

levers it may possess in the negotiations; and I say so to-day, not in the spirit of retaliation, because I say, Sir, that we ought not to retaliate upon the United States in the way some people advocate. There are men, well meaning men, in Canada—Liberals, some of them, let us admit—who say that we should meet the Dingley Bill on the principle of an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and a dollar for a dollar. Such is the demand of many men in Canada to-day, but we submit it would not be wise to adopt that policy. We submit that it is a wiser policy to wait and see what shall be the outcome of the present uncertainty in the United States in relation to their trade policy and of the negotiations which we are willing to enter into with respect to reciprocity. We submit that pending such negotiations and pending the settlement of the American tariff question and a clear understanding of what will be the effect which their policy may have upon the affairs of Canada, it is the part of prudence that we should to-day hold our hands and not extend to that country the measure of tariff reform which we would be anxious to extend if they would meet us on liberal lines.

But there are those who say that if we do not care to deal with the tariff in its relations with the United States to-day, we ought not to disturb our existing tariff at all. I have heard it argued that what we should do is to let our own tariff stand as it is to-day. I cannot subscribe to that doctrine. The Liberal party has pledged itself to give tariff reform, and the country expects the Liberal party to fulfil that pledge. And if the events across the border have taken such a course as to justify us in withholding action in relation to our trade with that country, that is no reason why we should not proceed to deal with tariff reform in its relation to those countries which are prepared to deal with us. We are prepared to declare to this House and the world, that we will trade with those people, whoever they may be, who are willing to trade with us. We do it as individuals with our neighbours; we would buy from the neighbour who is willing to buy from us. What is a nation but a combination of many thousand individuals? And if an individual would be justified in dealing with the neighbour who wants to trade with him, why should not the nation be justified in adopting the same principle? We recognize the fact that if the Dingley Bill becomes law, it will have some effect on our trade. We do not complain of it; we have no right to complain of it. The American people have an undoubted right to frame their tariff policy with a single eye to their own interests, and we must recognize that without murmur; but they are an intelligent people, and intelligent enough to recognize the fact that if they have the right to frame their policy with a single eye

to their own interests, we have the right to frame our policy with a single eye to what we believe to be our interests. Therefore, while we say to our American brethren that we will not yield to this spirit of retaliation which is in the air, and for which there is, perhaps, very considerable justification, while we are not willing to put up the barbed wire fence which already exists three or four strands higher, there is no particular reason why we should take it down to-day. This leads to the conclusion that we must be prepared to deal with this question from the point of view of having one tariff for the countries which are willing to trade with us and a different tariff for the countries which are not. So far as our tariff has relation to those countries which have no particular desire to trade with us, we recognize that there are in it some items of sufficient importance to justify us in making reductions, not to please foreign countries, but to please ourselves. There are things we want to buy from foreign countries, and our desire to obtain these things on fair and reasonable terms is paramount to every other consideration in dealing with the tariff question. But with the exception of these articles to which I shall refer as I proceed, I have to tell the House that it is not the intention of the Government—speaking of the question generally, and not with reference to any particular article—to propose any great reduction in the tariff as applied to those countries which are not disposed to trade with us. We propose, therefore, to have a general tariff, and that general tariff will be, to a large extent, the tariff of to-day—but the tariff of to-day freed from some of its enormities, freed from some of the injustices of which the people complain, freed from many of the specific duties, freed from the conflicts, annoyances and irritation which have created war between the importer and the customs authorities—the tariff of to-day, in that sense, but not the tariff of to-day exactly, for if you remove from it all the evils I speak of, it is certainly not the tariff which hon. gentlemen opposite favour. We propose to adopt a general tariff, and then we propose to adopt a special tariff having reference to the countries which are desirous of trading with us; and as a matter of course, not by the express words of the resolution, but by the condition of affairs which exists, that preferential tariff gives preference, above all others, to the products of Great Britain.

Now, Mr. Speaker, having thus stated the guiding principles in the matter, I propose to invite your attention to the general tariff; and in doing so, I wish it to be distinctly understood that, as I have already explained, the duties are considerably higher than we intend they shall be, as applied to countries which are willing to trade with us. And if, as I read the items, hon. gentlemen think that the rate upon any of them is too