

last ten years, having had no rebellion, having had good crops, having had good times, and a high tariff, the Government would have wiped out 50 or 100 millions of the national debt. Instead of that the debt has increased alarmingly, and I speak for the majority of the people of this country when I say that it is high time to put an end to this mismanagement of our affairs. It is time this country were administered honestly, not for the benefit of the few at the expense of the many, but for the general welfare of the people at large. Sir, the people are not asleep, the people are not ignorant, and they cannot be bamboozled much longer by the sophistry of the Conservative party.

Mr. CAMERON. Mr. Speaker, I am sure you will be glad to learn that at this stage of the debate it is not my intention to inflict a long speech on the House. It is very interesting, I am sure, to myself and to many older members of the House to listen to a discussion on the National Policy. It is true the National Policy has been established as a compromise between the various interests and industries in the Dominion. In 1867, at the outset of confederation, the tariff on goods imported into Canada was 20 per cent, in New Brunswick, the tariff was 15 per cent; in Nova Scotia, 10 per cent. As might be expected, a compromise was made between the various tariffs on goods imported from abroad into the several provinces forming the confederation, and the tariff originally adopted by this Dominion was a tariff of 15 per cent. This, as can easily be seen, was a compromise between the tariffs adopted previous to confederation by the several provinces of this Dominion. For the first six or seven years of confederation this was the tariff in existence. When the Conservative party was defeated in 1874, the Liberals adopted a new tariff. It was then found necessary to increase the tariff from 15 to 17½ per cent. During the Liberal regime, it was ascertained that the tariff was not sufficient to maintain the revenues of this Dominion at a figure to enable the Government to meet their obligations. It was found necessary in 1877 to increase the tariff. They increased it on various lines of goods, and on many articles which were imported into the Dominion from 17½ to 25 per cent. If a careful analysis is made of the tariff in existence in 1877 and 1878 it will be found that it was not very materially lower than the existing tariff. In 1870, I may observe, the Parliament of Canada conceived the idea of adopting a national policy. At that time, Parliament determined to adopt a policy of protection to the natural resources of the Dominion of Canada, as regards the products of the mine, of the field, of the sea, and of the forest; but, unfortunately, owing to a great desire on the part of the western provinces particularly, to have coal imported into Canada free of duty, that

policy lasted but a short time. It was found, however, that it gave a great stimulus to the various industries, even during the short period in which it was in existence, and after it had been abandoned for several years, the Liberal-Conservative party, very wisely, as I believe, adopted a national policy, which, as was properly stated at the time, did not, after all, mean or intend to mean an increase of taxation on the people; the object at the time was simply to so readjust the tariff as to foster the industries of this Dominion, to develop the natural resources of the country, and in this way prove a benefit to the Dominion at large. This has been the policy since 1879. This policy has been assailed by hon. gentlemen opposite for a long period now, and if I am a judge of the situation, they seem to me to be just as far from displacing the Government from the treasury benches on the lines of their policy to-day as they have been in years past. They adopted, for a short time, it is true, commercial union, then unrestricted reciprocity, continental union, and now at last they have come down to a policy for revenue only, on the lines of British free trade. The resolution which is now under consideration of the House was moved by the hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright), and is as follows:—

That, inasmuch as enormous sums of money are now exacted from the people of Canada which are not paid into the treasury, and inasmuch as the burthens of the people are thereby greatly and unnecessarily increased, and it is of the utmost importance to the well-being of the community that not only should the present extravagant expenditure be diminished, but that the said burthens should be reduced as largely and speedily as possible,—it is expedient that in making provision to restore “the equilibrium between revenue and expenditure,” as recommended in the Speech from the Throne, the existing tariff be so modified that it may be made a tariff for revenue only.

This means nothing more, and nothing less than a revenue tariff on the lines of British free trade, as enunciated by the leader of the Opposition from the Atlantic to the Pacific. This resolution, therefore, is one on which, it appears to me, hon. gentlemen opposite have determined to appeal to the people at the polls. It is, therefore, of interest to Parliament and the people of the whole Dominion, to inquire how a revenue tariff, on the lines of free trade, will affect the various industries of this Dominion. The revenue in Great Britain is raised by customs to a considerable extent, and practically, the balance of it is raised by direct taxation. As has been pointed out by my hon. friend from Toronto (Mr. Coatsworth), it is impossible that Canada can adopt the British free trade policy in its entirety. But, the leaders of the Liberal party have announced, that every vestige of protection must be eliminated from the tariff, and to that extent