

I do not intend to speak at length on the Address, but simply to dwell for a few moments upon some of the contentions of the hon. gentlemen opposite. The preferential tariff seems to be a thorn in their side. They attack it on all sides, discuss it, and call it a blunder of the Liberal party, but when they are asked if they condemn it they immediately withdraw and state that they have no intention of doing so. Yet it is not the best policy that could have been followed, according to the hon. gentlemen opposite, because they have not fathered that policy, and I am not so very much surprised at the stand they take. Up to November, 1900, they were convinced that the Liberal party were not a party that could govern this country. They were convinced that the whole science of government was within their ranks, and of course they suffered, were distressed that we should last for one parliament, but to their very great amazement they saw that the policy of those men who could not govern this country had been approved by the overwhelming majority in the country. Preferential trade, says the hon. gentleman from Prince Edward Island, was blundered into by the Laurier government. They did not look for the results they obtained. They wanted to strike every other country, and they pretended that German trade and Belgian trade was not to benefit by that reduction given to British goods. I will readily admit that Sir Louis Davies, when he started upon his journey to convince the law officers of the Crown that this reduction should be limited to Great Britain only, and not extended to German and Belgian goods, was expressing a legal opinion which had considerable weight, but at the same time he knew full well that if the Law Lords of the British Crown declared against him, the British government would be in the dilemma of accepting the benefit of the preference and repudiating the two treaties, or refusing the benefit which was offered. At the same time the premier of Canada crossed the sea and by his fair and open declaration that he wanted no *quid pro quo*, that he thought free trade England had done sufficiently for Canada by opening its doors absolutely to our trade and was entitled to some kind of return and advantage in our markets, touched the hearts of the British people and created such a sentiment that although

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND.

the British law officers declared against the contention of Sir Louis Davies, the Prime Minister of this country carried his point. Yet my hon. friends opposite say that he blundered into it. We know that somebody blundered in England about that time, and somebody blundered just 48 hours before Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Salisbury's government denounced the German and Belgian treaties. That somebody was not the prime minister of Canada. He had hoped to be, and was chagrined because he had failed, and he had declared it was ridiculous that these treaties could be denounced by Great Britain. That gentleman was Sir Charles Tupper himself. He was given the lie direct 48 hours afterwards by the action of the Imperial government which denounced those treaties.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—Where did Sir Charles Tupper make that declaration?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND—In London, forty-eight hours before the announcement, but I think it was his misfortune to make it twenty-four hours before the treaties were denounced.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—I never heard of it before.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND—My hon. friend just shows that when he abandons his duties in this House and resumes his duties in that splendid garden, Prince Edward Island, he is so interested in it that he does not follow what takes place in London or in Ottawa. If my hon. friend will simply ask his colleague on his right, or his hon. friends at his back, I do not think he will find anybody but himself who is not aware that Sir Charles Tupper committed the blunder of declaring forty-eight hours, or perhaps twenty-four hours in advance that those treaties could not be denounced.

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—The government of which Sir Charles Tupper was the head, asked the Imperial government to have them denounced.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND—I have no objection to follow my hon. friend on that ground, but we are discussing what Sir Charles Tupper said forty-eight hours before.