

## THE CANADIAN TARIFF.

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The interest very generally displayed in the recent Commercial Legislation of Canada makes me glad to have the opportunity of meeting the Representatives of the Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom. The Canadian Ministers of Canada recently in London have desired me to convey to the Belfast Chamber of Commerce their best thanks for the invitation with which they honoured them, and also to express their very deep regret that public business compelled their return to Canada. The Finance Minister especially regrets that he has lost an opportunity to explain on this occasion and to this distinguished audience, the nature and extent of the changes effected in the Canadian Tariff under his advice.

No one can regret Sir Leonard Tilley's enforced absence more than myself, as you would then have had assurance from the highest authority that in the recent increase of Customs' duties, intentional hostility to British Trade was never for a moment suggested. You would also no doubt have had it authoritatively stated, that if in the preparation of a new and complex classification of Imports, undue pressure had been placed upon any special industry, such pressure would be removed. And he might also have been able to assure you in the name of the people and Government of Canada, that subject to their own pressing necessities, they recognise the plain and obvious duty of treating their own fellow subjects on more favoured terms than foreigners.

If however, I cannot address you with the authority and responsibility of the Finance Minister, I am on the other hand able to speak with greater freedom of the position and policy of Canada, and to unite more fully with you in the discussion of those subjects which are now occupying the minds of thoughtful men, observant of the deplorable depression in the Trading and Agricultural interests of the Kingdom.