

THE REVIEW

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SPEECH

OF SIR RICHARD CARTWRIGHT,

Delivered at London, Ont., on the 19th September.

(Toronto Globe, Sept. 20.)

Sir Richard Cartwright was received with great cheering. He said:—Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen:—A good many years have elapsed since I last had the pleasure of addressing an audience in the good City of London, and, as might be expected, in the interval a considerable number of changes have come over the political kaleidoscope. Nevertheless, I hope to be able before I sit down to show to you that despite the aspersions of their opponents, the Liberal party are, after all is said and done, where the Liberal party always were; that the Liberal party are prepared to redeem the pledges in power which they gave in Opposition; and that it simply requires a fair examination of the facts of the case, a fair understanding of the changes which have occurred in the position of Canada within the last few years, and notably within the last four years, in order to be able to prove to you, as I hope I shall succeed in proving to-night, that the Liberal party in power are prepared to the fullest extent to make good the statements and assurances which the Liberal party made to you when out of power.

NO OBJECTION TO FAIR CRITICISM.

Now, sir, I have not the slightest objection to the severest criticism that our opponents choose to make against us—on one condition only. I have myself had the reputation in time past of being a tolerably severe critic of our opponents—(cheers)—and it would very ill become me, and it would very ill become the Liberal party, to dispute their right to offer to the electors of Parliament the sharpest and the severest criticism they know how to offer as to our dealings with public affairs during the past four years. All that I ask of them, all that I ask of you, is simply this: I ask of them that their criticism should be free from wilful misstatements; and I ask of you that you will give us that measure of fair play to examine for yourselves the statements which we make to you, and to judge, after you have looked at the authorities which we will show you, after you have examined the proofs that we have to offer, whether or not we do indeed deserve the confidence of our fellow-countrymen, and whether or not it will be to your interest and profit to replace us in power for a second term. Now, sir, I beg to say that, on the present occasion, I speak to you not merely as a politician, but I speak to you as a responsible Minister of the Crown; and I hope on this present occasion to make no statement to you for which I cannot give absolute proof; or where, from the nature of the case, absolute proof is impossible, and substantial reasons for the statements which I may make to you to-night.

CANADA'S FINANCIAL POSITION.

Sir, on the present occasion I propose

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A. & R. LOGGIE

more particularly to deal with these three subjects in special: I propose to deal with the question of the expenditure and the financial position of Canada. I propose to deal with the somewhat intricate and complicated subject of the preferential tariff in favor of Great Britain and its effects. And I propose, in the last place, to say a few words as to certain charges of malfeasance, and as to improper dealings with ballots and other things of that kind, which have been pretty freely preferred against us by our Conservative opponents; and I may add a few words on the general policy, which, in my judgment, the Liberal party will do well to pursue in the future as well as in the past. Now, sir, I have noticed that it has been a very common trick of our opponents, and particularly a very common trick of late, to select certain disjointed sentences and certain disjointed quotations from the speeches of various members of the Liberal party. They deal with these without the slightest reference to the context; without the smallest reference to the circumstances under which they were delivered; without the smallest reference to the changed position of the country, and indeed, to the changed position of other countries with which we have dealings, and on these they presume to have found various charges of inconsistency, various charges of breach of promise on our part, and as I need not say also to bring forward—without much proof, however—various charges of corruption and malfeasance on the part of the Government. No, sir, in my opinion this is rather a picaresque style of argument on the part of men who have themselves held for many years responsible offices in Government.

A QUESTION OF TO-DAY.

The question before the people of Canada, Mr. Chairman, in my judgment, is not what ought to have been done twenty-five, or twenty, or fifteen, or ten years ago; the question is what ought to be done to-day, and the grounds on which we ought to be tried, the grounds on which we ought to be found guilty, or the grounds on which we have the right to demand your confidence, are, how we have administered the Government of Canada during the period that it has been under our control, since the year 1896 down to the present moment. (Cheers.) Now, sir, I shall not waste more words on these preliminaries, but I will proceed with certain statements made, notably by Sir Charles Tupper and Mr. Foster, who, as you know, is the chief financial exponent of the Opposition. I have observed with some regret that these gentlemen seem bent on maintaining their ancient reputation. It does not much surprise me to find that Sir Chas. Tupper, as of old, has almost outstripped his own well-earned reputation as a wholesale manufacturer of fiction. (Laughter.) Nor am I altogether surprised, either to find that Mr. Foster runs him an exceedingly good second in the scarcely so respectable—but still, I suppose from a political point of view, useful—function of peddler and retailer of half-truths. (Laughter.) Now, sir, in

the case of Sir Charles Tupper, who, of course, is entitled to preference as the leader of the Opposition, I observe that Sir Charles brings several charges or makes three severe assertions against us.

SIR CHARLES AND THE CONTINGENT.

