

part of the mother country towards the colonies, which has hitherto been regarded as the true commercial policy of the nation, and which has never deserved the name of policy, because it makes for disunion and not for union, for weakness and not for strength.

I deplore the fact that so great an opportunity should have been lost. The Government were bound by their pledges to make an effort to secure preferential trade, and half the offer now made would have accomplished the work. The offer that is made to give to British products the advantage which this tariff will give a year hence, would, if utilized for the purpose I have mentioned, have secured such preferential trade between the mother country and the colonies as would be attended with unbounded advantage. I deplore the loss of such an opportunity the more, because if the hon. the First Minister had used all the ability and research he possesses to discover a means of preventing preferential trade from ever being obtained by Canada, he could not have adopted a better means than the one he has taken. If Lord Salisbury's Government wished to obtain the support of the House of Commons of England to preferential trade and were in a position to come down with such a proposition as was made here in this illegal and unpatriotic way, if the Salisbury Government were in a position to say to the House of Commons: Here are the terms on which Canada is willing to negotiate for preferential trade, and all we have to give in return is admission of the products of Canada into our country on more favourable terms than are given to foreign countries, such a proposition would carry an overwhelming majority of that House beyond doubt. But suppose it were possible to carry the present offer into effect and to give this advantage to England, the moment that was done, and the counter proposal made to bring Canadian products into Great Britain upon more favourable terms than those of foreign countries, such a proposal would have no chance of success. A golden opportunity has been wasted and a course taken calculated to be most injurious to this country.

As I have said, the hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright) to-day threw off all disguise. We could not learn from the Finance Minister, not even the "Globe" could, what was really the intent of this tariff, but all disguise was thrown off this afternoon as the hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright) declared that it was not preferential trade with England he desired. The hon. gentleman knows that all you have to do to arouse the most enthusiastic sentiment of this country is to speak of anything that will draw apparently, the mother country and this country closer together.

And advantage is taken to-day, not to obtain preferential trade with England, but to

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obtain free trade with all countries. That is the policy. The disguise is thrown off. The hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright) occupied a most humiliating position. When the Mackenzie Government was in power he was the exponent of their financial policy, and in their struggle to retain power, he was ready to adopt first one expedient and then another, but when the Liberals were out of office and had long struggled to get back, it was found that one of the most serious difficulties in the way of their ambitions was the reputation that the hon. gentleman had acquired in this House and out of it as the fierce denunciator of the National Policy and of protection to Canadian industries. No words that the English language could furnish him were strong enough in the denunciation of anything and everything that was calculated to promote and develop Canadian industries. When hon. gentlemen opposite went to the country on the last occasion, they found that the hon. member for South Oxford had to be retired. It was found that the sentiment in favour of the National Policy had taken strong hold of public opinion in Canada. In four successive attempts they had been defeated on that question, and the people had shown that they were determined to stand by the National Policy. And the Liberal party came to the conclusion that it was hopeless to attempt to get into power unless the hon. member for South Oxford could be withdrawn from the field. He was virtually induced—got a hint, I suppose, that his services on the platform, instead of being a benefit to his party, were most damaging—to remain in the background. But that was not enough. When the leader of gentlemen opposite endeavoured to assure the manufacturing industries of this country that they would not be disturbed, that they had nothing to fear at the hands of the Liberal party, they were told by the representatives of those industries: That is all very well so far as you are concerned, Mr. Laurier, I dare say you mean what you say. But, Sir Richard Cartwright is to be the Finance Minister and he is pledged to tear up the National Policy, root and branch, he is pledged to treat those who have been maintaining the industries of this country as robbers and thieves, and there is no hope that any justice would be shown the manufacturers, if he is to be the Finance Minister. What was the result? Why, Sir, the most positive pledges were given again and again that if they came into power Sir Richard Cartwright should not be Finance Minister. But every person knows that there was not a man on that side of the House with the power and ability to deal with questions of that kind possessed by the hon. member for South Oxford. Every person knows that he is a giant—I will not say among pigmies, but I will say he is a giant. He was a Triton—I will not say among minnows, but he was a Triton. And so he was regarded and so he