

Commercial Union with Canada.

SPEECH

OF

HON. ROBERT R. HITT,

OF ILLINOIS,

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

*Friday, March 1, 1889.*

On the joint resolution (H. Res. 129) to promote commercial union with Canada.

Mr. HITT said:

Mr. SPEAKER: This joint resolution, for calling up which I desire to thank the gentleman from Iowa, to promote commercial union with Canada, is a timely and practical response, in liberal spirit and full regard of the dignity and independence of all, to a widespread and extending movement now going forward in the Dominion, friendly to us in tendency and aiming at larger and freer intercourse. It is true the present administration of the Dominion is Tory and hostile to commercial union with us. Sir John McDonald, the prime minister and real ruler, desires to bind Canada as closely in trade as in political connection with Great Britain; and every appliance of power and appeal to sentiment have been used against this movement. Yet the material reasons, the business advantages to every one, are so evident that it goes on. In the Canadian Parliament last spring sixty-seven members, representing districts that contain more than half the wealth of Canada, voted for unrestricted reciprocity. The bye-elections since then show the increasing strength of the movement. The executive officers and prime ministers of the provinces, something like our States, have declared for it.

It is time that we give some assurance that such a powerful movement of such immense consequences interests our people, and will be considered in as liberal and practical a spirit on our side.

Since this resolution was introduced by me one year ago, March 5, it has been most carefully, scrutinizingly discussed, and almost universally approved by the press of the country. The Committee on Foreign Affairs, after much consideration, reported it to the House without a dissenting voice, recommending its adoption. It provides, in few words:

That whenever it shall be duly certified to the President of the United States that the Government of the Dominion of Canada has declared a desire to establish commercial union with the United States, having a uniform revenue system, like internal taxes to be collected, and like import duties to be imposed on articles brought into either country from other nations, with no duties upon trade between the United States and Canada, he shall appoint three commissioners to meet those who may be likewise designated to represent the Government of Canada, to prepare a plan for the assimilation of the import duties and internal-revenue taxes of the two countries, and an equitable division of receipts, in a commercial union; and said commissioners shall report to the President, who shall lay the report before Congress.