

empire, who sustains my views as to the preserving effects of free trade on our empire. Sir Wilfrid Laurier says: "There are parties who hope to maintain the British Empire upon lines of restricted trade. If the British Empire is to be maintained, it can only be upon the most absolute freedom, political and commercial. In building up this great empire, to deviate from the principle of freedom will be to so much weaken the ties and bonds which hold it together." That is the view I hold, and, I believe, you hold in this hall. (Cheers.) It only requires the force of law to give effect to Sir Wilfrid's policy, and he is in the position of power to carry it out.

That is the interpretation put by Lord Rosebery, leader of the Liberal party in England, on Sir Wilfrid Laurier's remarks. The people of Great Britain have taken exactly the same ground. Some of the leaders of the Conservative party in this country, and I believe the Conservatives generally, still cling to what they call preferential trade—that we will lower our duties to Great Britain if Great Britain will give us a preference over the United States and other countries of the world. I was in the House of Commons last night and heard Sir Charles Tupper refer to the Governor General and the remarks made by His Excellency lately in the city of Toronto. The moment I read those remarks I regarded them as an intimation from the British Government—the Conservative party in England conveying through the Governor General to the Conservative party in Canada that the carrying out of that policy was an impossible one—that the imports of the people of Great Britain were confined almost entirely to raw materials and to food and upon the cheapening of both of these important articles, which are imported to the extent of about \$1,000,000,000 per year they relied for their prosperity—that it would be ruin to the trade of England and ruin to the industrial population of Great Britain if they put any tax, however small, upon that enormous import of articles which are so essential to the welfare and prosperity of the people of Great Britain. Any one can see in a moment that the strength of Britain's policy is free trade. There is no nation in the world which can show such remarkable prosperity, such a redundant revenue and such freedom from debt. Germany, France and Russia have increased their debt; the United States have increased their debt; Canada has increased her debt. The only nation that has not increased her debt is the British nation. They have been reducing it year after year at the rate of forty or fifty millions of dollars every year. If that

condition is arrived at through the policy of free trade that she is to-day following, how would she prosper under the opposite condition by taxing the food and the raw materials that are imported there to be worked over for export to the markets of the world by her industrial population? Instead of condemning the Governor General for the stand that he took—and I have no authority for supposing any more than my own intelligence—we should carefully weigh his words. That the Governor General would attempt for a moment to interfere in the battle of the two parties in Canada,—

Hon. Mr. McCALLUM—It looks like it.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—No; but he is the representative of the British Government in Canada, and if the British Government have thought it desirable to convey to the people of Canada the stand they are obliged to take upon the policy that is being developed in any portion of the British Empire which requires their sanction to the adoption of such a clause, they are quite justified in giving timely warning and timely notice to the people of Canada that it would be ruin to their own policy if they attempted to carry out such an arrangement. If I am correct in my idea, that the Governor General was acting as the mouthpiece between the government of Great Britain or maybe Her Majesty herself and the people of Canada in so far as that is concerned, I have no fault to find with him or with the British Government asking him to make that reference.

Hon. Mr. McCALLUM—We have responsible government.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—Certainly we have responsible government, but while the Governor General is guided by the constitutional advice given by his advisers here in Canada, he has a certain responsibility also to the British Government who have sent him here, as the connecting link in the British constitution which binds an empire together and I say in exercising his responsibility in that respect, he was perfectly right and perfectly justified. It was not a question of domestic politics in Canada, but a question that involves the taxation of the imports of Great Britain. It was not an interference with our domestic policy at all, but dealing with a proposition to im-