

Where have the advances been made with a view to securing what they describe as wider markets? We see in the press—though we do not see it in the Speech from the Throne—the announcement that advances have been made to the United States of America; that the Minister of Finance made another trip down to Washington in the supposed belief that he would achieve some practical result in this respect. We are also told that, as well, efforts have been made to establish reciprocal relations with Australia. Apparently the Government have in mind—but I must say that in my own judgment it is only apparently as far as one of those countries goes—the making of a reciprocity pact, one with the United States and another with Australia. As far as the United States are concerned, I expressed the fear that the desire was only apparent. I believe on the part of most members of the Government, and I am inclined to believe on the part of the preponderating element of the Government, the only purpose was a mere gesture, knowing full well its futility, in order to see if they could lure behind them, without the reward of office, the honourable gentlemen who sit to my left.

In so far as that subject is concerned, my position has been well known for years. I do not believe advantage can be gained for Canada, I do not believe advantage can be gained for any country, only a fraction the size of its neighbour, the competitor of that neighbour in every field of its enterprise, by tying itself to a trade treaty with that neighbour. Reciprocity with a country which is not a producer in surplus of our products is something that should be sought for and should be gained, if at all possible; that is something which would be of advantage to both countries. Reciprocity with Australia is something which should be obtained, if we are able to obtain it for Canada. Reciprocity with the West Indies, who produce goods that we do not produce in surplus, who consume what we produce in surplus, is desirable. Reciprocity with a country in that position should be the object of our policy. The late government achieved it with some of these countries. The late government tried to achieve it, and did everything in its power to achieve it, with Australia, and before retirement from office I was instrumental, by interviews with the Prime Minister of Australia, in securing his influence to have inserted in the legislation of that

dominion power to its government to negotiate reciprocity treaties with the other dominions of the Empire. I pressed that upon him. It was inserted and after I returned communications passed with a view to securing practical results. The legislation of the Commonwealth of Australia came into effect only, I think, in the fall, and some time late in the fall, of 1921; consequently the government of that dominion was not able to take action upon it during the life of the late government. I earnestly hope this Government will press for fair terms of reciprocity with that dominion, and I earnestly hope they will meet with success. But Sir, in regard to the United States of America, reciprocity with that country of the nature of that which they achieved, and which the people of this country rejected in 1911, could, I think, lead to no good object for this Dominion, it could, I think, only succeed in tying our hands fiscally, in subordinating us more and more, as years would go on, to the commercial domination of the republic. I think hon. gentlemen will agree that now in opposition I take no different stand from that which I took in office, and that I took no different stand in office from that which I had taken throughout the country, before acquiring the reins of power. In all modesty I venture to suggest that those opposite consider now for the first time an example of that kind.

It is stated now that they are making a powerful effort for the reduction of freight rates. Reduction of freight rates is a vital question in this Dominion. That freight rates must come down is axiomatic, but I had thought that the control of freight rates had been, even by hon. gentlemen opposite, placed in the hands of a railway board, which had been given a judicial status, which had been given ample power, and whose duty it was to do the right thing in this regard. I know that in the late campaign hon. gentlemen, hoping to secure votes thereby, ignored their legislation, ignored the status of the board, played before the electors as if it were the duty of the Government to derogate from its own legislation, the duty of Parliament to derogate therefrom, to invade the domain of a judicial body, and to do what alone a judicial body was empowered to do. I know they sought to raise a wave of prejudice against the Administration by ignoring the Board of Railway Commissioners, and I know, besides that, one member of that Government, not content with