

continuing it, we will permit the free admission, under any regulations that may be made by the Customs Department, of machinery of every kind imported for the purpose of equipping a beet-root sugar factory into the Dominion. We think, if the industry is to be put on a basis of business, if the industry is as promising a one for the Dominion as it is said to be, with the bounty which is allowed by the legislature of Ontario, and with this valuable concession, for it is a valuable concession, in respect to the machinery, an opportunity will be allowed for giving that business a fair trial in the province of Ontario. Such, however, is our hope, and I have no doubt my hon. friend the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Fisher) will be able to lend the assistance of his department. I am told that one of the greatest difficulties that they have to contend with in this business, is, in the cultivation of a beet of the proper strength and of the proper quality. That is a matter coming particularly within the authority of the hon. Minister of Agriculture, and I have no doubt that he will be glad to lend the assistance of his department in the way of instruction, information, lectures, circulars and literature, or in any direction that tends to improve the cultivation of the beet.

Now, a marked characteristic of the present session has been short speeches and I desire to have the budget speech respond to the general feeling in that respect. After all, the only question of real importance in the budget speech, outside of the general information it contains and which may be interesting, the thing that always interests people in the budget speech is the question of tariff changes, and as we have no tariff changes to announce, there is no reason why I should occupy the time of the House with an extended speech. The tariff policy we have to offer to-day is the tariff policy which we adopted in 1897 and which we have continued up to the present time. It is a tariff policy based upon the necessities of our revenue, a revenue tariff, which incidentally affords a very considerable degree of encouragement to those engaged in Canadian industries, and having as its leading principle the principle of the British preferential tariff.

PREFERENTIAL TARIFF.

I am afraid that on that question we are as wide as ever from our hon. friends opposite. Perhaps it is not easy for me to determine how wide the difference is between us, in view of some of the conflicting statements hon. gentlemen have made from time to time, but I suppose I shall not be wrong if I say that the ground taken by hon. gentlemen opposite is, that while they are in favour of the principle of a British preferential tariff, they are opposed to what they call a one-sided preference.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. Hear, hear; I am glad to receive these hear, hears, because they show that I have correctly described, as I desire to do, the attitude of hon. gentlemen opposite. They say that they are opposed to a one-sided preference and they say our preference is a one-sided one.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. Hear, hear; and again I am glad to have it. Surely if a one-sided preference is bad, and if our preference is a one-sided one, there is only one thing for hon. gentlemen to do, and that is to bring down a resolution to repeal the British preferential tariff.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. I am bound to believe that they will do so, and if so, of course we will have at once the issue joined between us. We can respect their view although we differ from it. But, we will know exactly where we stand and we will know where they stand. They have held that we did wrong in granting a preference to the goods of Great Britain without demanding a preference for Canada in the markets of Great Britain.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. Again those comforting hear, hears, which show that I am correctly giving the views of my hon. friends. They have been pleased to try to persuade themselves and try to persuade the public that the preference in the