

THE PRICE OF NATURAL PRODUCTS HAS BEEN DECREASED

In the tariff debate at Ottawa Hon.
 Laurier spoke as follows:--

are determined to be relieved of this system of taxation which produces no surplus in the treasury by a deficit in their pockets. (Applause.) But, sir, even while my hon. friend was indulging in this entory, this boasting, which constituted the main part of his speech, even while he was exhibiting to the admiring gaze of his friends this evidence of prosperity and vitality and plenty, I was saying to myself, "What a splendid opportunity. While he was making use of extravagant language in pronouncing an encomium upon the National Policy, a singular thought must have struck him—that was that a million Canadians had died in this country, and that the explanation that he gave we have heard before and since. It is threadbare. The explanation was that if one million Canadians had deserted this land of plenty, it was not that this land of plenty, which this country had made fertile, had been made barren by their vicious policy, but simply because the Grits were decrying the country. But I submit to you that if the Grits were decrying the country that they were decrying the country that they were decrying. They were sounding paeans of triumph and extolling the National Policy to the skies. In spite of the assertions of the Tories that the country is prosperous, the people believe the Grits when they are crying out that the country is in a state of ruin. It is simply to show the great compliment which was paid by Mr. Foster to the policy of the Liberal party. If Mr. Foster and his friends be sincere, if they really believe that the country is in a state of ruin, they say that the people believe the Grits who say that it is not prosperous, it is a tribute to the hold the Liberal party have on the people of the country. (Applause.) I do not wonder that the hon. gentleman who has just been elected at the meeting of the Liberals at the polls. If only we can meet them at the polls on fair terms

[illegible]

developing in this country the manufacturing industry, and that one of our people has forgotten the great formula of truth, which says with which these duties were heralded to the world. No one has forgotten the language of Sir John Macdonald when Charles Tupper once that occasion. Sir Charles said the right figure, we know, but he never rolled them as on that occasion. We almost heard the roar of the furnaces and smelled the smoke that was to issue from them. There was a time when we were to receive employment out of these duties, but after seven years they are only asking for more. They may increase the tariff again. The consequence would be that in five years you will see more capital invested in the industry and you will not be able to remove that protection because they will say, "Do not touch us, for if you touch us you will wipe away all the capital invested in this industry." We must prevent this consequence. The system is false which will produce such a result as this. (Hear, hear.) That is not all. There is something more perhaps than all that in the protective tariff which charges against the protective tariff, if, no one can see that the minister of finance, is that it is debasing and degrading. Under such a system the government are placed in the hands of their masters, who are stronger than they are. The country is in the hands of the country attempt to rebel their masters clutch them by the throat and throw them back into bondage. Whenever they have to their shame, to submit to the indignity of their masters they would have the right of belief, and they would medley made a clerical error. The country sees through them and understands the meaning of their clerical errors. It was a clerical error which induced them to place a duty of ten per cent. on tea, from 35 to 20 per cent., and it was not in a moment of weakness that the minister of finance reduced the duty, but the firmness; but when he heard the crack of the ministerial whip over his shoulders that he was forced into the humiliating position of going back and re-imposing duty upon the farmers. Is it a clerical error about tea. I want to know, or is it no error at all? The hon. gentleman has said that he has no objection, but no one noticed that there had been a change in the tariff on tea. For the last twenty years tea and coffee have been free except when imported from the United States, and then they were subjected to a duty of ten per cent. It is that under the tariff as constituted it is intended to levy a tax of ten per cent. upon tea which comes from England. According to the figures of last year this would give a duty on tea of \$140,000,000, but the minister of finance has not to place a duty on tea, but the object to build up a trade with the East so that we may be compelled to export our tea from China and Japan. Why make a mistake and do as the minister of finance wants to take it from the east? (Hear, hear.) There is a nigger on the fence which we have not yet discovered. (Cheers.) The minister of finance wants to be complimented because he has removed the duties on tea, and he has confessed that he has removed most of the specific duties in cotton and woollen goods. But specific duties still remain. Last year there was a duty on syrup of 10 per cent. per gallon, and now it has changed from 10 per cent. to 1-2 cent per pound. I want to know therefore why this change from the gallon to the pound?

Sir Richard Cartwright—Ask Mr. Laurier.

