

other products on the tables of the wealthy. Our object to-day is to open the door of the American market, to open the door of a nation of 90,000,000, which has been closed to us for the last 60 years, and when we are now on the eve of reaching that long sought goal, we are met by objection after objection, we are deluged by a plethora of sophistry, we are told that if such an arrangement is to go into effect and Canadian vegetables, cereals and fruits, can cross the boundary line and be eaten free of duty by the American people it will be all over with the Canadian confederation, and even the British Empire will reel and rock upon its foundations.

Some hon. MEMBERS Hear, hear

Sir WILFRID LAURIER Sir, let us discuss these franks of nomenclature, let us approach this question from the point of view of common sense, from the basis of first principles.

Some hon. MEMBERS Hear, hear

Sir WILFRID LAURIER Let us, I say, approach the question from the point of view of common sense, and I am glad that my remarks on that point evoke some response from the other side; we will see how far they will go. If, Sir, I were to state to my hon. friends on the other side that amongst civilized mankind, all those who work, work with the object of disposing of the product of their labour, I should be told, this is a truism that is running in the street. If I were to add that the man who works has the legitimate ambition of getting the greatest possible remuneration for his labour, I should be told, this is a mere truism. If I were to say that the man who works, will be better remunerated the more clients he has, seeking the products of his labour, I should be told, this is a truism. And yet, this is the very thing, this very truism, which is embodied in the proposition now before you. All that we ask under these resolutions is to obtain for the man who works in the fields, the best possible remuneration for his labour. And does that proposition require any defence? Is it not simply on the line of common sense? Is it not the first of all principles? How, then, is it that it is not accepted at once? I will give the reasons. I will try to be fair in giving these reasons. But, before I proceed further, I must say that it seems to me that the House of Commons and the Canadian people at large, owe a debt of gratitude to my hon. friend the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) and my hon. friend the Minister of Customs (Mr. Paterson) for having obtained from our neighbours, such an advantageous arrangement, and having obtained it without the sacrifice of any Canadian interest. Mr. Chairman, here perhaps I may be permitted

to say that, in my opinion, the discussion which has taken place up to this time has been carried on upon a high level. Of course, I do not agree with my hon. friends on the other side who have taken part in the discussion, I do not pay them the tribute, and all of it, being carried on the discussion in a fair manner, in a manner which, I think, does not acknowledge it on our part, and reflects credit upon themselves. I am sorry that for this I have to make an exception in the person of my hon. friend from North Toronto (Mr. Foster). My hon. friend from North Toronto was not satisfied to criticize the arrangement, in which, indeed, he would have been within his rights, but he was unduly unfair in trying to discredit not only the agreement but those who had made it. The spoke of my hon. friend the Minister of Finance, and my hon. friend the Minister of Customs, as being very ordinary men. He repeated this two or three times, speaking pointedly of my hon. friend the Minister of Finance. Well, if my hon. friend from North Toronto has not learned it yet he may learn it now, that if he has to his credit one-half the achievements of my hon. friend the Minister of Finance he would have reason to be very proud of his career than he can be. Then, he went over to the members of this cabinet, this one and that one, and at last he came to my poor humble self; and of my poor humble self he spoke as follows:

Men of such fine financial mind and business acumen as the right hon. gentleman who leads the government and the party.

I have never posed as a man of fine financial mind, or of business acumen, but when I see the pretensions put up by some men who dabble in finance and business, I am surprised at my modesty. If I had dabbled in finance and business, I am prepared to admit, I should have perhaps made a sad mess of it. But I could not have been worse than my hon. friend. If, after having posed as a business man and financier, I had nothing to show but a record of failures, I would go and hide myself for very shame, and be very chary to throw stones into other people's gardens, for fear they should be returned to me with compound interest.

I stated a moment ago that the agreement we make is simply to get better prices for the product of the Canadian farmers. This is a proposition so obvious that I am surprised it should have received the treatment it has received on the part of our friends opposite. But the objections made to this agreement are not to be found within the four corners of the same; they are all based upon extraneous grounds. The opposition, the Conservative party, are against this agreement because, as they tell us, it will produce consequences which will be deplorable for this country—I have