

was entitled to a brief holiday, and that under ordinary circumstances you could get along well enough without me. (A voice—"No.") Both suppositions proved true. I have looked into matters of considerable moment, have conversed with many leaders of public opinion in England, some members of the House of Commons, some members of the House of Lords, many citizens of high repute, and I believe I am better equipped now for public life than ever before. In regard to the second observation, I am convinced I made no mistake. I left the government of this country in the hands of colleagues who are able, talented and loyal. (Cheers and cries of "They're all right.") And I have not found that in my absence public interests have suffered in the slightest degree. I believe they are all the better for having been left in that condition for a short time. I am glad to say I am returning in good health and in good spirits, quite satisfied that Canada is prosperous and quite hopeful as to the prosperity, material and political, of this country for the future.

BRITISH OPINION CHANGING.

It is very gratifying to me, on my third visit to the Old Land, to find that the opinions of the people of the Mother Country have changed a good deal in the last fifteen years. It is quite true that we are thought of more than we were fifteen years ago. It is quite true that we are better known now than then, and I think I may say, without any reflection on the people of England, that it would not hurt them or us if we were even better known than we are now.

Several circumstances have combined to produce the present condition of affairs. First, the part taken by Canada in the great Jubilee celebration of 1897 indicated to the people of England that we had men of high repute, high standing and high character connected with public affairs. No name is more highly prized, no man of colonial origin in all the dependencies of the Empire is more highly esteemed, than the great leader of the Liberal party of Canada, Sir Wilfrid Laurier. (Cheers.) It was indeed a very gratifying circumstance to me, to know that not only are we considered materially one of the greatest colonies of the Empire, but to feel that the men who have the destinies of our country under their control are regarded as among the greatest statesmen of the Empire. (Cheers.)

The policy of the great Liberal party in giving a preference to the products of the British Empire in the markets of Canada has done a great deal to foster a feeling of sympathy and respect between Canada and the Empire. What British statesmen say is, "While you have a tariff that shuts out all nations not of British blood, and while in the exercise of your rights as a free colony you are at liberty to frame your tariff to suit yourselves, we regard it as a great compliment that you give to us, who are part of the Empire, the Mother Country, a preference you do not give to foreign countries. This you do with