

his hat in the ring as a protectionist, and we on this side of the House are behind him.

I wonder if my hon. friend the member for Timiskaming (Mr. McDonald), who is a labour member, I understand, is in favour of the free admission of United States coal. I wish I had thought of it a little bit earlier when he was in his seat, because I am sure he would get up and proclaim himself a good protectionist as the late Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the ex-leader of the Opposition.

Since this debate began, Mr. Speaker, almost everything has been dealt with. During the last two or three days and nights we have heard a lot about the Canadian merchant marine. Every time my hon. friend from Red Deer spoke he propounded a new theory, and he always pleaded that they were free trade theories. Now, I would ask him where could he have freer trade than under Government ownership of the ships that pass in the night? If it was not for the Government merchant marine half of our commercial enterprises to-day would be crippled. Remember, before the war we used to send coal from Sydney harbour to Montreal for 49 and 50 cents a ton. Our shipping was confiscated and put into the business of the war, and to-day we cannot send a ton of coal from Sydney harbour to St. John's, Newfoundland, under \$4.25 a ton, although for a similar rate you can send the same quantity from Newport News to Marseilles.

Now, the point of the matter is this, that any person who wishes to strike a blow at Canadian trade and commerce cannot do it any more effectively than by advocating the doctrine of reciprocity, and by voting to-night with my hon. friend from Shelburne and Queen's.

Mr. J. F. JOHNSTON (Last Mountain): Mr. Speaker, in the first place I wish to thank the hon. member for Shelburne and Queen's (Mr. Fielding) for bringing this matter to the attention of the House. I believe a great mistake was made by the Canadian people when they rejected the reciprocity agreement in 1911. I also wish to congratulate the hon. gentleman for the manner in which he introduced his resolution, for I am sure that he would have been excused by most hon. members had he paid some attention to the political aspects and the reason why this measure was defeated in 1911. In the province of Saskatchewan from which I come we had but one issue in that election, that issue was reciprocity, and in support of that fact

[Mr. Butts.]

the people of the province returned ninety per cent of their representatives to this Parliament. That, I think, is proof that they were in favour of wider trade relations with the United States.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that any one who has given thought to economic matters will agree that the salvation of Canada depends upon greater production. And if we produce more, I submit it follows that we must have greater markets. Where are we to get those markets? Our trading with the Mother Country is falling off rapidly. In 1917 our export trade with Great Britain amounted to \$800,000,000; for the year 1920 it was less than \$400,000,000, or a drop of more than one hundred per cent. In the same period our exports to France dropped from \$100,000,000 to \$25,000,000. The Government that preceded the present ministry realized that we needed greater markets, and as a result of their search for those markets they advanced credits to various countries, including Roumania and Greece. Now, what has happened in connection with the marketing of our products in those two countries? If I am correctly advised, the interest on those credits has not been paid. Why did not the Government at that time—and this is the point I wish to make, Mr. Speaker—when they realized that wider markets were needed, turn to the great republic to the south of us? Surely that is a better market for our products than any we can find in Central Europe. In this connection I would point out that during 1920 some 60,000,000 bushels of the wheat crop of the Prairie Provinces found its way across the border and 30,000,000 bushels of that wheat, according to the information I have been able to secure, is to be consumed in the United States. Everyone knows that during the marketing of our grain crop last year there was a money stringency in this country. I would like to submit this question to the Government: Do they believe that in the marketing of that 30,000,000 bushels of wheat the money derived from those sales was an embarrassing consideration for the banks of this country during the fall of last year? I think not.

I believe that the United States offers to Canada the most natural and the greatest market that we can have, Canada should not lose an opportunity to meet the United States at least half way. The hon. member for Brantford (Mr. Cockshutt) held this resolution up to ridicule, and said that it would be a disgrace for this country to make any such advance. Well,