

to come which may be very serious indeed. I should like to have called the attitude of voluntary concession, all interests considered, the Canadian attitude. The statement of Sir Josiah Stamp describes the Liberal attitude in the matter of voluntary concession. I think at least I am justified in calling it the Liberal attitude in connection with the British preference, because the Liberal government initiated that policy, and the only increases given under the British preference in Canada have been given by Liberal administrations. I am prepared to concede, and am glad to recognize the fact, that every Conservative government since that measure was introduced, with the sole exception of the present administration, kept the British preference where it was. There was a decrease in the preference on one or two commodities for a short time during the period of the war. The fact remains, however, that the governments of the Right Hon. Sir Robert Borden and of the Right Hon. Arthur Meighen alike recognized that the policy of British preference was one to which in the circumstances as they existed no exception could well be taken, and one which was of great advantage to Canada. They maintained the preference and the method of its application had passed from the realm of partisan discussion and had become what many of us had hoped was a national attitude. I trust on mature consideration the government will feel that that is still the best attitude to take. I am sure, if they treat Great Britain in that spirit, they will get from Great Britain, so far as consideration for Canada is concerned, a much better arrangement and a much better bargain than they will get by sitting down and discussing particular items and restricting trade in one way or another through locked agreements reached as a result of bickering as well as bargaining.

So far as the Liberal party is concerned, we will cordially welcome whatever extension of trade between Great Britain and Canada the government may find it possible to effect. They may go into the conference with the feeling that so far as the opposition is concerned, we believe they will protect Canada's trade to the extent of seeing that no interests which should be carefully considered will be jeopardized, and that they may go as far as they like in the matter of the furtherance of trade among the different portions of the British empire. If they adopt an attitude of the kind I have described they may expect the support of hon. gentlemen on this side of the house. We will not, however, support any narrow, circumscribed view of the question of trade between Great Britain and this country. Our attitude has been made clear, and was made clear in

the last budget of the Liberal party presented preparatory to the conference of 1930. Our attitude to-day remains what it was in 1930. That budget denoted a further lowering of the duties against Great Britain, with a view to increasing the preference and transferring to Great Britain trade which formerly had taken place between Canada and other nations. That change did not affect adversely a single interest in this country, and it would have helped very materially trade among the different parts of the empire.

There is one thing to which we will take exception,—and to which exception should be taken not only in Canada but in every dominion and in Great Britain herself—we will take exception to any tariff arrangement which will shackle the freedom of any self-governing dominion, or of Great Britain herself, in the matter of any trade arrangements which we or she or they may wish to make with countries outside of the empire. We will oppose any measure which may shackle and bind subsequent parliaments. No one has been more eloquent than has my right hon. friend in his statements that no one parliament should bind a subsequent one. He should, before the conference, make it clear to the people of Canada that he will see to it that, whatever arrangements are made, subsequent parliaments will not be bound so far as their fiscal freedom is concerned. Short of binding subsequent parliaments, of restricting or limiting freedom to trade with other parts of the world, of not failing to allow freedom of trade with the world in general to the extent to which we may wish to carry it on, the government may rest assured that it will have the support of the opposition in the furtherance of the largest possible measure of trade between the different parts of the empire that it can bring about.

At this point I should like to answer one representation my right hon. friend has made in other discussions. He said that the Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier had adopted a bargaining method similar to his own when he was in England in 1902, and the right hon. gentleman referred to a resolution then passed as evidence of the truth of his assertion, Sir Wilfrid Laurier did nothing of the kind. The situation in 1902 was this: Great Britain had placed a duty on foodstuffs coming from all parts of the world in order to raise revenue needed as a consequence of expenditures made during the South African war. It was a temporary measure for revenue purposes only. What Sir Wilfrid Laurier said was that Canada would expect Great Britain to remove the tax, so far as Canada was concerned, because we had given Great Britain a preference in our