

the world, and they can get along no doubt if they establish a hostile tariff against us to-day. The people of each country have the patriotism to feel that they can get along and be independent if necessary, no matter what the other may do. We at all events say that as respects Canada. But I do not hesitate to say that although we will get along without them, and that they will get along without us, we will both get along better if we be friendly and reciprocal in our tariffs.

The talk of this coming enactment at Washington has already created a good deal of ill-feeling, and naturally so. Our newspapers contain angry editorials threatening reprisals. A minister of the Crown has said that if this Bill should pass Canada will not take it lying down. It is natural for such opinions to be expressed, but I do not think that angry editorials or threats of reprisals will serve any good purpose to-day. We should all apply ourselves to some effort to save ourselves from the injury on both sides of the line that may be brought about by the enactment of this adverse commercial legislation.

Now there is a happy situation before us which is perhaps not generally known. It is a very interesting fact, and of great importance now, that the reciprocity agreement of 1911 is still on the statute books of the United States. There is a widespread impression abroad that that Tariff Act of the United States was repealed. It was repealed so far as the action of the House of Representatives could repeal it, but when the Bill for that purpose went to the Senate it got no further. And so it happens that the reciprocity agreement of 1911, though a matter of the past so far as Canada is concerned, is to-day on the statute books of the United States and is, if I may so call it, a standing offer. How far it represents the public opinion of the United States to-day is a debatable question. They regard it largely, I have no doubt, as a matter of the past, but since the Act is there, we are justified in assuming that it is still open to us to consider, and I think we shall do well if we proceed along these lines.

There is no doubt that the passing of the Fordney Bill would be a matter of injury to Canada. The wheat growers of the West attach great importance to their access to the American market. That has been shown in various ways. The Government of the day have shown their appreciation of that by arranging that wheat shall be mutually free. And in the matter

[Mr. Fielding.]

of the cattle trade of the country I think the feeling is stronger. I know that some of the most important ranchers in the western country regard the Fordney Bill as a very great menace to them, and if it is passed they consider that all the cattle and stock-raising interests of Western Canada will have received a very severe blow. That is the impression of men in the trade who are best informed.

Now, should we stand idly by and wait until something happens, or shall we make some effort to show our American friends that we are willing to meet them half way to avert what would seem to be a danger? It is our move. Mr. Samuel W. McCall, the statesman of Massachusetts who had charge of the Reciprocity Bill in Congress, was interviewed not many months ago by an American newspaper and was asked what he thought of the future of reciprocity. He said:

As to the future of reciprocity, if it is ever again to become a practical issue, the initiative will have to proceed from Canada. After one emphatic rebuff our country is not likely to appear in the position of coaxing a neighbour, and coaxing her for something that is vastly more important to her than to us.

Whether it is more important to the United States or to Canada is a matter perhaps on which there will be a difference of opinion, and I do not want to raise any matter of controversy. I think we will all agree that, apart from that point, the statement of Mr. McCall is a natural and a reasonable one. Whatever may be said as to their motives, the Americans, who, for so long, we thought, acted so ungenerously toward us, did take the last step toward closer relations with us. The last movement for reciprocity, I say, came from them, and if there is to be any other movement in the matter Mr. McCall is reasonable in his assertion that it must come from Canada. We might well, then, in view of the situation in Washington to-day, place ourselves on record as being willing to resume negotiations and to confirm the agreement which some years ago we were not pleased to accept.

Now, it may be said: Why should we make a move at all? I am satisfied that if nothing is done—if we simply let angry articles appear in the newspapers; if angry ministers say they will not take these things lying down—we shall have bad blood between the United States and Canada; and there never was a time when, even apart from the question of commercial relations, it was more desirable that Canada and the