

by their Governor Cummings, have taken strong ground in favour of radical tariff revision and reciprocity; that a large share of the Republican votes in other western states share these sentiments, and that the entire Democratic party of the United States vigorously uphold them. Do not lose time, he tells us; do not wait to see what may be the outcome of these negotiations that are approaching. Proceed at once to state your policy; assume that you know all about it, get your tariff fixed and go ahead! He says that the right hon. leader of the government had promised to send no more reciprocity delegations to the United States. I do not understand that the Prime Minister has done that. Canada has maintained a most dignified attitude in this matter. When the commission left Washington in 1899 the assertion was made by the Canadian head of that commission, the premier of this country, that Canada was not going back to Washington asking for reciprocity again. He said: We have been seeking for improved trade relations, we know how desirable it is to have an improvement, we know how much these trade relations could be improved, we have exhausted our patience and our resources in the effort to improve them, and if you reach the point where you understand this question and realize that a treaty is desirable, you can intimate that fact to us. Well, they have done that. My hon. friend from St. Mary's, Montreal, says that Senator Fairbank's letters came very conveniently at this season. What does he mean? Does he mean there is collusion between Senator Fairbanks and the Prime Minister of this country? Does he mean that Senator Fairbanks was employed to write letters to the Prime Minister which give colour to the supposition that the commission might sit again for the purpose of affording the premier and his government a pretext for deferring action on the tariff? Does he mean that? I do not think he does. I do not imagine that he does, but if he does mean that he is entirely mistaken. These advances have come from the American government; they have come from Senator Fairbanks at the instigation of and by the direction of the President of the United States—an intimation and an invitation to the Canadian government to meet the American commissioners again for the purpose of renewing the negotiations that were broken off in February 1899. Now, shall the commission meet? Is it unnecessary to call this commission together again? Shall we proceed to fix our tariff and ignore the probability, nay, the certainty of this commission meeting when we shall respond to the invitation of the United States. I should say certainly the commission should meet. If the United States have made overtures to us, if they have given us an invitation to renew these negotiations, they have done it for a reason. They have done it because they desire a settlement, they

have done it because they realize that the position of matters, as it exists to-day between Canada and the United States, is not desirable and realizing this they ask us to meet them for the purpose of entering upon negotiations looking to the possibility of settlement and adjustment of these questions. We are not warranted in assuming that it is not worth while to accept. The fact that the invitation is given, that it is given in good faith, the very fact that this advance is made by them with the full knowledge of the indignation that exists in this country in regard to their treatment of us, with the full knowledge that we have reason to complain, is a sufficient warrant, in fact an imperative reason, why we should accept the invitation.

Now, if we go down, what should be the proper basis of an arrangement? We might as well discuss this matter pretty fully. What should be the basis of the arrangement we should enter into, because I am sure that the premier would be glad to know something about public opinion as it relates to this matter. What should be the basis of the arrangement in regard to reciprocity between these two countries. I am accused, I have seen the accusation in Conservative papers time and time and again, I have heard the accusation, that in the course of some speeches I made before chambers of commerce, merchants exchanges and bankers' conventions, &c., in the United States, I have made propositions that were detrimental and inimical to the interests of Canada and that I have given away the case.

Mr. GOURLEY. Hear, hear.

Mr. CHARLTON. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Gourley) says hear, hear. I will tell the hon. gentleman how far I have gone. I have said that reciprocity in natural products, so far as my views go, is an essential feature of any arrangement we may make—no palliatives, no concession upon this thing and upon that but reciprocity in natural products all along the line.

Mr. GOURLEY. It would ruin us in 24 hours.

Mr. CHARLTON. Not at all. If we should get to that point the Americans would ask: What would you give us in return? We will say: We will abstain from changing our tariff so as to apply the process of the strangulation of the import trade in our country. If you give us free trade in natural products we may possibly, in addition to the retention of the moderate features of our tariff, now so favourable to you, abolish the British preference, and make your position under our tariff laws the same as that occupied by Great Britain. My hon. friend can judge as to whether I have given away our case and he can judge as to whether or not we can obtain reciprocity on that basis. It will be advantageous to us. I suppose I may be optimistic on this subject. I have mingled with American public men, with the leading American statesmen, I know the