Mr. Laurier—The change makes a duty of 7 cents per gallon, and at ten pounds per gallon, would give a duty of 70 per cent. (Hear, hear.) Until we have recovered this anomaly there is a great deal to be removed. (Cheers.) "What is the policy of the Liberal party?" It is free trade, as in England, that is the ideal, that is the goal. (Cheers.) It will take some time, perhaps a long time, before we get to that point. We will, however, have for the next many years to go on still collecting our revenue by customs duties, but at this moment we believe in the principle of free trade. That is to say, that duties should be levied, not for the purpose of raising revenue, but for the purpose of protecting our interests, but for the general good of the country. (Hear, hear.) Take agricultural implements; the minister of finance is approached and he is told by some persons that they want an import duty on special implements. The minister promises to employ many hands. The industry is specially protected and thereby put into jeopardy. When we have a tariff for revenue only there will be safety, but it does not exist at the present time. (Cheers.) The policy of the gentlemen opposite. Now, sir, must come to my hon. friend (Mr. Davin) who said that once upon a time I was a protectionist. Now let me say to my friend that I am surprised to see him in the position that he is in. It is only a few weeks ago since he advocated tariff reform—(hear, hear)—scientific protection was what he wanted. He wants protection now; but there is no science about it. He has no science about it. A man may be great in a certain case, but he fails to come to the scratch. (Hear, hear.) There was Peter the Hermit, who arrayed the west of Europe against the east, but he lost his land and a second time. "Old man," the General said after him, "lead him to his camp, and we will swear that he would not desert them again. (Applause.) So that, like Peter the Hermit, the member or the Association of the United Farmers of Canada, he will not desert them again. (Hear, hear.) So far as I am personally concerned, as to being a protectionist, I have to offer neither a denial, a confirmation nor a justification. It is a crime to maintain a tariff for revenue. I am in youth to those of reflection, more deliberate and matured, I am afraid I am guilty of many crimes of that kind. Apart from political economy, there are many views I do not hold. I am not a protectionist. I had my career to run over again, there are many things which I would avoid. If he has been more fortunate than me I do not envy him at all. (Cheers.) Moreover, sir, if Mr. Laurier is right, there are the most illustrious names in the world that would come to my lips in connection with this question. I stand upon the ground of principle and of the condition of the country. What I want is a free trade. I want a free trade, and nothing else. When we want population, and sir, when I consider that once I was a protectionist in my young days, I also remember that during the decade from 1871 to 1881 the population of Canada was 13 per cent., while from 1881 to 1891, under protection, the increase in population fell from 13 to 9 per cent.

Mr. Davin—Mr. Laurier has no more to say?

Mr. Laurier—Now, Mr. Speaker, (20

hon. gentleman stated that I acknowledged in 1872, when a Liberal was in power, that the hon. gentleman professes to state that I am not in favour of him. He has not, but if he will permit me to say so. Quite unintentionally, I have no doubt, he has not stated my charge. It is not that in the course of twenty years I have changed his mind, but that a few years after having named himself a protectionist he went into Mr. Mackenzie's government and was as silent as that desk.

Mr. Landier.—It would be a blessed thing if you could get into something and keep as silent as that desk. (Great laughter.)

