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WAR?

One morning this week brought three messages. From Berlin we learned that the weekly mails to Canada are burdened with German catalogues, price lists and offers of business connections. The German exporters have lost no time in mobilizing for the recapture of the Canadian trade. From Washington came the story that President Taft would go to the limit of the law in Canadian tariff matters, though he could not violate the spirit and the letter thereof. From Ottawa despatches said there was no sign of weakening on the part of the government. This referred to granting concessions which might prevent Taft from making his first important use of the proverbial big stick. Add to these three messages the remark of Mr. Fielding that in the United States as well as in Canada we have a very enterprising and sometimes very imaginative press, and one seems to have the cardinal points of the situation.

That tariff war would be unwelcome is obvious. That it will hurt most the United States is equally so. Our neighbors cannot afford to look at the Dominion through the same spectacles as they did twenty years ago. Canada has changed from the seeker to the sought; from the solicitor to the dictator. In other words, we fully appreciate the potentialities and possibilities of our market, Germany, now that it has thrown aside official pride, seeks our trade. In return, Canada finds a market with a wider door. France affords another opening, and so shortly will Italy. Most important, perhaps, Great Britain has decided to mitigate commercial belatedness by making a bold and businesslike bid for a larger share of our import trade. These are but a few of the consid-

erations which must be weighed well before President Taft declares business war.

What might have been considered undue discrimination years ago must now be regarded as a natural development of a progressive nation. Then, we could afford to have no clearly defined trade policies. Neither could we support the smallest ghost of discrimination. Now, we have definite and progressive policies and have earned the right to formulate largely our trade treaties, with due regard to all nations and without arousing hypersensitiveness on the part of our nearest neighbors.

In past international relations, Canada has complained bitterly of being sacrificed on the altar of British-American statesmanship. Many still harbor the thought that the State of Maine presses too far into our Maritime provinces. The Ashburton capitulation, so called, is another example. While these and other cases related more particularly to boundary lines, Canada to-day stands in a position to decide by decisive action a far more important event. Our home market is expanding. The European situation is favorable, and the inevitable dislocation of trade caused by the United States enforcing the maximum tariff rates would in a comparatively short time be counterbalanced by other factors. Already certain Canadian statesmen may be trembling at the semi-belligerent messages which echo from Washington. There should be no hesitation at Ottawa. We imagine that Mr. Fielding has informed Messrs. Emery and Pepper, the United States tariff delegates, of Canada's final ruling. It, therefore, seems to rest entirely with the United States to adjust their big export trade to Canada's twentieth century conditions. Otherwise the tariff war must come, and its length will probably depend upon the