

the mother country and Canada. Had a system of preferences existed—

This is a hypothetical case,

—at the present moment Canada would have had to consult the mother country before entering into an agreement with the United States. Then the local interests of Canada would have been antagonistic to the interests of Great Britain, and colonial preference, instead of being a link in the chain of empire, might well have brought that chain to the snapping point.

This is what the home government answers to the charge that this agreement is injurious to Great Britain. Now, it is stated that reciprocity would even impair the existing preference. I shall not read to the House the answer made by Mr. Buxton, but I will ask permission to file it on 'Hansard.'

#### OUR TRADE WITH CANADA.

The government recognized the advantages which we in this country received from the preference which Canada had been good enough to give us, but he would point out that Mr. Fielding and his ministers had always based that preference upon the advantage which it conferred upon Canadian trade. Holding the views which they did, the government could not regret any arrangement or agreement which might weaken the opportunities of putting a tax upon corn coming to this country, nor could they regret any fiscal arrangements which tended to the reduction of high duties in any part of the world and to break down tariff walls. Neither could they regret any arrangement under which the trade of Canada itself would, as Canadians thought, be largely increased. They certainly felt very strongly that at the present moment the allegiance and loyalty of the Canadians were not involved in this agreement (ministerial cheers). He could assure the right hon. gentleman that the very pessimistic view which he took of the effect of the agreement upon Canadian preference to Great Britain was much exaggerated. We sent at the present moment nearly £20,000,000 worth of goods to Canada, and of those two-thirds received a preference under the old agreement, and £969,000 represented the goods dealt with in the agreement between Canada and America.

Of the last figure £176,000 represented goods free to all nations, and about £800,000 only was affected by the agreement so far as British preference was concerned. Out of that £477,000 still retained a preference of 10 to 12 per cent, leaving a balance of £316,000, or only 1½ per cent, of British imports to Canada on which the duties in future would be identical with the duties on American goods. Therefore he thought he might say that the alarm which seemed to have been excited in some quarters had really been very much exaggerated. Mr. Chamberlain had declared that as a result of the agreement less Canadian corn would come to England, and that the price of corn in this country would consequently go up. That was the argument which free traders had always advanced against a colonial preference which involved

Mr. LEMIEUX.

a tax on imported corn. They had been told that under tariff reform the growth of corn in the colonies and at home would be encouraged to such an extent that in the end the price would be cheaper. If that would be the result under the proposals of tariff reformers, was it not still more likely to be the result of the stimulus given to Canadian corn growing by opening the markets of America? (Ministerial cheers).

Now, I will answer, and I will conclude here, the last argument—I will not suggest that this last argument is the last refuge because I might bring in the name of Dr. Johnson, and I do not wish to apply the words of Dr. Johnson to my hon. friend—but I will answer the last argument of my hon. friend that this agreement will weaken the tie between Great Britain and Canada. That is a very poor argument. It is more than that; it is a panicky argument. Why Sir, the loyalty of Canada and Canadians stood the test of adversity during half a century. Will it not stand the test of coming prosperity? There were days of adversity in 1775 and in 1812 and we were just a few isolated provinces defending ourselves against the invading armies of the United States of America. Yet the French who had recently been conquered on the Plains of Abraham united with the descendants of the United Empire Loyalists, resisted the invasion of the American soldiers and saved Canada to the British Empire. In 1866, when the abrogation of the Elgin-Marcy Treaty caused all the evil forebodings contained in the state document which I read a moment ago, we were able to steer our own course, and to maintain our dignity. In 1867, when Sir John A. Macdonald, Mr. George Brown, Mr. Alexander Mackenzie and Sir George Cartier united their forces to make this confederation of ours, the United States of America were not slow in passing a resolution in their Congress offering the several provinces of Canada the opportunity of becoming so many different states in the American union. But the Canadians were not lured by the offer made by the United States. In 1870 we repelled another invasion. How did Canada accept the suggestion that England should hand over our country as a compensation for the Alabama claims? A few days ago I was reading the reminiscences of Goldwin Smith and—I do not know if my hon. friend has read the book—it is stated in so many words that there was a time in the seventies when Mr. Gladstone, being Prime Minister of England, was ready to sacrifice Canada as compensation for the Alabama Claims made by the United States. Canada resisted the suggestions made by British statesmen. The great Disraeli, himself, stated that we were a millstone around the neck of the mother country; yet, in spite of these remarks, in spite of this pol-