

that the construction which I have just laid before the House as to the real bearing and meaning of our offer is the true and legal construction, although I leave it to my legal friends to elaborate that point more in detail.

I submit that reason, equity and common sense are on our side in making that contention.

Sir, it is a well known fact that it is a fundamental principle of law that "he who seeks equity must do equity," and a nation that seeks to avail itself of the reduction offered in our tariff should be prepared to grant us corresponding advantages. We exclude no nation, and I call again the attention of hon. gentlemen opposite to what I have read to the effect that the Germans have admitted substantially the truth of that position with regard to the treaty between Hawaii and the United States. The hon. gentleman is terribly exercised as to what we are going to do in case the English Government do not see things exactly as we do, and it would be a pity to keep the hon. gentleman in suspense. We mean to fight this point by all legal and constitutional means until we get a decision; and after we have done that, if the decision should go against us, we mean to appeal to the British Government and nation to do us justice by repealing this clause and denouncing these treaties which should never have been enacted to our manifest detriment.

Mr. SPROULE. Would it not have been better to find that out first?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. With all due deference to my hon. friend, he will find that we were not born yesterday, and know what we are about. Perhaps that truth is dawning on the minds of some hon. gentlemen opposite, and if not, they will learn it very shortly, unless I am entirely mistaken. I now quote, not from the "Times," but from an article in the "Blackwood Review":

Lord Salisbury publicly stated his opinion, a short while ago, "that before a very long time has elapsed some means will be found of mitigating this evil," that is, the evil inflicted by what he calls "those two unlucky treaties."

Again the hon. gentleman is in trouble. He fears we will be defeated on the legal question. He is afraid that Great Britain, with a magnanimity certainly unparalleled, will insist, 'coute qui coute,' on our admitting German goods, goods from a country which gives us no advantage, on the same terms as her own. Well, if the worst comes to the worst, if Great Britain does insist, and we, as loyal subjects, have to obey, in what will the consumer be worse off? We import at present \$5,000,000 of German goods, and we will have given these to our consumers at a half a million dollars cheaper than at present.

Mr. FOSTER. Then if Great Britain refuses to do otherwise than call for the treaties being carried out, you will exceed your offer to Canada.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. I do not say that. I say that Great Britain may extend it to Germany. Great Britain may compel us, in her capacity of suzerain and sovereign state, to give to Germany and Belgium the same privileges which we offer to her, and we may not be able to resist her sovereign will, unless the hon. gentleman is prepared to head a rebellion on that issue. I have known gentlemen of his persuasion many years ago, when they did not get their own way, demonstrate in Montreal and elsewhere the value of their loyalty when it came in conflict with what they supposed was their interests. I do not believe that the practical and probable results of the hon. gentleman's contention, if it be correct, will be so serious to the people of Canada.

But it may interest hon. gentlemen to know how these disloyal and traitorous proposals of ours have struck the average English mind. I am happy to be able to enlighten him. I have recently had placed in my hands some rather interesting reports of the way in which journals, such a journal as the London "Times," for instance, looks upon the proposal made by Canada that the goods of these countries, and notably the mother country, which gives us special advantages in trading with them, should be admitted at a reduced rate. It is a pity these journals had not an opportunity of consulting the hon. gentleman before they penned the following articles:—

The London "Times" stated that the new departure is most gratifying to all who desire to see the Empire knitted more closely together, that it is the most remarkable step yet made towards the fiscal confederation of the Empire. While it would be premature to pass judgment upon the most-favoured-nation clause, we have no hesitation—

Will the hon. gentleman mark this—

—we have no hesitation in saying, that if such stipulations stand in the way of a free and fair arrangement of duties between this country and Canada, the earliest opportunity should be taken to relieve us of such obligations.

"The earliest opportunity should be taken to relieve us of such obligations."

We regret to see the attitude of Mr. Foster. It is unfair to attempt to discredit the proposals as a refusal to be bound by Imperial treaty. There is much doubt whether these treaties have any bearing on the proposals. But even so, the Imperial Government has an undoubted right to alter the fiscal arrangements with foreign nations which appear obsolete and inexpedient. Immediate enforcement of the new tariff, when the parliament resolutions passed, subject to statutory sanction afterwards, is in accordance with the established rule of the House of Commons,—

Although it was not necessary to pass any resolution. Here is some good advice. Is