First of all, I note that Sir Charles declares on every occasion that it was he (Sir Charles Tupper) who, by his influence on public opinion, really sent the Canadian contingent to South Africa. (Laughter.) Now, sir, I know Sir Charles' colossal self-conceit; and I am very well aware that Sir Charles is just the man to persuade himself that the conduct of the Government was influenced by the force of his philippic, but I beg to inform Sir Charles Tupper on this occasion, as I have informed him elsewhere, that perhaps he had as little influence on the deliberations of the Government, perhaps he had as little influence on the question whether or not we would send a contingent to South Africa, as he had in framing the policy of the British Government as to whether or not they would send a contingent to Peking on a recent occasion. (Laughter and cheers.) There is, sir, one condition, and one condition alone, on which I would be willing to admit that Sir Charles Tupper had a good deal to do with sending the contingent to South Africa. If Sir Charles is willing to declare—and on this occasion only I would be willing to take Sir Charles' unsupported word, although it is not a thing that I am in the habit commonly of doing—(laughter)—if Sir Charles is willing to declare that it was he who inspired Mr. Kruger's ultimatum to the British Government—that it was he who was really the promoter of the invasion of British territory by the Transvaal State, then, sir, I am willing to admit that Sir Charles had a good deal to do with the sending of the contingent to South Africa. (Laughter and cheers.)

But, as I have observed, however close the relations may happen to be between Sir Charles Tupper and Mr. Paul Kruger—(laughter)—I beg leave to tell him that he had absolutely nothing to do with the conduct of the Government in sending that contingent forward. (Hear, hear.)

GOVERNMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY.

One thing the Government did do. The Government did not allow themselves to be stamped. The Government did not allow themselves to take a step of the greatest gravity without due deliberation and consideration—(hear, hear)—and so far from holding it a matter of censure on the part of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his colleagues that they thought gravely and long before they decided on a step which they knew would involve the expenditure of the people's money, and what in our idea was far more important, would put at hazard and risk the lives of thousands of our fellow-countrymen in the battlefield—I say that they would have been entirely false to their duty if they had taken a step of that importance and magnitude without fully weighing and considering and counting the cost. (Cheers.) And I can say to Sir Charles Tupper and his

followers wherever they may be that the Government of Canada, acting in that fashion, deliberately and calmly showed a far greater sense of their responsibility and of the duty which they owed to the people than Sir Charles Tupper appeared to have felt when without rhyme or reason, he took it upon himself, first of all, to denounce the Government from one end of the country to the other for their delay, as he alleged, in sending forward a contingent and, in the next place, and far worse, to make use of that delay to attempt to stir up a racial war between the two great divisions into which Canada is divided to-day. (Cheers.)

PREFERENTIAL TRADE.

Then Sir Charles Tupper declares on every possible occasion that Sir Wilfrid Laurier threw away the offer of preferential trade; that Sir Wilfrid Laurier might, if he pleased, without the slightest difficulty, have obtained from the English Government any concession that he chose to ask, and that in place of that Sir Wilfrid Laurier deliberately slighted and scorned the offer which the English Government were willing to make to him. Sir, that is a figment invented out of Sir Charles Tupper's brain alone. I know as well as Sir Charles Tupper what the feelings were of the English Government, what the feelings were of the men who compose and who form the most influential part of the English Government, and I have here before me and I propose to read to you a short letter sent to one of my colleagues by the President of the British Empire League, by one of the most eminent men in England, by a member of the present Government, which sets forth in the strongest and clearest light the utter falsity of the imputation made by Sir Charles Tupper against Sir Wilfrid Laurier—that he deliberately set his face against the offer of a preference to our imports which the English Government were willing to make to him.

Sir, that letter is in answer to a communication from one of our colleagues, is dated May 2, 1899, and is as follows:—

DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE'S LETTER.

"Privy Council Office, London.
"My Dear Sir: I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of April last. The best answer I can give to your inquiry is to enclose to you a copy of the report of the speeches made on the various occasions in the summer of 1897 when I had the pleasure of meeting the colonial Premiers in my capacity as President of the British Empire League. I do not think that in any of these speeches you will find anything to support the view of my opinion on the question of granting preferential trade in the colonies which appears to have been held by Sir Charles Tupper and by some of the journals in this country, which seek to attribute what they term protectionist heresies to members of the British Government. It was no doubt my speech at Liverpool on the 13th of June, 1897, which was referred to by Sir Charles Tupper, and my admission that free trade had not done for us all that was once expected may have been commented on by free traders or Opposition journals. But while I congratulate Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Dominion of Canada on the offer which has been made of admitting British goods at reduced rates as compared with those on the goods of other nations as an important step in the direction of Imperial unity, I had no authority to offer, and I did not offer, to Canada any preference in the British market. You are at liberty to make use as you please of this letter. Believe me, my dear Sir, yours faithfully, Devonshire."

