

reciprocity, and Sir John A. Macdonald asked the people to stop at reciprocity in natural products. It was a fight between unrestricted and restricted reciprocity. We all remember Sir John's speech in Toronto at the Albany Club when he was about to dissolve the House in 1891. He said:

The Conservative party has been instrumental in putting on the statute book every advantage that has ever been obtained from the United States. From the treaty of 1866 to this day every treaty and agreement between the United States and Canada bears the signature of Conservative leaders. To-day we are trying to open to the farmer the American market for his natural products, and the manufacturer will not be affected in the least.

It was on the 5th of March that we met at the poll, and Sir John A. Macdonald and his party won the day. Mr. Blaine, it is true, had denied a few days before the elections that he had offered to discuss reciprocity in natural products; yet Sir John A. Macdonald was victorious, and he sent three Bluenoses—I do not know whether New Brunswickers are included in that term or not—at any rate, he sent Sir John Thompson, Sir George Foster, and Sir Charles Tupper to Washington to try to implement his promise to the farming community of Canada to make an effort to open the American market to Canadian farm products. They failed. In 1911 Mr. Fielding succeeded, but the East denied the West the United States market. I believe that rebuff created an incentive in the breasts of the western farmers to exercise political action under their own banner. Perhaps that was the determining cause.

As to Quebec, I have had occasion to say that it has generally been a fair fighter and a good loser, but it did balk at the War-time Elections Act. It felt that the dice had been outrageously loaded. No quarrel had that Province with those people who favoured conscription for the recruiting of troops; but it felt that at the basis of democracy stood the franchise and that the electors of Canada were entitled to a fair deal. I said that last year; but I added that it was unfortunate—repeating the words which have just fallen from the lips of my honourable friend—that there should be whole provinces—the West, Quebec, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island—voting one way. I urged that some means should be found after the ensuing elections (that is, the recent elections) again to divide as heretofore on political lines, so that the sentiment in Quebec to which my honourable friend has referred, and which is largely a Conservative sentiment, might find expression by the return of a

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND

goodly number of representatives from that part of the country.

I venture to suggest one remedy for these blocs that appeared on the electoral map of the 6th of December: proportional representation. Can it be applied? I am told it cannot in the large areas comprised in some of the constituencies in the West, where the population is sparse, but it should be in the smaller and more thickly-settled parts of the country. Proportional representation would have given a fairly representative number of adherents to the Conservative party from Quebec on the 6th of December, just as it would have given a fairly good representation to that party from the West and from Nova Scotia. The Liberal party would also have benefited in the West. This is my personal view. I have been from the outset in favour of proportional representation. I might cite—I do not know whether I have ever done so in this Chamber or not—the example of Belgium. Belgium is divided into two races, the Flemish and the Walloon. They seem to be unfortunately divided on religious lines, the Flemish being Catholics and the Walloons to a large extent Socialists and anti-clericals. The division in language and in religion was made a line of cleavage which was most dangerous for the body politic. Proportional representation was established. From the Flemish came a goodly number of Liberals, Radicals and Socialists, who mingled and fraternized with members from the Walloon district; and from the Walloon district came a fairly good representation of Conservatives and Catholics, who fraternized with the Catholic Flemish. This helped to round the angles considerably throughout the years that followed; and it seems to me that it offers a further reason for establishing proportional representation in Canada, because then men of the same opinions from all parts of Canada would meet in the House of Commons, and act together in amity.

Yet, for all that, I am not fearful of the results of the last election. I feel that the men elected to the House of Commons will find a common ground for working together in the best interests of the country. The problems they have to deal with are difficult ones, the financial problem being the most pressing. Canada needs the best efforts of its delegates to the Federal seat of Government. It may surely rely on its enlightened patriotism.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Turriff, the debate was adjourned.