

them. With respect to free trade with the United States, we have had some very remarkable admissions from these hon. gentlemen opposite. A few years ago they were constantly telling us that there was no possibility of obtaining reciprocal trade with the United States; but a few weeks ago the Premier of this country admitted in Toronto, that there was no difficulty whatever in obtaining reciprocity with the neighbouring republic. It follows, Sir, that when I first proposed that measure five years ago, Canada might have had reciprocal trade, if the Government had chosen to work for it; Canada to-day might have had 500,000 people which she has lost since that proposal was rejected, and Canada might also have doubled or trebled her trade with the United States, but these hon. gentlemen opposite would have none of it. Had they been honest in this matter, had they stuck to their original declaration, had they adopted and stood fast by the policy which the Finance Minister himself declared when I first brought forward this matter in 1888, why, Sir, then I would have said, that at least they have the credit of consistency. But what has their course been? When in 1888 I proposed that we should open negotiations with the United States, they refused deliberately, on the ground that they would make no effort whatever to have free trade with the States, unless they could secure the interests of the protected few. When in 1889 I repeated that motion I was met with a direct negative, and in 1890, as the House knows, when the motion was again proposed, Mr. Colby was good enough to blurt out the truth that the Government did not want anything to do with it, and that the Government did not even believe in the exchange of natural products. Now, Sir, what are we to say of the miserable falsehood which preceded and followed the elections of 1891, when these hon. gentlemen opposite dared to go to the country under the pretense that they required the mandate of the people to enable them to negotiate a reciprocity treaty with the United States, which they had not the remotest idea of honestly attempting to do? Has the House forgotten the humiliation to which Sir Charles Tupper was subjected when over his own hand, he was obliged to report to the Government of Canada that he had to proceed with Sir Julian Pauncefote, the British Ambassador, to the presence of Mr. Blaine, and there humbly to recant all that he had said to the people of Canada as to the alleged invitation of the United States Government to come and treat with them? Do they remember their whole conduct since 1886? What has been their policy as regard the United States? Their policy has been to snarl and to run away, their policy has been to bluster and to cringe, and I, for one, felt humiliation when the Finance Minister, rising in his place, told us that he, the Finance Minister of Canada, had to appeal to Mr. Blaine, the Premier of the United

States, to be instructed in what way he might raise taxes out of the people of Canada. I, for one, reaffirm my position. I say clearly and distinctly that as matters stand to-day in Canada—although it need not have been so, and although it was not always so—no great development is possible unless in some form or shape, either by the voluntary good-will of the United States or by a reciprocity treaty, the markets of the rest of this continent are thrown open to us. I say, Sir, that that condition is fixed for us by geographical considerations. I do not mean to say that we cannot enjoy a moderate prosperity without; but I do say that after the chances which Canada has thrown away, as in 1867, when she entered on the race of national existence, with extraordinary advantages over the United States, and which we've thrown away by the folly of the Government of the day, and afterwards, in 1878, when we had pretty well extricated ourselves from the effects of the villainous improvidence of preceding Administrations—I say, Sir, that after throwing away those chances, it is no longer possible for us to hope for any great development of the really great resources which Canada possesses unless it is through obtaining access to the markets of the United States. But, Sir, although we may not be able to obtain that; although I am perfectly willing to own that the conduct of the Government of Canada for the past seven years has been such as to put a great impediment in our way; although there is no doubt that, from first to last, whether under Cleveland or under Harrison, they have so conducted themselves as to become objects of just suspicion to the American Government; yet I say that there is a good deal that still remains for us to do. We can reform this system. We can, beyond all doubt, if we choose, grant a great and permanent relief to the people of this country. We can reduce the taxation which now presses upon them. I am not now discussing what is abstractly the best; I am simply discussing what is the best possible. I say it is right that time and due consideration should be given. I say, although this is a case, not of cutting away mouldering branches, but of cutting down the entire Upas tree, it is right and proper that the bystanders should be duly warned. It is true that the Government have made reciprocity with the United States in their time and by them quite impossible; but there is no doubt that the tariff which we now have to deal with is a tariff vicious in the extreme. It is not merely a tariff under which great waste and huge extortion are perpetrated. It is a tariff that sins in every possible form. Now, what are the universal notes or marks of a good system of taxation? I will tell the hon. gentleman. A good and honest taxation will take as little as possible out of the pockets of the people beyond what goes into the treasury. A good and honest taxation will be uniform in its operation on all classes and sections; it will