

Canada where agriculture is the chief industry than it is to other sections of the country.

I should like to be permitted to say a few words of a more or less personal nature on the Australian Treaty. When that treaty had been brought before this House, and was extended by Order in Council, a few days afterwards, to apply to New Zealand, there was a meeting of a few Conservative senators, including the honourable gentleman who is sitting to my left (Hon. Mr. Pope) and myself. The honourable senator for Alma (Hon. G. G. Foster) was chairman of the meeting. We felt that the treaty should be attacked, although we all were, I think, of what might be called the Imperialistic school—as I have been all my lifetime. But after considering the matter further we came to the conclusion that it might be regarded as an ungracious act to raise strenuous objection to a treaty that had been made with a sister Dominion. That was the only reason why the treaty was not severely criticized at its very inception. Since then the Government has found that the treaty has been responsible for a great injury to the dairying industry of Canada. At last, after protests from all over the country, the Government has been forced, by pressure of public opinion, to change its policy. No better proof could be given of the soundness of our views at the time the treaty was introduced.

The Government has also made a change in its policy concerning fruit and vegetables. I shall not dwell on that matter; I merely wish to say that the Government initiated a policy on a yearly basis, and before it had been put fairly into effect there was a change to a seasonal basis, in line with the policy that has always been advocated by men of the same political views as my own. These changes go to show how difficult must be the lot of gentlemen who formerly were free traders and have been converted to at least moderate protection.

I should also like to make a few remarks on the subject of Imperial preference. To the limited extent that my means and circumstances permitted I have travelled in a great number of British Dominions, and in my humble way I have tried to study the question of how trade may be developed between the different Dominions to the advantage of them all. Therefore I think that I am in a position to discuss some features of the question of Imperial preference.

The Laurier Government introduced the first scheme of Imperial preference in Canada. The

budget that has been brought down by the present Minister of Finance has amazed many who belong to the same school of thought as I do. I think it is generally conceded that trade between Great Britain and Canada, on a sound basis, would be a highly desirable thing; but, Imperialist as I am, I do not believe the Britisher, who is the keenest trader in the world, ever expected to get from us something for nothing. I have read Lord Beaverbrook's articles dealing with Imperial preference, and he makes it clear that it was never expected that Great Britain would be given free access to the Dominion market without making some concessions in return. Lord Melchett has published a book that deals with the same subject. In a masterly way he has analyzed the chief staple products of the world; his schedules show the extent to which various countries produce more or less than they consume, which countries are obliged to import certain goods, and so on. The primary duty of the Government of a country is similar to that of a father with regard to his family. The Government should always endeavour to get the best possible treatment for its own people, consistent with fair dealing with other countries. If individuals confer favours outside their families, they generally do so to friends; and if any of the British Dominions wish to give special treatment to other countries, they should do so to those that are under the same flag. We realize that there are many things we cannot produce in this country in competition with Great Britain. There they have a larger population and a huge home market; their labour is cheaper, and they have not the same climatic conditions to contend with. All honourable members are desirous of developing trade between Canada and Great Britain, but I am sure that many of us, perhaps the most of us, would like to get a quid pro quo from the Mother Country. The Minister of Finance has turned a sort of somersault. He has increased duties on some things, and has placed on the free list a large variety of goods from Great Britain. I say he is absolutely mistaken in that policy, because in the production of many things we cannot compete successfully with the Mother Country. We should give them a preference, I grant, but not free trade. And we should have a tariff wall against the United States to correspond in height with the one that they have for their own protection. Many of our industries are small and have to contend with conditions that do not prevail in other countries.

Canada is an expensive country to govern, as all honourable members know. It is far-flung; it has a northern climate. For that reason our policy should be to exact duties on