Mr. Laurier.—Well, sir, I am sorry to say that there is not anything more to the charge as amended than as it was presented. In 1872, when Mr. Davin stated that in 1872 the Liberals of Lower Canada while they were assembled in Montreal laid down a platform and adopted as a basis of that platform the policy of protection, I deny the charge absolutely. I am sure he has gone into the records and that he must have got it from the pickings of newspapers in Lower Canada. He never found it among the real facts. On the contrary, the Liberals of the district of Quebec have always been in favour of free trade, as far back as 1847 the Liberal Association issued a manifesto, of which the third article was this: "Free trade with all the world, and the free navigation of the St. Lawrence." (Applause.) Now this manifesto was issued by the Liberal of Quebec who were of the school of Mr. Lafontaine. I am free to admit that in the district of Montreal the ideas of Mr. Papineau prevailed and there was a party in favour of policy of protection. And in so far as Lower Canada is free to admit that I have been brought up in the school of Mr. Papineau; but time and again, for twenty years at least, I have declared in Lower Canada that we were in favour of free trade. Why should I not state the whole truth about this? Mr. Davin accuses me of having changed my views upon protection. He said a few days ago that I wrote protection articles in the newspaper, *Le Devoir*. I have never written a word of protection in this *Le Devoir*, but I made a speech once, I remember, in 1871, in the legislature of Quebec. That was the only speech which I ever made on that question in which I brought up the views of Mr. Papineau. I have never derived from him; and I am surprised, I must say, that the loyal gentleman who supports the government should reproach me for not holding the views I held when I was a young man in Lower Canada, and that those views were derived from the school of Mr. Papineau, prior to the rebellion of 1837, laid down as his doctrine that we should buy nothing from England. And when I was a young man of Quebec, I was brought up with youth and victory, I stated at that time that there was as much reason to adhere to the policy of Mr. Papineau as in the year 1887? But, Mr. Speaker, what did I do? When I went to the St. James Hotel, I found that I had not introduced that doctrine for any reason of political economy, but simply for political reasons, to fight the British government and to force them to give us the preferences for which we were striving. I saw I could not do that, and so at the famous meeting held on the 7th of May, 1839, a resolution which was not moved by a Frenchman, but by an Englishman, Mr. Wilfred Nelson? It was as follows: "That the measure of Lord John Russell, which would place the assembly all control over the revenue, is a flagrant violation to all the rights granted to Lower Canada by the capitulation and the treaty. That the government which can adopt such violent measures and thus bring products of blood and violence is a contemptible government, unworthy of respect and even of allegiance. That the people of Lower Canada will refrain as much as possible from the purchase of any goods, except such as they can produce in their own country, and will make use of products manufactured in the country, so as to deprive the government of the revenue, which it is its hope to gain by collecting the duties imposed on foreign goods." I said that, and not an object of political economy, and now that we have obtained all the liberties which we were striving for then, I leave it to gentlemen on the other side of the house to pursue the policy which to-day they pursue with a vengeance. Hitherto their policy has not been to buy anything from England, and their defense has been that they applied this policy only to such goods as we produce in this country in order to protect our products. Now, if they have gone a step further, and have placed a tax upon tea imports from England. Speaking here in the maturity of my years, and in the maturity of my convictions, formed, as I hope, by deep reflection, and after serious thought, and knowing that I am voicing not my own opinions, but the sentiments of the whole of the Liberals of this country, I say that, whatever may be our future relations with the English, whether they remain as they are to-day, whether they become closer, or whether they become looser, it shall always be our aim and purpose to cultivate, maintain and promote the most friendly sentiments and the most friendly products of the country that great nation, which, notwithstanding what has been said by the other side to the contrary, notwithstanding the sneers of hon. gentlemen opposite, is to-day the greatest and foremost commercial power that the world has ever seen. (Great cheering.)

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has interfered with traffic to the point of no less than \$200,000 in freight rates alone during the past half year. The directors have instructed the manager to spend only the money that is absolutely necessary to secure safety, to enforce the strictest and even rational economy in every department. His policy is to be extended to the utmost possible extent.

Waterbury, Ireland, April 19.—The
 master Faraday, after leaving the shore
 of the Commercial Cable Co.'s new
 cable, yesterday proceeded to lay out
 143 miles of a heavy type. This was
 complete at 6 p.m. (Irish time) to-day.
 She then buoyed the end and returned
 Ballinskelligs. She then sailed for
 New, N. S., to commence operations on
 the American side. During the work of
 laying out communication was kept up
 between the ship and the shore through
 the cable, and the electricians on board
 report the cable as being perfect.

Berlin, April 19.—The Protestant Alliance has appealed to all Protestants to sign a petition requesting the Bundesrath not to sanction the Reichstag's repeal of the anti-Jesuit law.

Vienna, April 19.—The fire which broke out in Nussandl has burned out, and virtually the whole town is in ruins. Many persons are missing. The injured have been removed to other towns. Hundreds of families are sleeping in the fields. They are without sufficient food or clothing, and many cases of extreme distress are reported.

Platt City, Mo., April 19.—The grand jury has brought indictments against 40 of the leading men and women for playing progressive euchre.

Philadelphia, April 19.—The second game in the champion chess match between Steinitz and Lasker was played today, and for the second time in the series the champion met defeat at the hands of his young opponent. Lasker opened with the queen's pawn, and in 35 moves Steinitz was beaten.

San Francisco, April 19.—The bark cholias Thayer sailed yesterday morning for Karluk with supplies. The schooner Jennie Wand and Mary Dodge start for the Alaska canneries with 48 men, who will go as packers. They agreed to work at the same rates as the Chinamen. They cannot hope to make much over \$100 for the season's work.

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