

finitely brought up in a resolution moved by the Hon. Mr. Sutter, and seconded by Hon. Mr. Fitzgerald, two delegates from the Australian colonies, and was adopted without dissent :—

That this conference is of opinion that any provisions in existing treaties between Great Britain and any foreign power, which prevent the self-governing dependencies of the empire from entering into agreements of commercial reciprocity with each other or with Great Britain, should be removed.

That certainly contemplated that a time would come when it might be advantageous to the colonies to have preferential trade with the mother country. That resolution, although supported unanimously by the delegates of the different colonies, was stamped out by the representative of the British government. Lord Jersey stated that it was quite impossible to move in that direction as the mother country would never think of denouncing the treaties with Germany and Belgium. They were both warm allies of the mother country, and they had no desire or disposition to take any such step.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—That is where he made a blunder.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—The only way it could be done was by the very method we adopted. We forced the hand of the British government when we introduced our preferential trade policy. The law officers of the Crown, of course, declared against it. The British government were unfavourable to it, because it disturbed their relations with two important countries in Europe. Then British public sentiment came to our aid, and it was through that British sentiment, that recognition of the loyalty of Canada in making an offer so generously to the mother country, unaccompanied by any qualifications, it stirred the hearts of the British people and forced the hand of the Imperial government. That led to larger trade and the recognition of Canada as a much more important part of the empire than she had occupied before that particular period. Now, the hon. gentleman in his statement said he would much rather that the goods we imported were made in Canada. I venture to say that our artisans, our mechanics, our labourers are more highly paid to-day, have more constant work than they had at any time when the national policy was in existence before the preferential trade was

adopted. My hon. friend from Charlotte-town smiles.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—I thought the national policy was in existence yet.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—I think the hon. gentleman is right.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—At times it is exceedingly difficult to know where the hon. gentlemen want to place the present government. At one time we are denounced as destroying the industries of the country by taking away the national policy, that we are failing to stand by the industries of the country, that we are rushing on to free trade and ruin. At another, that we are maintaining a protective tariff. It is difficult to judge what is the just conclusion of the rank and file of our friends opposite, because they differ so widely on the policy pursued by the government, that it is quite impossible to make it consonant with common sense. What I say is, that at no time in the history of Canada was the prosperity of the country more in evidence than it is to-day, or that our various industrial lines were more fully occupied, or making more money than during the time the preferential tariff has been in existence.

Hon. Mr. McMILLAN—In the woollen trade for instance.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—My hon. friend is quite correct; the woollen men are complaining that the preference is injuring them, that a tariff 23 per cent is not enough for them. There are differences of opinion on that. It is thought that if the woollen men, with the advantage of 23 per cent and freights and insurance, and the additional advantage of being in the home market, would only adopt proper appliances, and improved machinery, they certainly ought to be able to compete with those who produce articles abroad. What I maintain is this—that the giving of that preference to Great Britain aroused a sentiment there that declared in favour of trade with Canada, that it created a demand for Canadian products, that Canada was recognized as a most important factor in the future of the empire. It is quite true that our imports from Great Britain have not increased—I quite grant that—in the ratio that one would have a right to expect. Last year, in round figures, we imported \$43,000,-