

# Hon. Wilfrid Laurier's Speech

ON THE

## TRADE QUESTION.

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*On the occasion of the resolution which was presented to the House of Commons by the member for L'Islet,  
August 4th, 1891.*

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MR. LAURIER. Mr. Speaker, when some few weeks ago the hon. gentleman introduced the motion which he has now again placed in your hands, and which he was afterwards compelled to withdraw, for the reason he has alluded to, he launched upon us as a Parthian arrow the threat that we should still hear his motion. One would have hoped, one might have expected, that in the meantime reflection and better advices would have given him a wiser decision; but it is evident that the hon. gentleman has for this offspring of his brain, the blind fondness which sometimes makes people mistake deformity for beauty; he dotes upon this motion of his. Not satisfied with presenting it to us, in the form in which he presented it to us the first time, he has embellished it, and given it a new toilet for the present occasion. Still, it seems to me that it remains what it was at first, an *olla podrida* which it would be difficult even for the rude stomachs of National Policy men to digest. There are some things in this motion which under ordinary circumstances I should not object to; but the hon. gentleman has not been quite fair.

### HE GIVES US SOMETHING TO SWALLOW

which in itself might be acceptable, in order to cram down our throats a good deal that is altogether unpalatable. For instance, the hon. gentlemen wants us to approve of the policy of the Government in their efforts to extend our trade with the far East, with the West Indies, with Great Britain, and with the United States. What have the Government done to extend our trade with the far East? They have subsidized some steamers. Certainly that is not a stroke of genius nor anything unheard of. And what have the Government done to extend our trade with the West Indies? They have again subsidized steamers, and not only that, they have sent my hon. friend the Minister of Finance to negotiate reciprocity treaties with our sister colonies in the West Indies and with the Spanish colonies as well. My hon. friend, however, has never boasted of his success in that line. He has not been very prompt in laying before the House the result of his efforts. It is only within eight days that he has thought fit to acquaint the House of the result of his endeavours; and certainly he will agree with me that he has not much to boast of in that direction.