

to. Here is a quotation from the letter written by the late Mr. Paterson and myself to the American Secretary of State:

It is agreed that the desired tariff changes shall not take the formal shape of a treaty, but that the governments of the two countries will use their utmost efforts to bring about such changes by concurrent legislation at Washington and Ottawa.

The governments of the two countries having made this agreement from the conviction that, if confirmed by the necessary legislative authorities, it will benefit the people on both sides of the border line, we may reasonably hope and expect that the arrangement, if so confirmed, will remain in operation for a considerable period. Only this expectation on the part of both governments would justify the time and labour that have been employed in the maturing of the proposed measures. Nevertheless, it is distinctly understood that we do not attempt to bind for the future the action of the United States Congress or the Parliament of Canada, but that each of these authorities shall be absolutely free to make any change of tariff policy or of any other matter covered by the present arrangement that may be deemed expedient. We look for the continuance of the arrangement, not because either party is bound to it, but because of our conviction that the more liberal trade policy thus to be established will be viewed by the people of the United States and Canada as one which will strengthen the friendly relations now happily prevailing and promote the commercial interests of both countries.

That is incorporated in the agreement, written by Mr. Paterson and myself, placed there at our request, not because the American government insisted upon it, but because we thought it was not wise at that time to bind Canada for a longer term. We were content to bring the arrangement back for submission to the Canadian people, to let them try it, and in the light of actual experience to determine whether or not they wanted to make a permanent treaty.

There is one satisfaction in dealing with my hon. friend's position in this matter; we have at all events a clear-cut issue. He is opposed to reciprocity with the United States—he does not want it anyhow. His idea is—I do not quote his words now—no truck or trade with the Yankees. That is only another clear-cut way of expressing his position.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Not at all; that is very unfair.

Mr. FIELDING: Well, I understand that in his speech yesterday my right honourable friend (Mr. Meighen) distinctly declared his opposition to reciprocity with the United States.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Hear, hear.

Mr. FIELDING: Very good. Then there is a clear-cut issue. Hon. gentlemen of the Conservative party—so far as they permit themselves to be represented by my right hon. friend—are against any trade treaty with the United States. In the name of the Lib-

eral party of Canada I declare to-day that we stand for reciprocity with the United States. I say that when the opportunity comes to make a fair treaty or agreement—and I say the agreement of 1911 was a fair and reasonable agreement, and I am glad that our Progressive friends call for a repetition of that agreement in their motion to-day; to that extent I agree with it—but I say that when the opportunity comes we are proud to declare in the face of the parliament of Canada, whatever the fate of it may be, that this Liberal party stands for reciprocity with the United States when we can get a fair and reasonable agreement. That is our position. We are content to let the people judge between the hon. gentleman and ourselves on that point.

Now, I want to conclude. I have spoken longer than I expected to do.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Go on.

Mr. FIELDING: The budget speech—may I modestly say?—was not partisan, it was not boastful, though I think there was something in it that might justify boastfulness. There was not a line nor a note in it that gave cause of offence to anybody. It stated simple facts in a way beyond dispute. That has not been denied. It was a fair statement of the situation, and it offered a fair proposal to the people. Now, what is it that is offered in the reciprocity agreement? My right hon. friend, by the way, says there has been a change in public opinion since 1911 with regard to reciprocity.

Mr. MEIGHEN: No.

Mr. FIELDING: No, I reverse the statement. My right hon. friend is right. He says there was no change, that is, that the adverse opinion of the people of Canada in 1911 remains to-day. That is more correct. I want to tell my right hon. friend that he is absolutely unwarranted in making that statement. In 1911 blind partisanship led men away from the consideration of an economic question and for party reasons, not for economic reasons, they voted against reciprocity.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Does the minister not consider that what he is saying now is "a grouch?"

Mr. FIELDING: No.

Mr. BUREAU: It is an answer to a grouch.

Mr. FIELDING: No, it is just a proclamation again of the old faith, and I am proud to proclaim it; that is all. But my right hon.