public lands to conciliate parliamentary supporters was one destructive of the independence of parliament. The resolution was voted down, but the facts presented in the speech were used with tremendous effect in both the provincial and Dominion election campaigns which followed within twelve months. Another question which, in its time, even overshadowed that of the tariff, was the proposal for the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. When the contract with the syndicate was announced in the session of 1880-81, the Liberals opposed it with all their force, not only in the House, but in the country during the short time in the Christmas recess that was available for public agitation. In the forefront of this fierce war of opinion, Mr. Charlton was conspicuous. He, more clearly than any of his colleagues, outlined a policy which he con-