

that, I wish to be distinctly and positively understood as not being one of those who are desirous of framing our fiscal policy, or any other policy, upon the basis upon which the United States govern their people. What I think we should do as Canadians is to consider first what is in our own interest, what is to our greatest advantage, and just as soon as we have come to that conclusion, our policy should be along that line and along no other. At the same time, while a neighbouring country places on its statute-books any law which materially affects us, if we can gain any advantage by following in their footsteps in that particular, I do not hesitate to say that in the interests of the people of Canada, we should follow that course, but where it does not have that effect, where it has a contrary effect, we should never be, as an independent people, the slavish followers of any foreign country, particularly as affects our fiscal policy and our tariff arrangements. These are the views that I hold, and I believe they are held generally by the party with which I am connected in this country—Canada first, and in all particulars we ought to govern ourselves in our own interests. The hon. gentleman repeated statements that we have heard very often as to the trade policy of this country. He tells us that our increase in trade has not been wonderful during the past year. It is not as great, I presume, as any of us would like it to have been, but when we contrast the trade of Canada and its present financial, moral and industrial position with that of any other portion of the world at the present day, there is no Canadian who knows anything of his country but must be proud of the fact that he is a Canadian. Has not our trade increased in a greater ratio than that of our neighbours across the border? Have we not, displayed in all our enterprises more caution, and have we not attained to a greater height in the length of time that we have been working under the policy which my hon. friend condemns so strenuously, than any other country in the world? I will not attempt to waste the time of this House in discussing the causes which led to the depression that prevails in the United States. It is a happy thought with the hon. gentleman opposite and those who oppose the policy of the present government, to attribute it to the silver question. My own convictions are that the great depression in the United States at the

present day, is, to a very great extent due to the fact that people are in an unsettled state, not knowing what the Government intend to do. It is true, as he says, the late elections in the United States gave the impression, at least to the people of the outer world, that Congress was to reduce the tariff, and, with that expectation, trade at once became disturbed to a very great extent. When I say trade, I mean the buying and selling, and the importing from foreign countries. No man will import and pay a high rate of duty when he is looking forward with fond expectation to the duty being lowered. What are the facts? The hon. gentleman has admitted that the people of the United States are not to receive the advantages that they anticipated after the election. Look at the Wilson Bill itself. Take it in all its details: while there is a reduction in the tariff, it is from 15 to 25 per cent higher than our tariff. That is the position in which it went up from the House of Representatives. How does it present itself to us to-day? Are they to have a tariff based upon free trade principles, and which we are asked to follow? Would my hon. friend be willing to enter into a reciprocity treaty, pure and simple, with the United States, taking their tariff as proposed by the Senate, or as it is likely to be placed on the statute-book?—We are told that the McKinley tariff in the United States and the "Foster tariff" in this country have been the cause of great depression in the country. Why, the "Foster tariff," as he terms it, or the Canadian tariff, has been 30 to 50 per cent less than that of the United States, and I am one of those who believe, and have not hesitated to express that opinion, not only in this country, but in the Antipodes, when I was addressing the chambers of commerce in Australia, that instead of the McKinley tariff ruining the trade of Canada and injuring our farmers, it has only compelled Canadians to seek other markets, and in seeking those markets, they have not only secured them but have obtained better prices and a better profit from the change. In speaking of the trade of the Dominion, we are constantly reminded of the year 1873. I venture the assertion that there is scarcely a gentleman in this House who has not heard the same thing repeated in every speech made by gentlemen of the opposition, on this question. The year 1873, as hon. gentlemen know, was abnormal in the history of Canada, so far as our imports