

tariff is largely on the principle of the old tariff, and therefore it cannot be other than protective in its principles. They told us :

That the existing tariff is, founded upon an unsound principle—

The unsound principle in the old tariff was protection, and yet the Finance Minister tells us that the old tariff is largely the one which this Government has adopted. It was on an unsound principle before, but they have not changed that principle ; therefore, they have not kept faith with the country. Then, it says, that this tariff, based on this unsound principle, has produced these evils :

It has developed monopolies, trusts and combinations ;

It has decreased the value of farm and other landed property ;

It has oppressed the masses to the enrichment of a few ;

It has checked immigration ;

It has caused great loss of population ;

It has impeded commerce ;

It has discriminated against Great Britain ;

All of which evils must continue to grow in intensity as long as the present tariff system remains in force.

And yet, notwithstanding all these evils here enumerated, the Minister declares that the tariff is very much as it was before in the first schedule, which is the principal one and the one under which we will operate for some time to come.

That the highest interests of Canada demand a removal of this obstacle to our country's progress.

That it should be so adjusted as to make free, or bear as lightly as possible upon, the necessities of life, and should be so arranged as to promote free trade with the whole world, more particularly with Great Britain and the United States.

We denounce the principle of protection as radically unsound, and unjust to the masses of the people, and we declare our conviction that any tariff changes based on that principle must fail to afford any substantial relief from the burdens under which the country labours.

If they have based their new tariff, and according to the hon. Minister's declaration they have, upon exactly the same principle, then it must fail to bring relief to the people of Canada, according to his argument.

Now, I have a word to say on what the hon. Minister is pleased to call the general tariff, because we have practically two tariffs. In my judgment it deviates very slightly from the old protective tariff, and so far as it keeps close to that line, I confess I admire it, and have not much complaint to make with it. The changes they have made are in my opinion in the wrong direction, though they will not much disturb the business of the country. But in all the glamour with which this general tariff has gone out to the world, many people have lost sight of the other part, which

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gives special privileges to other countries. I candidly believe that as time advances, and the operation of that tariff becomes better known, you will hear a very widespread complaint against it. Now, we have the tariff of to-day, which is a protective tariff. The hon. gentlemen were to do away with protection. The hon. Finance Minister admits that himself. He says in his own speech :

But with the exception of these articles to which I shall refer as I proceed, I have to tell the House that it is not the intention of the Government—speaking of the question generally, and not with reference to any particular article—to propose any great reduction in the tariff as applied to those countries which are not disposed to trade with us. We propose, therefore, to have a general tariff, and that general tariff will be, to a large extent, the tariff of to-day.

Then, I say, it is a protective tariff, and to that extent I admire it and have very little complaint to make of it. But the hon. gentleman says they are fulfilling their pledges. Is that a fact ? What did the hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright) say in my constituency in 1896. He said :

I stand by the declaration I have made, that protection is nothing more nor less than deliberate, legalized and organized robbery, and, more than that, if you do not stamp it out, it is the very high road to political slavery first, and industrial slavery afterward.

What did he say at Chatham ? He said :

That is very largely due to a most vicious system of legislation, under which the whole fiscal system of Canada has become an instrument of legalized robbery on a scale and to an extent absolutely unprecedented in the history of any other country so young as our own.

He said further :

Our policy is death to protection and war to the knife to corruption. Sir, we strike, and we will strike, for liberty and freedom from this system of protective taxation ; and I tell the hon. gentleman that we will not rest until the slavery that they have imposed upon us has become a thing of the past, and until Canadians are as free as Canadians ought to be free to make the most they can of the opportunities God has given them.

Yet the hon. Minister of Finance tells us it is the same tariff, with the exception of a few changes to do away with some of its enormities. Then the hon. member for South Oxford, speaking of the taxation of the people, said :

We pay 31 or 32 million dollars of taxes every year into the Treasury, and we are really taxed to the tune of 50 or 60 millions a year, counting what we pay to the legalized robbers, whose hands are never out of our pockets at your down-sitting or your up-rising, whether you eat, or drink, or work, or play, or sleep, or fall sick even.

He says, put us into power and we will change it all ; and yet the Finance Minister says that the tariff under which we are