Sir, that is from a man who bears in England the reputation of being one of the most straightforward statesmen that ever held a seat in any British Cabinet, and I say that it is not possible to find words in the English language which more completely and fully exculpate Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and which more completely and fully give a flat contradiction to the allegations of Sir Charles Tupper that Sir Wilfrid Laurier had simply to ask and obtain preferential trade from the British Government in favor of Canada. Sir, I do not believe that Sir Wilfrid Laurier or any of us would have the smallest objection if the British Government saw fit to grant favorable terms to Canada in preference to the terms that it grants to other nations. But when we granted preferential trade to Great Britain, when the Parliament of Canada consented to discriminate in favor of British goods, we did it without haggling, without making a bargain with Great Britain; we did it in the hope, which I trust to be able to show you has been fully realized, that our conduct on that occasion would, besides conferring a very great benefit on the Canadian consumer, result in a substantial benefit to Canadian producers at large, by giving them a real substantial preference by the good-will of the English consumer in the English market. (Cheers.)

CHARGE OF ULTRA-IMPERIALISM.

There is a third statement made by Sir Charles Tupper which I hardly know how to characterize. I do not know that he is repeating these statements in Ontario, but I do know that he has been re-

peating them from one end of Quebec to the other. Sir Charles Tupper, where it suits his purpose, is constantly declaring that Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his Cabinet desires to abdicate our autonomy, by ceasing to be a self-governing country, by becoming a mere appanage, so to speak of the Imperial Parliament at Westminster, and of being prepared under those circumstances to contribute \$46,000,000 a year as our share of Imperial defence. Well, as I can say in this: that I am sorry that Sir Charles Tupper—a man at his time of life, a man who has held the positions he has held—should deem it consistent with his self respect or the importance of the subject to talk such arrant nonsense in any part of this Dominion.

SIR CHARLES TUPPER'S ROMANCE.

I need not tell you that the very last thing in the world that Sir Wilfrid or his colleagues contemplate is, in any shape or form, resigning one particle of our rights to free self-government in Canada. We prize those, we know their value, and most assuredly no member of the Liberal party and no Liberal Government are in the slightest degree disposed to part with any shred of self-government any shred of power, any shred of authority which rightfully belongs to us at this present moment. As for the declaration that we will be called upon under any circumstances to contribute \$46,000,000 a year to Imperial defences, I simply make this statement in the full confidence that every man of sense and intelligence from one end of Canada to the other, when that statement is known and heard and canvassed by them, will pronounce it as I pronounce it, to be the most absurd figment that ever emanated from the brain of a—I hardly know how to designate Sir Charles in this instance—a political charlatan, I am afraid I must call him—

A voice—Romancer.
Sir Richard Cartwright—I thank you my friend—a political romancer, who desired, for purposes of his own, to array the prejudices of a certain class of persons in one or two Provinces of the Dominion against the Government which he was opposing at the time. (Cheers and laughter.) Sir, I ask again, what is the policy which Sir Charles Tupper is advocating at the present moment? Why, sir, in Ontario, as you well know, for the last year he has hardly lost an opportunity of denouncing Sir Wilfrid Laurier because Sir Wilfrid Laurier took time to deliberate before he authorized sending forward a contingent to South Africa. That, in Sir Charles Tupper's opinion, was little short of treason. That in his (Sir Charles Tupper's) opinion, was a thing which should have been done without the slightest consultation or deliberation, whereas, as everybody knows, our troops were sent to South Africa in the shortest possible space of time within which they could be reasonably equipped.

THE POLICY FOR QUEBEC.

But, sir, in Quebec we find Sir Charles Tupper denouncing Sir Wilfrid Laurier on every occasion as an Imperialist, as a man who is too British for Sir Charles Tupper's taste, as a man who is willing to sacrifice himself for this or that title or this or that trumpety distinction. Whatever else Sir Wilfrid Laurier may be, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and I say it to his credit, and I say it to the credit of his colleagues, he and they are, above all things and before all things, true Canadians, and no more likely to sacrifice the autonomy of Canada than any of you can be. (Loud cheers.) I am willing to make all possible allowances for Sir Charles Tupper. It is not the first time I have come to the conclusion that Sir Charles is one of those unfortunate persons who may be best described as congenitally and morally blind. I am disposed to believe he is physically incapable of distinguishing black from white, right from wrong, or truth from falsehood. (Laughter and cheers.) I can well believe that after Sir Charles has repeated certain statements for a number of times he possesses the faculty of believing them, and it is only for the sake of others I have deemed it worth my while to spend this amount of time to expose the absurd statements with which he has chosen to inaugurate his campaign on the present occasion. (Laughter and cheers.)

MR. FOSTER'S HALF TRUTHS.

