

But when the proposition of the hon. gentleman is not only to reduce the duties on British goods, but also to reduce the duties on goods of all countries with which Great Britain has commercial treaties, the proposition, if adopted, would offer a serious obstacle to the future course of Canada.

And later on, in the same speech, he further opposed any such policy as that which has governed us during the past year, as involving a serious disturbance of revenue and wide economic revolution. So that I press this instance in the lives of interesting public men, on the hon. gentleman's notice and ask him to take courage and not, on account of Mr. Chamberlain's supposed vacillation, which I do not think exists, on the question, abandon the cause which he has already admitted is fraught with so much benefit to this country.

Then Mr. Ross is no mean authority. The Hon. George W. Ross has come out as an exponent of this policy, and, at any rate until he receives the Cobden medal, will, I fancy, be true to the cause.

Then we have the colonial premiers meeting in England, and as I do not think full reference was made to that interesting occasion, I might add to the history of the movement by referring to the meeting of the colonial premiers on June the 12th, when the chairman mentioned that "the object of the United Empire Trade League was the furtherance of mutually advantageous trade, on a preferential basis, between all who shared allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen." The chairman was a member of the English House of Commons, and the Lord Chancellor, in speaking on that occasion, said:

He, as a Minister of the Crown, had to be doubly cautious, but he could say that he had been a rank protectionist all his life, and he had not forgotten the fact. Under these circumstances, and remembering, after all, that the tie which united nations and the colonies to the mother country must be, in a certain degree, the interest of those who directed its counsel, it certainly was no unimportant matter that they should endeavour to preserve the trade of the Empire and to get employment for its people. As long as the interests of all were preserved, he believed it would be impossible to set the colonies against the mother country or the mother country against the colonies.

At the same meeting Sir George Turner said:

He believed the colonies would be very glad indeed to give some preference, so that they might trade with Great Britain for goods which they now received from other countries. He thought the proposition should come from Great Britain, and he had no hesitation in saying that any advance from Great Britain would be received in no huckstering spirit, but with every desire to enter into a fair, reasonable and equitable arrangement—such an arrangement as will be advantageous to all parties.

And the Hon. C. C. Kingston, Premier of South Australia, said:

It was a conference of Australian Premiers, whose first object was to discuss the matter which was the object of that league. There was unanimity of opinion upon that matter. At the same time, it occurred to them that it would be better if the mother country and her statesmen were to formulate proposals for their acceptance. Any such suggestions would receive the most sympathetic consideration in the lands from which the Ministers came; for, above all, in their trade relationship, in every relationship they would infinitely prefer that their transactions should be with their own kin and their own flesh and blood.

Now, in addition to what was said by those authorities, and which is sufficiently encouraging to show that in the mother country and in the colonies the subject has been seriously considered and carefully discussed, I have a word to say. But I would like to define my own position, so far as this question relates to our own tariff. I am, as I have always been, a protectionist, and yet I say that there is nothing in any of the opinions that have been expressed by those who have favoured the subject in England that would make it impossible for such arrangements to be carried out by those who are sincere and consistent protectionists, because while I advocate protection, I have always belonged to the party in Canada who are not extreme protectionists but advocate a revenue for tariff based on protection—a tariff which shall give the protection necessary to foster our interests and at the same time enable us to obtain sufficient revenue. Mr. Chamberlain and men of that character know full well that in a colony like this there is no possible way of obtaining revenue for federal purposes without a customs tariff, and the only difference between us is whether that should be arranged, having careful regard to the necessity of protecting interests, or without any regard whatever to the interest of trade and manufactures.

Now, I believe that a union between the colonies and the mother country that would throw down any necessary protective tariff or any necessary element of protection would neither be good for the mother country nor for the colonies. Loyalty in the colonies to the mother country is not loyalty to the English manufacturers. We should be a great load and a great drag to those in the mother country were we to adopt any policy that would weaken us on our own ground and in our own plans of bearing our responsibilities and discharging our duties. Nevertheless, I believe that concessions could be made and arrangements brought about that would not interfere with any of the great interests of this country, manufacturing or agricultural, that would substantially effect this object in view. The hour is late and I shall content myself, considering the easy task that lay before me when I rose, with making one or two observations on this question on the nationality of this country. I believe