

Our merchant can call up by telephone, in New York, or Boston or Philadelphia, his correspondent, asking him to make a small shipment of goods, they will be on their way in a few hours, and they will be here in two or three days. To sort up his stock he can buy as little or as much as he pleases. The advantages are so great, because of the facility for placing orders and shipping goods, and because of the juxtaposition of the wholesale man and the consumer that an enormous trade would naturally grow up and for various reasons, these amongst others, we have developed an enormous import trade from the United States. If the Americans had afforded us the same facilities and the same reasonable kind of treatment that we have afforded them there would be no question raised to-day as to whether our trade relations were on a satisfactory basis. There would be no question raised as to whether we should enter upon the kind of policy that they have been pursuing towards us. The hon. leader of the opposition says that our tariff should be put up as a preliminary to negotiations. Put it up and then you will have something to offer the Americans, put it up, and if they do not give you what you ought to have we would then have the very tariff we ought to have. It is my conviction that this course, adopted at this juncture, would have exactly the opposite effect from that which the hon. leader of the opposition supposes it would have. If we were to enter upon a revision of the tariff such as we would perhaps desire to do in case we should get no adequate concessions from the Americans, it would be a tariff of a character which would create irritation, it would be a tariff of a character that would very likely defeat the object we had in view. It would be flouted in the face as a menace, it would be practically saying to them: Here we have done this; you do what we want or we will keep this tariff in force. I do not think that would be prudent or politic. We should approach the United States in a different manner. The time is near at hand when, in my opinion, we are certain to get very material concessions. I am quite optimistic about the matter. I believe that we will get concessions that will be entirely satisfactory, and so I am thoroughly convinced that it would not be prudent in our interest to enter upon a course such as we might enter upon, in all probability such as we would be justified in entering upon if no concessions were made.

Our relations with the United States must necessarily, largely govern our tariff policy. It is the country with which we have the largest amount of trade, it is the country with which our trade relations at the present time are most unsatisfactory and our relations with that country must largely govern our tariff policy, and the adjustment of this tariff policy is a matter of so much importance that we do not want to enter

upon that adjustment rashly without a full knowledge of the conditions. We want to move slowly and cautiously, we want to move with certainty. In regard to my own feeling about this matter, I am pretty well known in this House to be an advocate of reciprocity. I commenced it long ago. I dare say my right hon. friend the Prime Minister (Mr. Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier) will remember that I was chosen by Mr. Mackenzie in 1875 to defend the Brown draft treaty when the attack was made upon that treaty in this House by the opposition, headed by Sir John A. Macdonald, and since that time I have been undeviating in my support of the policy of enlarged trade relations with the United States. I have always believed, I believe to-day that nothing will secure a better results or better advantages to Canada than to remove the absurd restrictions which exist between those two countries, and to enter upon a broader and more reasonable policy as to trade affairs between the two great Anglo-Saxon Commonwealths of the North American continent. But, I have felt, and that feeling grew stronger when the Joint High Commission met at Quebec and Washington, and when I, in common with my brother commissioners, was brought more fully into contact with the question of the trade relations between Canada and the United States, that we have not been fairly treated. I realized more fully than ever before the unfair character of American fiscal legislation towards us, and I have felt a sense of resentment at the character of the American policy towards Canada. I have been actuated in the course I have advocated and in the position which I have taken upon this question by the belief that if we could not get what was fair from that country, that if we are to continue to live under the conditions that have existed during the past, we had better set up housekeeping for ourselves, and adopt a policy which we under normal conditions might not deem it advisable to enter upon.

It was not, Sir, that I was in love with protection as an abstract proposition, it was not that I was dissatisfied with the condition of affairs that existed under our present tariff rates, provided that we were met in the same spirit by our customers, it was not this that prompted me to the course that I believed the proper one to pursue; but it was primarily the conditions that existed between this country and the United States. Last session I introduced a resolution in this House. I introduced it for a two-fold purpose. In the first place, I believed that what was set forth in that resolution represented the feelings of the great majority of the Canadian people, and I thought that the formulating of this resolution would have a tendency to demonstrate as to whether my view upon that matter was right or wrong. I thought in the second place, Sir, and perhaps this was the consideration that had