And now, sir, I come to the case of a different sort of person. I come to deal with some statements on the part of Mr. Foster. Now Mr. Foster's special faculty since ever I have known him, has been this: Mr. Foster will not make statements like Sir Charles Tupper, absolutely unsupported. Mr. Foster's special faculty is, on the contrary, to make a statement which is partly true. He deals in half-truths. Well, as I told the house on one occasion, you know perfectly well, as Tennyson put it, "a lie that is all a lie may be met and fought out, but a lie that is part a truth is a harder matter to fight," and consequently Mr. Foster requires at our hands perhaps a little more careful dissection than Sir Charles Tupper.

Now, sir, to give you an illustration. In the first place I find that Mr. Foster declares, and declared correctly, that his

expenditure in 1896 amounted to of a railway manager, who being desirous of presenting a favorable showing to his stockholders, should suspend all work for the purpose of maintaining his permanent way in good order, and should discontinue all repairs on his rolling stock. Sir, we have known those things done, and we have found them result in great loss of life to the passengers on that railway and in very great loss of money to the company whose rolling stock or other property had been allowed to deteriorate for want of proper repairs. Now, sir, that is exactly what Mr. Foster did in 1896. He did reduce the expenditure to a matter of \$37,000,000, but how did he do it?

STARVING PUBLIC SERVICES.

Sir, he did it in the first place by throwing over a number of items to a further year which ought to have been paid for in that year, and he did it in the second place by absolutely starving two most important services. He did it in the next place by discontinuing the drill pay to our militia, with the effect of disorganizing a very large part of that force, from which, to some extent, they have even yet hardly recovered in many cases. He did it in the second place by refusing proper repairs on public works, with the result that so much damage was done in many cases an expenditure, probably of millions, has resulted which could have been saved by the judicious expenditure of a few hundred thousands at the time. More than that. When Mr. Foster claims credit for having reduced the expenditure to \$37,000,000 in 1896 he deliberately conceals as far as he can the fact that in 1895 he had expended \$38,132,000, and, in the second place, that for 1897 he demanded a sum of \$38,358,000 for his main estimates alone, not to speak of the very large supplementaries with which I will have occasion to deal a little further on. No, sir, when a man in one year spends \$38,132,000 when in the year succeeding he asks for his first estimate, \$38,358,000 and when for a special purpose in the intervening year he cuts it down to \$37,000,000, all that I can say is that his conduct is, to say the least of it, very suspicious and that he has no ground whatever for declaring that he had effected a permanent reduction in the public expenditure.

CROSS ENTRIES OF SEVERAL MILLIONS.

Similarly Mr. Foster declares that our expenditure in 1900 will amount to \$42,000,000. Sir, that may be, but Mr. Foster is extremely careful to conceal from the people on all occasions this all-important fact, that of the four or five million additional which we propose to spend over his own estimate for 1897, almost the entire amount is made up of sums which cost the people of Canada nothing, which are in the strictest sense cross entries. Mr. Foster knows right well that the purpose of the sinking fund alone half a million more had to be expended in 1896 or 1897. Mr. Foster knows right well that for the purpose of administering our railways a charge of \$1,500,000 or \$1,600,000 more was made in 1900 than was made in 1896 or 1897; and he knows that every penny of that amount was collected on the other side from the increased receipts of those railroads and did not cost the people of Canada one copper. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) Similarly he knows that \$1,700,000 or thereabouts was expended on the Yukon for the benefit of the people of the Yukon, for maintaining order in the Yukon district, and he knows that every farthing of that amount was collected from the Yukon and that it cost the remaining people of Canada nothing. (Cheers.) He knows further that there were three or four hundred thousand dollars additional of interest caused by the necessity of defraying the interest on the excessive increase of capital which he had caused in the years 1895 and 1896 by his own expenditures or by his own deficits. Add those together and you find that the additional expenditure, four and a half millions or thereabouts, is lessened to an amount of some four or five hundred dollars at most, of which I will give you the details later on, and so no part of which additional expenditure did Mr. Foster or his friend raise an objection on the floor of parliament. (Cheers.)

THE \$35,000,000 ARGUMENT.

Then, sir, Mr. Foster, declared, and declares at great length and emphasizes it very much, that I in particular asserted in 1895 and 1896 that an expenditure of thirty-eight millions was extravagant under the then conditions of Canada. Sir, that is true. I thought so then, I think so still—(hear, hear)—and were the conditions the same I would use my utmost exertions to cut down the expenditure; but Mr. Foster keeps back from the people whom he addresses these important facts, that at the time I considered an expenditure of 38 millions excessive, at that moment we had a deficit of over four millions of dollars on the expenditure of the current year. (Hear, hear.) He keeps back the fact that, since that time the revenues of Canada have practically, to all intents and purposes, trebled, because

(Continued on Page 4.)

USE - - -

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