

result of this proposed agreement, we shall have a large inflow of population into our west. I am told by the officers of the immigration Department that we may expect in the west this year not less than 500,000 people. And with a greater population in the west, more wheat will be grown, and there will be greater hauls for the railways, and lower prices for the consumer. Our hon. friends need, therefore, be under no apprehension that this agreement will in any way prejudice our transportation systems.

We are told, however, by my hon. friend (Mr. Sproule) that it is a one-sided agreement, and he quoted to this effect the words of two or three prominent men in the United States—I think even the President of the United States.

Mr. SPROULE. Yes.

Mr. LEMIEUX. So did my hon. friend from North Toronto (Mr. Foster), but we also have one of the highest protectionists on this continent, Mr. Joe Cannon, Uncle Joe, prominent in American public life, who objects to this agreement because it is one-sided. It is, indeed, strange to find protectionists on both sides of the line agreeing that it is a one-sided agreement to the prejudice of each. Well, I believe with the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) with the Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier), with Mr. Taft, the President of the United States, that it is a compact which involves mutual advantages. That is only natural. Canada could never expect, in dealing with the United States, or even in dealing with the smallest island in the West Indies, to obtain in a trade bargain, a one-sided arrangement.

But my hon. friend says that we have given up our fiscal independence, and he quoted from Mr. Austen Chamberlain, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in England some years ago, to prove this assertion. But he failed to remind the House that Mr. Chamberlain stated, probably in the same speech, that Canada had just entered into the American vortex. Well, such a statement is a silly one. We are not in any way divesting ourselves of our fiscal independence. We are simply propounding a policy which parliament is free to accept or reject. We have kept clear of all entangling alliances because we know that the conditions of this country are likely to change rapidly within the next 5, 10 or 20 years and at any moment we may alter our course. In a brief period we shall have a much larger population and be much stronger, and the British preference still remains. That preference is still, in the words of my right hon. leader, the Prime Minister, the cardinal feature of our fiscal policy. We gave that preference willingly to the mother country and we asked nothing in return. We have maintained that pre-

ference, although it is one-sided, and to the advocates of inter-imperial preference we said: We Liberals, we Canadians, shall never put a price on our loyalty. Why did we give this preference to Great Britain? We gave it in order to show our gratitude for the blessings of responsible government which we owe to her wise policy and the efforts of her statesmen, such as Lord Durham and Lord Elgin? We gave Great Britain a preference because we recognized that her markets were free to the countries of the world and her colonies in particular, and because during more than a century she bore the brunt of Canadian defence on land and sea. We have not altered or impaired in the least our fiscal independence, we have simply made a bargain, and are submitting that bargain to the Canadian people. This parliament is free to accept or reject it, but we still maintain, in either event, the British preference which we gave of our own free consent, and which we still maintain because of our gratitude to the mother country, and also because it suits us.

We are told, however, by my hon. friend, that this is a dreadful blow to tariff reform in England. Well, if such be the case, what then? I am a Liberal, and as a Reformer I accept the verdict of the people—vox populi, vox Dei. On three different occasions, the electorate in Great Britain has been consulted on tariff reform—in 1906, 1909 and a few months ago—and on each John Bull declared that, even for the sake of his colonies, he will not tax the food of the large masses who are working at low wages, and sometimes starving, in London, Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool. Mr. Balfour himself during the last campaign made a proposal to the British electors. He would not, he said, discuss mutual preference at that election, but if returned to power he would have a referendum. That was the chief plank of his platform in the month of December last. He offered to give John Bull an occasion to show whether he was for or against mutual preference. What did John Bull answer? He answered that he would not even consider the propriety of a referendum of that question. Therefore, it is not this proposed arrangement which is giving a death blow to tariff reform. Long ago in 1906 and 1908, the people of England themselves gave a death blow to mutual preference.

But see what confusion exists among hon. gentlemen opposite. We have my hon. friend from Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk), who rose in his place the other day, and asked the House to postpone the consideration of this question, because, forsooth, he had reached in his own mind the idea that we were playing into the hands of the British government in making this bargain with the United States. He wants to postpone