

strong. The United States, the hon. gentleman tells us, are practically a unit in favor of their tariff policy. Does the hon. gentleman know what majority the Republican party have in Congress to-day? because if he does not, I think I can tell him. The total majority of that party in a House of 339 members, I think, was eight. That is the decisive majority to which he refers. That is the evidence and the proof that the people of the United States are a unit in favor of protection. I do not intend at the present moment to spend any great length of time in discussing the various points to which the hon. gentleman has called our attention in the matter of the tariff, other than this. I notice that the hon. gentleman dwelt on the new industries which had sprung up by magic, but he forgot to enumerate them. Now, I know something of the industries which sprung up by magic, and I know more, I am sorry to say, of the industries which, having been fostered into existence by unwise protection, resulted in total loss of capital to those who had invested in them and in very great loss to the localities which had been induced to subscribe in order to aid them. Perhaps the hon. gentleman had reference to an industry nearer at home. I remember one industry in which he might at one time have been induced to take an interest, and that was the industry of timber limits, though I think a check has been given to that particular branch of development. As I said, I will defer, for the moment at any rate, my remarks on the various items in which the hon. gentleman proposes to increase our taxation. I think it is more in the public interest that we should apply ourselves at present to consider what are the immediate needs of the time, and I propose to review, in a few words, our position in regard to the people of the United States. I say—and if my words do not find an echo on the other side of the House, they will find an echo far and wide through the Dominion of Canada—that, to-day, our position in regard to our great neighbor is eminently unsatisfactory, and why is it so? I will tell the hon. gentleman why. We are standing at the cross-roads. Two policies are now face to face before the people of this country. You may see, if you choose, the reflection of the policy of the Government in the McKinley resolutions, and you may see the reflection of the policy of the Opposition in this House in the resolutions which were introduced by Mr. Hitt, the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations. Here is our position: It is perfectly clear that, whatever else this Government may or may not have done, they have succeeded in bringing Canada into this position, that Canada will shortly be compelled to choose between our policy and theirs, between free intercourse and non-intercourse, and I know well what particular decision the people of Canada, if they were allowed a fair and honest choice, would choose to make in that matter. But I have something to say as to the policy the Government have inaugurated towards the United States. It is now five years and more, since the members of the Opposition in this House called the attention of the Government to the fact that, as our treaty with the United States with respect to the fisheries was about to expire, it was eminently desirable that the Government of Canada, should exert themselves to bring about proper and friendly relations with the people of the United

States. What has been the course of these hon. gentlemen from that day to this? It can be characterized as nothing but a succession of imbecile blunders. First of all, those hon. gentlemen were only too ready to make concessions to the United States, without the slightest idea of what the results of those concessions would be. Then suddenly turning round on their previous action, after having, as I say, gone perhaps further in the way of concession than was either necessary or desirable, we saw them resorting to a policy of bluster and annoyance in which they—I will not say falsely, but certainly mistakenly—supposed they would have the support of the English Government. But, when it was seen by the mother country that these foolish men were playing with fire, that they were incurring dangers altogether too great to be incurred either by ourselves or by the empire, we saw a complete and total reversal of their previous policy, and we saw an English statesman sent out from England practically for the purpose of ordering these gentlemen—for it amounted to that—to withdraw their pretensions and make peace as best they could, no matter at what humiliation or at what risk to our interests, with the people of the United States. Then, Sir, we had a little while ago a declaration on the part of these gentlemen that they refused to be bound by the offer they themselves had made to the people of the United States. As I said, that offer they were compelled to implement probably by the action of Sir Charles Tupper, the then Minister of Finance, within two or three days. But, I suppose, by way of provoking and challenging the people of the United States, scarcely had our backs been turned when we saw these men commit the further folly—the insane folly for such it was—of deliberately risking a great injury to a most important trade, by attaching an export duty to lumber, which they ought to have known would simply serve as a lever to parties in the United States who desire to injure our trade in that important commodity. Then, we had twice the rejection of the resolution, which I had the honor to propose in this House; not binding the Government to any particular form of trade with the United States, but simply asking that they would invite negotiations for the purpose of seeing whether we could not obtain better trade relations with our American neighbors. I suppose, by way of giving emphasis to that, they added to this double rejection a further refusal to take any steps whatever to maintain an agent at Washington, who could keep them advised of what they extremely need to be advised—the real temper and feeling of the American politicians and people. I say, that in dealing with the United States these hon. gentlemen opposite, from first to last, have displayed an utter want of statesmanship and capacity for Government. These hon. gentlemen may be, as one of their supporters last night described them, persons who are extremely well fitted to gerrymandering fifty-four constituencies, under pretence of providing constituencies for four new members; they may be able enough to pass Franchise Bills; they may be able to debauch members, and constituencies, and Provinces too, for that matter; but when a real emergency occurs, we find these men helpless, or compelled to adopt the policy furnished them from this side of the House. In this matter I say, that we on this side of the House, speak at least for one-half the