

Mr. MULOCK. Does the hon. gentleman say that, under the present tariff, the necessities of life are free?

Mr. DAVIN. I say that, under the present tariff, what are commonly called the necessities of life are free, and I shall be glad, when the hon. gentleman speaks, if he will show how, as the hon. gentleman who proposed this motion, has not done, he could get the revenue needed for carrying on the business of Canada without taxing articles which, according to his interpretation of the phrase, "necessaries of life," would come within that category. I will go further than that, I will promise to vote with the hon. gentleman, when it comes to a division, if the ablest amongst them will rise and show how the wit of man could raise the revenue necessary for carrying on the affairs of Canada at this moment by customs and excise, without having in the customs tariff, as my hon. friend the Finance Minister suggested, some of the elements of protection, (Cheers). At the first glance of this tariff, those of us who advocated reductions in the interest of the farmer, were disappointed. We had hoped that, for instance, agricultural implements would be free, that one or two other articles would be free; but, when I came to examine the tariff as a whole, I came to this conclusion, and I will endeavour to show that is the case before I sit down, that those for whom we agitated last session and the session before, have received a great deal more than if we had been successful last year and had induced the Finance Minister to give us that comparatively contracted measure of reform which we urged upon him at that time. The Finance Minister, and the Government generally, instead of doing what we asked them, took a course of which, at the time, I did not approve. They said: "We will not do that; on the contrary, we will postpone this matter for a year; some of our members will go and see the manufacturers and the farmers, and we will make ourselves acquainted with the exact condition of affairs." There were excuses, I confess, for their taking that course, because those who spoke, as representatives of the people, uttered a divided voice in the House. Some said they

wanted a tariff reform in the direction embodied in the motion which I had the honour to place on the motion paper. Others said they did not think such a reform was needed, that the farmers were perfectly content. Under those circumstances, it was perfectly natural that the Government should say that they must come into direct contact with the people of the country. Another idea, evidently, came into the minds of the Government. It occurred to them that, if they made any move, and it was so stated by the Prime Minister, I think, there must be a general revision, that the time has come to revise the tariff, and a general revision should be made, and the only way that it could be done was by doing, but more thoroughly, what Sir Leonard Tilley did in 1879, go about the country, come into contact with the various industries and ascertain exactly how they were progressing, and how much reduction could be made with loyalty to the principle on which hon. gentlemen stood, as a Government, and with justice to the industries that had been called into being by that policy. The hon. Minister of Finance and Senator Angers came west; and, from the moment they touched the west, there was one universal voice in favor of certain reductions or certain abolitions in regard to duties on articles used by the farmers. The result of their coming west was, that one of the papers opposed to me attacked me, as if the coming west of those gentlemen showed that the Government had no confidence in what I represented in this House. But I pointed out to those who attacked me, as I point out now, that it was most natural, seeing that the voice coming from the west was divided and the Ministers should take the course they took. We had a meeting at Regina, and Mr. Bole, a prominent farmer, spoke at it. The hon. Finance Minister was so struck with the ability and exhaustiveness of the speech made by Mr. Bole, that he turned round to me and asked who he was, and expressed the opinion, which he holds in common with all who heard that gentleman, that the speech was a thoughtful one, and that, evidently, he was well posted. Mr. Bole asked for a reduction in certain directions,