

upon the prophecies of those who advocate it in this country. I had shown that in my researches I came across the speech of my hon. friend from North Toronto (Mr. Foster) in 'Hansard' of 1892, which is the first reference I have found of his in relation to this subject. We find the hon. member next figuring on this topic in the Imperial Conference which was held in Ottawa in 1894—seventeen years ago. I think it quite important to look at these things, I think it quite important to go into the history of my hon. friend in this connection and look at the Chamberlain preference for a little while. For it will be clear to the whole House that one of the arguments of hon. gentlemen opposite is that we ought to postpone trade arrangements with other parts of the world in case we may interfere with some possible trade arrangement in the future with Great Britain. At page 234 of the report of that conference, the hon. gentleman from North Toronto ventured a prediction—as he so often does—and said that in twenty years time the larger part of Britain will be outside of Great Britain. At page 184 he places the time at twenty-five years. Well, that puts these prophecies within a few days of one another. A discrepancy of five years in the prophecies of a man who takes eternity to fulfil his prophecies is not a very long time. That was seventeen years ago. Senator Pulsford, of the Australian Commonwealth, has shown that these prophecies so far from giving promise of fulfilment, not only have the outlying portions of the British Empire not grown in a way to surpass Great Britain, but it happens that they have not grown even proportionately as fast in population as the United Kingdom has grown. And this prophecy was due to be fulfilled in twenty-five years. The hon. member for North Toronto spoke again upon the subject, as reported at page 205 of the report.

Since our meeting yesterday, I have read the comments in the British papers, and, you may depend upon it, that in the British Empire to-day the seed has more than sprouted; it is germinating.

He got a little mixed in his botany, I think, unless I am misinformed, germination comes before sprouting.

The idea is growing, and it is going—

Mark the courage, the confidence in himself.

—it is going, ultimately, to bring the different parts of the empire together, in spite of all the doctrinaires that live and breathe upon the face of the earth.

The House recognizes the style. Well, now, I do not know the exact condition of this botanical specimen to-day, but I think it is withered pretty badly; I do not think the growth is taking place very rapidly. What a magnificent contempt for doctrin-

aires my hon. friend has—almost as much contempt as he has for the members of the present cabinet. I wonder that he did not reflect, in 1894, that his record as a trade producer—for that was the middle year of the three years I quoted this afternoon when the trade of Canada was disappearing under his fostering hand—I wonder that he did not reflect that he was scarcely the man to talk to either doctrinaires or anybody else about how to promote trade either in Canada or in the British Empire. Just imagine the hon. member, with such performances and such prophecies, coming into this House and telling the hon. ministers who, after all, having found that trade as he had it diminishing have been able to show a marvellous expansion of the trade of Canada in the last fifteen years—just imagine him standing upon a pedestal raised there by his performances, and by his sense, no doubt, of his own greatness, and saying: 'They are two very ordinary men; and the other members of the cabinet are thirteen very ordinary men.' The time has come when some one has got to say in this House and this country that the hon. member for North Toronto has no record as a statesman, and no record as a prophet which for one moment justifies him in using language like that to any hon. member on this side of the House. And then he had contempt for the doctrinaires who did not quite see this thing as he saw it, mere tyros in politics, men like Gladstone, and Peel, and Lord Salisbury, and Cobden—men of absolutely opposite sides of politics in Great Britain, but all of whom knew more about this preference thing, and the difficulty of making it live than the hon. member for North Toronto had even dreamed. And I should like to advise the hon. gentleman, if he pays any attention to what I say, not to be too much impressed by what he reads in the Tory papers of London. During the whole of my life, it has been a safe thing to prophesy that, in elections, the United Kingdom will go just in the opposite direction from the prophecies of the Tory press of London. That is an almost invariable rule; and if the hon. gentleman had known that, he would not have been so elated at what he read in the London Tory press the day after he made his comments. And if he reads the Unionist press at the present time, he will observe the extraordinary spectacle that, while all agree that preference of the Chamberlain order is a corpse, they are divided in opinion as to what to do with it. Half of them are in favour of burying it, while the other half—and the more stupid lot, I think—are in favour of hanging on to it.

I have not quite finished with the hon. gentleman's prophecies. They are interesting and are not altogether ancient history. At page 206 of this report which I have been quoting the hon. gentleman said: