

meet this spirit which I believe exists in the country, which will dominate the country and dominate its politics, for our wheat fields and gold fields already have become famous and we have succeeded in attracting the very best minds of the mother country and the very best element to come here and to settle, and the Government will excite a movement from the British Isles by adopting the policy I suggest, which is to keep the valuable rights in those territories and mining districts for the citizens of those countries in which British subjects can obtain similar rights. Name no country, but carry on a reciprocal system of legislation in general, and the Government will do a great work by accelerating the influx into that country of the classes of people we want, and they will also do a great deal in keeping out possibly an element that is undesirable even in the country from which those people may come. So much in general, and I only speak of the subject in general, in order that I may as far as possible attract the attention of the Government to these questions which are of such great importance to the country at the present time and which are so disturbing in some of their aspects as regards business which is now being carried on, and which without adjustment I fear will involve many people in Canada in a condition of absolute ruin.

I am not going to travel, so far as I can possibly avoid it, over the subject of preferential trade, not wishing to repeat what has been said before. I shall state as my opinion, that preferential trade is going to be the great question for the people of this country and of the Empire. In my mind, preferential trade is now in a singularly happy condition. The only point upon which I differ from the hon. member for York (Mr. Foster) is that I do not believe that the ill-advised utterances of the Prime Minister have killed that movement; on the contrary, I believe it is not in his power, any more that it is in the power of Mr. Chamberlain, to kill a movement of that character. While I believe that the course of the right hon. gentleman was to retard the movement and to block it for a moment, yet all the signs of the political horizon seem to make for its strength and progress. It is a marvellous thing that in England you could obtain any time, let alone at formal conferences, the consideration and attention of either of the two political parties to a subject which undoubtedly does involve all the heresies such as Mr. Asquith, Lord Rosebery and the Cobden Club friends of the right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) charged against it. He would be a bold man who would deny that this subject is now being ably threshed out by the Colonial Minister himself, and that it is a movement which is receiving great encouragement from him. But it is a question which the soldiers as well as the statesmen of the Empire are discussing, and

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it is a subject which concerns the army and navy of England as much as it does her commercial interests. It is a question that will not down and the future for it is hopeful.

The right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) seems to excuse himself so far as he may for the violation of his pre-election promises by the supposed hostility of Mr. Chamberlain to any practical method of carrying out preferential trade. The right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) who in the course of his speech dwelt so much on the absence of customs duties in connection with Mr. Chamberlain's idea, went on to read from Mr. Chamberlain's speech an extract which showed that never for a moment has the Colonial Secretary dreamed that a system of preferential trade in the Empire could be obtained in any other way than through customs.

If I am not out of order, Mr. Speaker, and I do not wish to trespass upon the rules of the House in this connection, I may perhaps point out that Lord Aberdeen has given utterance to opinions, at Toronto in 1897, and I would like to ask the right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) whether I am correct in supposing that when Lord Aberdeen addressed the National Club, he spoke the views of his advisers, and whether, when on that occasion he discussed the subject of preferential trade, he was speaking the views of the right hon. gentleman and those who sit with him? It would be important in connection with my observations to know that.

The PRIME MINISTER. The hon. gentleman (Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper) knows very well that when Lord Aberdeen spoke on the occasion to which the hon. gentleman has referred, he did not speak as the Governor General of Canada, but he spoke simply as Lord Aberdeen.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. Then Mr. Speaker, is it permitted for me to discuss the speech of Lord Aberdeen when he spoke in Canada not as the Governor General?

Mr. SPEAKER. With reference to criticism in this House on the course of the Governor General, I am inclined to think that the proper rule for us to follow is: that in reference to any public question on which His Excellency speaks or acts, his speeches or his acts are not free from criticism in this House, because there is for all public acts of the Governor General a responsible Minister on the floor of this House who has to answer. Of course, I mean that in such discussion there must be the greatest propriety and respect in the language used. I do not think we can debar ourselves in this House from discussing the public acts of the representative of the Crown. With reference to private acts or speeches of the Governor General,