

Canada and her sons of whom Robert Reid, the poet of Canada has said:

Sing me a song of the great Dominion;
Soul felt words for a patriot's ear;
Ring out boldly the well turned measure
Voicing your notes that the world may hear;
Here is no stravelling—Heaven forsaken—
Shrinking aside where the nations throng;
Proud as the proudest she moves among them—
Worthy is she of a noble song.
Sing me the worth of each Canadian—
Roamer in wilderness, toiler in town—
Search earth over you will find none stauncher,
Whether his hands be white or brown;
Come of a right good stock to start with,
Best of the world's blood in each vein;
Lords of ourselves, and slaves to no one,
For us or from us, you'll find we're—men.

And Canada desires, with her men, to be left alone to work out that destiny that she has been working out so bravely for the years of the past. And if the present government do not allow her to go on in her own way with her own development, there will come a fearful day of reckoning for them as soon as the Canadian people have an opportunity to speak their mind upon this question.

Hon. RODOLPHE LEMIEUX (Postmaster General). Mr. Chairman, I shall crave the indulgence of the committee for a short time to express to the House and the country the arguments that offer themselves to me in favour of the policy wisely pursued by this government and cheerfully held by the best elements of this country of ours. I hope that in the few remarks I intend to make I shall approach this subject dispassionately. It is one of those issues of national importance which naturally should bar out any party spirit and any dissonant accents; because, Mr. Chairman, speaking of reciprocity of trade between Canada and the United States of America can only mean discussing the development, the progress, the ultimate grandeur of both countries.

I have listened, as I listen always, with great interest and great attention to my old and genial friend from East Grey (Mr. Sproule). I paid careful attention to his tale of woe. When I refer to my hon. friend as an old friend, I only mean that he is one of the old members of the House of Commons. It is one of the privileges of old age to become at times sentimental, reminiscent and even witty. My hon. friend in his tale of woe, has interspersed that tale with reminiscences of the past, with a little sentiment expressed at times in poetical quotation, and with a few witticisms, from the south of Ireland I suppose. In the closing sentences, and even at the beginning of his speech, he stated in a very manly way—forgetting the immediate past—

that this Canada of ours had good markets, had good times, and that we should let this country work out its own destiny. Without discussing all the points raised by my hon. friend in his very interesting, very witty and very sentimental speech, let me tell him that I take issue with him on this point. Granted that we have good times, but our policy is to have better times; granted that we have good markets, which we of the Liberal party have created during the past 14 years; but we want better markets. And so, while accepting what my hon. friend said, I will put it this way: Let Canada, with better times and better markets, work out its own destiny under the aegis of the British Crown. My hon. friend (Mr. Sproule) is full of fears as to the future of this young country, I am full of hope as to the future of this country of ours. And as he has quoted a little poetry let me remind him of the beautiful words of Tennyson, the great poet laureate, in speaking of the grandeur of England, and of the still greater hopes of that country:

We sailed wherever ships can sail,
We founded many a mighty state;
Pray God our greatness may not fail
Thro' craven fear of being great!

And I must say at once, that this can be addressed as much to myself as to my hon. friend. Sentiment, however, is a sorry substitute for sound argument. I am reminded of this old English truism by the fact that my hon. friend in his many reminiscences, in his sentimental moods, whilst unbiassed by party politics, as he stated from the beginning, paid his compliments to the old National Policy. I do not blame my hon. friend, he was a faithful supporter of the old chieftain, Sir John A. Macdonald. But has he forgotten that when Sir John A. Macdonald introduced in 1879 the National Policy before this parliament, he inserted a clause in the statute, whereby a reciprocal offer was made to the United States of America? The reciprocity offer did not work, and we remained with the high protective wall raised by the Conservative party in 1879 until 1896. What is the tale of woe of that policy adopted in 1879? I say that sentiment is a sorry substitute for sound facts and sound arguments. It is rather remarkable that I should lecture, if he will allow me, my old friend from East Grey, and tell him, I, a Frenchman, that I have more faith in facts and figures than in poetry, when discussing a financial question. What did the National Policy do during the 18 years of office of the Conservative party? Under the National Policy, from 1879 until 1884, the rate of increase of exports of Canadian produce was 17 per cent; from 1884 to 1889, 7 per cent; from 1889 to 1896, 29 per cent; and from 1896 to 1901 during our tenure