

any knowledge—except those so sunk in barbarism that they had nothing to trade—but what adopted the principle of collecting, at any rate, the expenses of the Government from the Customs. It was unfortunate that hon. members read visionary and dreamy works on the subject and took them as authorities, the same as some people took romances as facts. The members of the House ought to be practical men, and deal with the great national interests from a practical standpoint; and they ought not to be misled by the dreams of men who endeavoured to put upon paper a system which never had been in force. It struck him that, when hon. members talked of putting these systems into operation, it was like a shoemaker who made the foot fit the shoe. The policy of “let alone” was a most pernicious one, applied to such a country as Canada, where we had a hard struggle with other countries, where we had such a wide territory, such long distances, and where we were in many other ways so unevenly matched against the nations of the earth. The doctrine was as old as the hills. It was a doctrine which was preached by the slaves that sat by the flesh-pots of Egypt over 3,000 years ago; in Christ’s time it was the doctrine of the devils; and in Louis XIV’s time it was the doctrine of legalized plunderers. He did not know, in the history of that energetic and heroic people, the French, any period, not even that following the battle of Waterloo, in which the national forces were so exhausted as during the reign of Louis XIV. The men who were legalized in order to plunder, when asked what could be done for them, said: “Nothing; let us alone.” There was not a robber or thief in this country but preached the same doctrine. This pernicious doctrine had driven the peasants in the land of his forefathers from their homes and had scattered them to the four winds of heaven, and had left their habitations a desolate and solitary abode for “his lordship’s” deer. Seeing that he entertained that view with reference to the great doctrine of letting everything alone, he had no hesitation in saying that his opinions were still firmly settled upon the necessity

of adopting a policy that would afford some protection to the industry of this country. When he came to look at the position in which the two great parties in this country were placed as regarded this question, he found that it was the doctrine of the present Administration, and also of the Opposition, not that we should have free trade, for that did not exist, not that we should have protection, for that had not been claimed by the right hon. the mover of the amendment, but that we should have a tariff for revenue purposes. One could see that, under that principle of raising our revenue, the first consideration was the question of revenue, and the second consideration the question of protecting our industries. It did not necessarily follow that the industries of the country must be considered in connection with the tariff. The hon. the leader of the Government talked free trade and put on additional duties; the right hon. member for Kingston talked protection, and, when he had the power, he reduced the duties. He noticed that the right hon. member laughed. But he (Mr. Blain) was a member of a deputation which waited upon the right hon. gentleman to urge against the reduction of the duty on manufactured tobacco. There were at that time seven tobacco factories in Toronto, and it was pointed out that, if the duty were taken off, there would not be a factory existing in Toronto in six months. And so it turned out. The right hon. gentleman refused to accede to the representations of the deputation, and in six months there was only one tobacco manufactory in Toronto, and that was for the manufacture of black tobacco for the back-woodsmen; and hundreds of people were thrown out of employment, many of whom left the country and went to the United States. The right hon. gentleman still declared that he was a Free-trader—he even did this in the speech in which he introduced his amendment. He (Mr. Blain) had come to the conclusion that it was not a question of protection or free trade with the right hon. gentleman, but of so agitating the public mind that he would again be enabled to occupy the Treasury benches. If the views of the hon. member for Hamilton