

slightest discourtesy to the hon. gentleman opposite.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

The MINISTER OF CUSTOMS. Will any hon. gentlemen say I have done so?

Mr. FOSTER. You did not want to hear him, when he was trying to answer you.

The MINISTER OF CUSTOMS. The hon. gentleman placed a very serious statement upon the "Hansard."

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I am prepared to justify it.

The MINISTER OF CUSTOMS. If I understood him aright, he said that the Prime Minister was bound in some way, in the interests of the United States, as I understood him to say, to parties in the United States. I thought he had said more than he meant to say, that he had said it in a sudden heat, and that he might wish to explain it or withdraw it.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. No, no. The hon. gentleman said no such a thing. The hon. gentleman asked me to justify the statement I made, and I am prepared to do it now.

The MINISTER OF CUSTOMS. The hon. gentleman has entered upon a course of reasoning by which, he says, he convinced himself that something was done. Very well. Let it go at that. But what I said was, that he had made a direct statement so I understood him, and now he says he reached it by certain conclusions. I asked him if there was not a contradiction between the conclusions he had reached and a broad statement that that was the case. Now, with reference to what the Prime Minister did, what has been charged against him by the hon. gentleman who has just interrupted me, that has been up time and again in the House, and I do not intend to go into that at all at this time.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. No you had better not.

The MINISTER OF CUSTOMS. The House is thoroughly conversant with that matter. But leaving that question, I desire to maintain the position that has been taken on this side of the House with reference to that preferential tariff. I venture to say that every one in Canada would hail a preference given to us in the British market, if it could be obtained on terms advantageous to both, and in the interests of both. What I want to point out to hon. gentlemen opposite is this, that, by the preferential tariff enacted by this Government, though no law has been placed upon the Statute-book of England to compel the people of England to give a preference to Canadian products, in their market, the very fact that that Act was passed by this Canadian Parliament touched the British heart, and to-day, though there is no law compelling it, they are, of their

own free will, giving a preference to Canada. But, Sir, our legislation did more; it accomplished the denunciation of the German and Belgian treaties, which, so far as we can judge, would have gone on for many long years further, if action had not been taken by Canada. But the hon. gentleman takes exception to that. He says that the right hon. gentleman the Prime Minister and the Government and Parliament of Canada had nothing to do with the denunciation of those treaties. Well, it is a strange thing that the English newspapers, the English public, distinguished citizens of the British Empire, and in her remote colonies, recognise that our action here was the prime moving cause that brought about the denunciation of those treaties. I think it is in vain for the hon. gentleman to say that the Prime Minister, the Government and Parliament of Canada, are to have no credit for that result. Why, Sir, in the Conservative papers published in this city, no longer ago than the early part of this month, I find a report of an interview with Cecil Rhodes, a man whom, I think, hon. gentleman opposite will admit has been an important figure in the history of South Africa, and this is what he says:

"Mr. Cecil Rhodes arrived at Madeira to-day. In the course of a recent conversation he spoke warmly of the services Canada had rendered to the Empire by compelling the British Government to clear the German and Belgian treaties out of the way of future inter-imperial co-operation. Those treaties formerly were in his way in his tariff arrangements in South Africa. "Sir Wilfrid Laurier," he said, "has now got rid of them for us and the whole of the Empire."

That, at any rate, was the view of a distinguished man from an outlying British possession.

Mr. DAVIN. That is an opinion adverse to the policy of the Government.

The MINISTER OF CUSTOMS. What do I find in a special cable published in the Montreal "Star," a paper that is not, I believe, particularly friendly to the Administration or its acts? It is dated from London, England, and is as follows:—

"The crises in Cuba and China almost fill the papers here.

"The Budget of the Hon. Mr. Fielding, Minister of Finance, Canada, attracts a good deal of attention. I heard a Conservative member of Parliament say this morning: 'Our Ministers' law, law, law, and do little but jaw about the unity of the Empire, but Canada keeps on doing, doing, doing.'"

I said that the action of the Canadian Parliament in offering those terms to the British people, had touched the British heart,