

was the conviction in the right hon. gentleman's mind that the saving thing still for this country was to have reciprocity with the United States? And yet here comes my hon. friend from Guelph (Mr. Guthrie) and declares that the question is a dead question, and that the issue is out of the way. Are these two brave men who fought for their country, sitting down under one defeat, and allowing their country to go to ruin rather than repair the consequences of their failure to secure what they believed would be of greater value to Canada?

There was another bright and shining light which illuminated my countenance when I sat on the other side of the House and looked over to this side, that of my hon. friend, the late Minister of Labour. I believe that the late Minister of Labour lies as close to the heart of my right hon. friend and has done so for a period of years as ever did Mr. Bourassa and Mr. Armand Lavergne in the good old times. They took counsel together, and my friend Mr. Mackenzie King, no longer a member of this House but the leader of the Reform party in Ontario, has declared that the reciprocity question is not dead, and has made his propaganda upon that as a basis. Whom are we to believe? What is the purpose of all this? Are my hon. friend and his party going to save this country yet on the line of reciprocal trade arrangements and to save it by the only path which they declare lies open, or after all this talk are they going to let it die and do nothing? There is a question to be settled by my right hon. friend himself, with some of the members of his party.

My right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) is the greatest coiner of catch phrases whom I ever met in public life. They are often very happy, but many of them are only catch phrases. My right hon. friend in the opening of his speech said that this country fifteen years ago was very different from what it is at the present time, pluming himself on the great advance that had been made in fifteen years. Yes, Mr. Speaker, fifteen years ago this country was very different from what it is in 1911. Does my right hon. friend take credit to himself and his policy and his governmental methods for the difference between the Canada of fifteen years ago and the Canada of to-day? The Canada of 1896 was very different from the Canada of fifteen years before 1896, and I would again call the attention of the right hon. gentleman to the fact that the growth and development that took place in the period of fifteen years from 1896 to 1911 was absolutely based upon and was the outcome of the patient preparatory work that had been done in the preceding period. Your critic who is not very observing or very much gifted with sound common sense, leans on the fence

and watches the woodsman cutting down the trees. He watches him for a season and says: You have not got along very far, there is not much doing yet. Another year he leans over the fence rail. The man has cropped between the stumps after having burned the land off, but his crop is poor and skimp; the critic says: Not much doing here, the man is not much good. Four years afterwards he comes back and finds every stump out, but the land not yet cropped and he says: The man is no good, there is nothing doing around this farm. Then all at once, by pressure or persuasion or purchase, this man is succeeded by another man. Everything is ready for the plough, the man puts his plough into the soil ready for the planting, sows his seed and a few months afterwards reaps a bounteous harvest, and your critic then comes along and says, equally unreasoningly and equally unjustly: A great farmer this, see the crop he has got; the other man was no good, this man is good forever. There you have it exactly, the preparatory years in that great Northwest when all Canada, as the motive power and nourishing power of this great land was making experiments, was opening up its transport lines, was preparing its soil, was showing to the world the advantages of the country, that preparatory work of transport and exploration and development was the absolute essential to the fifteen years of harvest time that have been enjoyed from 1896 until to-day. Do not let us be carried away by these simple catch phrases.

In another respect the Canada of 1911 is a little different from the Canada of fifteen years before—it has been burdened by some mighty heavy unnecessary burdens, all the result of the system and the policy of my hon. friends opposite. The country has been denuded of some of its best property, which has been given to the individual by the policy and system of my right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier). In every branch of their administration evils became so glaring that the people thought it necessary at last to step in to prevent these evils. They were met by a government united in fastening down the lid and preventing all inquisition. Publicity was absolutely denied.

My right hon. friend has also declared that sentiment was the largest element in the defeat of reciprocity, and he feared that sentiment was the greatest impelling force in the endeavour to have reciprocal trade relations within the parts of the empire. Well, Sir, I believe it to be perfectly true that when sentiment is weak and selfishness is strong then is the opportunity for bad measures and bad government, and I am thankful that in every nation's history, the time comes ever and anon when sentiment thrusts out

Mr. FOSTER.