

former administration, by which he hoped to capture the markets of foreign countries with their manufactures and products on a one-sided scale, but I think the treaties he then caused to be put on the statute-book came to nothing. The South American Republics and other nations would not treat on that basis; they claimed that there had to be an equality of treatment in order to secure permanence of any treaties they made with other countries with which they desired to trade. These countries found that if they negotiated a treaty with the United States they would be repelling Great Britain, who had always been a good customer for their raw materials and had given them good manufactures in return, and they were not going to forego their commerce with Great Britain for any close treaty with the United States. It is a difficult thing to negotiate a treaty with the United States, where Canada is concerned. Where Great Britain is concerned it is not so difficult. The people of the United States are 70,000,000 and the British islands occupy a powerful position in the world both commercial and fiscal and every other way; therefore, a treaty with any other country and a treaty with Canada are different things. We are situated beside each other with a boundary 4,000 miles long between us. We speak the same language, produce the same articles, without any difference, and there is a rivalry between the people on the two sides of the boundary, which keeps up a selfish agitation that no Canadian shall be allowed to work in the United States or sell in the United States or compete with the people of the United States. That has been the policy which has been enforced. Unfortunately the democracy of the United States has arrived at that condition that the leaders of the people have always legislated with an eye on their own circumstances. They want to know how it will affect them. They do not consider the interests of the country so much as how to retain their individual positions. Therefore, it is a matter of difficulty negotiating a treaty with our neighbours. They call us thrifty, we call them sharp, we have, therefore, never got very far. I do not think myself that there is any use in trying to get a reciprocity treaty that is of any particular value, and we can do very well without one. So far as the settlement of questions that the government had to deal with is concerned, it has been a failure.

In fact it appeared to me to be a battle of protectionists rather than a treaty of friendship that was being moulded. What I am personally anxious about, in accordance with the question I put on the paper this afternoon, is whether or not this treaty is going to tie us up in carrying out any domestic policy that we may have with regard to our own affairs and with regard to our commercial relations with Great Britain. I have heard it stated that the government do not want to make any move because this treaty is in view, because it may have an injurious effect on the people of the United States and that the treaty will fail. I do not think that we should put ourselves in that position. We are perfectly independent of the United States. We can get on very well without a treaty, as we have for a great number of years, and it is not wise for us to forego any advantages we possess as Canadians until the people of the United States are in a position to be more amenable to what is fair and just as between two neighbours. For that reason I think it is a pity that the treaty was not closed up when Lord Herschell ceased to be the chairman of the commission by his unfortunate death. This treaty might be kept on the boards for one or two years, so long as it does not affect our national arrangements with other countries or with Great Britain itself, the fact of it being kept open is perhaps a good thing. The door is always open then to friendly negotiations; but we should not legislate with a view that our action might have some effect on this treaty. We should be perfectly free to enter into a free trade arrangement with Great Britain—more than that, we should let the people of the United States know that we intend to have free trade with Great Britain and the freest intercourse with all parts of the British Empire before we ask them to make another treaty. That is what I believe the people of Canada are desirous of accomplishing—the freest commercial relations possible with all parts of the British Empire, irrespective of what other nations may think or say. We do not want to negotiate a treaty and hold our peace, and then have the United States Government say, your policy was so and so when you negotiated this treaty; now that you have secured this treaty you are going to make Canada a back door by which our policy may be legislated out of existence. We do not want to do anything of the kind,