

ada is wiped out. If protection is wiped out in Canada and the United States as against one another if we have free trade across the border and a common tariff against the world, how long will it be before political union will follow?

When we are counting up the cost, Mr. Chairman, we must not lose sight of the fact that we lose our fiscal independence. That has been discussed a good deal this afternoon and denied; nevertheless, the fact remains true. This is not a treaty, says the Finance Minister; it is a pact which may be changed at will. Well, he has read to us this afternoon from this blue-book, and he has told us that we shall be absolutely free to make any change in the tariff of Canada that we see fit; that both countries that are at the present time parties to this arrangement shall be able to make any change they like at any time. Let us see if that really is so. Supposing that this tariff arrangement has been in effect for five years, that we find that it injures us, and we desire to make a change; the moment we do so the Americans resort to reprisals, and every interest in Canada that stands to lose by these reprisals falls upon this government or the government that may replace it and says: You must not sacrifice us, and the government says: Ah, but it is only a little thing. And so they grin and bear it. And step by step there will be that constant encroachment. It is the old story of the camel and the tent—the camel gets one foot in first, then his second foot, then his shoulder, then his head, and soon the camel is entirely in the tent and there is no room for anybody else. Or, if the Americans are the ones who are injured and they desire a change shall we dare to make any reprisals? Did we dare make any reprisals last spring when they threatened us with the big stick? Not at all. Shall we dare to make reprisals? No, there would be too many Canadians who would be seriously injured. And so we will grin and bear it. And I do not see how, Mr. Speaker, if this goes into effect and great avenues of trade are created flowing north and south instead of east and west, I do not see how it will be possible for us to take back anything we have given because the whip hand will be with the larger partner and the stronger partner can threaten us and make us suffer any time. Our fiscal independence henceforth—although on paper I admit we have absolute freedom—our fiscal independence henceforth will be in the hands of the authorities at Washington. They can hurt us and they can hurt us severely; we can hurt them but very little and do our very worst. Is it wise to put all our eggs into one basket and then leave the carrying of that basket to those whose interest it may be to let the basket drop? What would be the worst loss that we could inflict upon them? It would be to take

away a market of from eight to ten millions of people; the loss they could inflict on us would be to take away a market of ninety or a hundred millions of people on certain commodities which by that time had begun to flow in that direction. They could injure us infinitely more than we could injure them, and when they see fit to do so they have a leverage upon us—a leverage upon our commercial and political future the strength of which it is hard even now to begin to realize. How can there be any stability or any permanence under such circumstances? There is actually no stopping place until you have reached the place where you have complete commercial union and the larger partner dominates the policy of both.

Now, there is another price we are called upon to pay. We are called on to give up our export identity. We have special advantages in Canada for raising certain articles for export and this paternal government has endeavoured in a very large measure to educate our people to make the most of these special advantages. We have a rich soil, plenty of rainfall, a cool climate, so that there are certain things that we can produce admirably. We have gone in for export business and spent very large sums of money in improving our methods, and in rendering it possible for our commodities to reach the markets of the world. The excellent quality of our products has become recognized. The Canadian name is worth something when stamped on a box of cheese or a barrel of apples. But, hereafter it will have no value in excess of the value that may be given to the mixed commodity of the North American continent. Wheat so carefully graded and guarded hitherto will go down to Duluth or else to Buffalo and there it will be mixed with the inferior American grades and exported from a United States port as grain from North America. The mixture and export of this grain will make such a thing as Manitoba No. 1 hard and No. 1 Northern disappear; in the future there will be no such thing, but there will be substituted for it a mixture that will go abroad as wheat from the North American continent, and the price will fall accordingly. That mixture will enter into competition with the mixture from Argentina and Australia, and Canadian wheat will be only what its value is to tone up the weaker mixture of the other countries. Take our cheese as another example. We have been working with a great deal of energy to secure a reputation for Canadian cheese in the British market. We have given them an honest article; we have replaced the American article by the very honesty of our product. But, now, the cheese factories of both countries can ship indiscriminately through their ports, and it will be perfectly impossible hereafter to get Cana-