

United States, men of influence in that country, who were at one with us in our desire to be exempt from that maximum tariff. Nevertheless, as I have said, our information was that, in all probability the president, friendly though he was would be likely to feel that he was bound to impose the maximum tariff upon us. I am willing to assume that we might have accomplished this without any concession. I am willing to assume, for the moment, that if we had, to use the common phrase, been content to stand pat, we might have obtained the United States minimum tariff. And that, perhaps, would have been a great triumph for Canada. To hurl defiance at the United States when all the nations of Europe were accepting their terms and conditions, might have been a heroic method. But there are victories that are dearly bought. If we had achieved such a triumph over the United States government as I have spoken of, while, for the moment, it might have been a cause for congratulation, yet it would not have made for the future advantage of the relations between these two peoples. If, therefore, we could avoid the maximum tariff, if it was likely to be imposed, if we could avoid a conflict with the United States by the granting of some concessions—not very numerous, and from our point of view, not very important—I claim that, in the interests of this country for the present, and the future, it was far better that we should make these concessions than even that we should have a triumph over the United States on terms which would have left soreness and ill-feeling and might create friction in the negotiations that arise from time to time. So then, in view of the spirit with which we found the president dealing with the question, believing, as I fully believed, in his earnestness of purpose, in the sincerity of his professions of a desire to establish the best relations with Canada, we felt that it was worth our while to consider whether we could not find some common ground of action, something that we could grant to the United States without injury to ourselves, but which they might accept as an honourable basis of compromise. The question then arose as to what concessions we could grant to them. Two principles were laid down for our guidance, first, that the concessions should not be numerous; we could not give them the 110 numbers of the French treaty or anything approaching it, we could give them only a small number of concessions; second, that these concessions should not involve anything which could

place at a disadvantage any of our established Canadian industries.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. Do these concessions apply only to the United States, or are they general?

Mr. FIELDING. No, we declined to grant any concessions specifically to the United States. We provide that the concessions which are granted are in the general tariff and shall apply to the whole world.

Mr. MEIGHEN. Would the minister say whether, in his judgment, the concessions he has made, aside from the United States minimum tariff, are more of an advantage than a detriment to this country?

Mr. FIELDING. I think on general principles—I am not sure that my hon. friend will agree with me—that a reduction of duties on articles of general consumption is almost always an advantage to the people.

Mr. MEIGHEN. Why were not these concessions or reductions made long ago?

Mr. FIELDING. They have served a very useful purpose in that we have them to give now.

Mr. MEIGHEN. Then do I understand that for some years we have been cutting off our own noses in order to have a whip to use on the United States?

Mr. FIELDING. I am glad to hear my hon. friend suggest that these concessions should have been given long ago. But I want to know what has become of adequate protection.

Mr. J. A. CURRIE. The country has known what this schedule of concessions is, and parliament is waiting now to hear them from the minister.

Mr. FIELDING. Considering how many times my hon. friend has come to his feet to interrupt me, I think I have some reason to complain that he should now find fault with delay. Besides, the whole country knows what they are, and nobody can be interested in waiting for them any longer. However, we came to the conclusion that we would grant reductions in the general tariff upon a list of 13 items. There was a time when that was considered an unlucky number, but the superstition is thrust aside now, and 13 is a lucky number. I will now read the resolution containing the concessions: