

*The Address—Mr. Bennett*

tations to this effect previously made through the High Commissioner for Canada were supplemented by the ministers, both in writing and in the personal interviews with the imperial ministers.

Twenty-eight years ago that was urged. Last fall Canada again urged it. That is all. But Canada did it in a somewhat different form, as I shall presently point out. Now let us go a step further:

Mr. Chamberlain, on behalf of the Imperial government, was unable to agree to the proposals of the Canadian ministers. He represented that the Imperial government, while highly appreciating the good feeling manifested by Canada in the granting of preferential treatment, did not think the material results to the trade of the United Kingdom were as great as the Canadian ministers claimed. He further said that the change desired by Canada would be an important departure from the established fiscal policy of the kingdom, and that if the proposals could be entertained at all, as to which he was not prepared to commit himself, it would be necessary for Canada to offer some material tariff concessions beyond those which she had already voluntarily given.

The Canadian ministers, therefore, submitted a memorandum on the subject of the advantages already received by Great Britain from the Canadian preferential tariff, with a view to showing that these were of much value, and entitled to weight in the consideration of the whole subject.

Now here are the words to which I direct the careful attention of the house:

While urging that the benefits of the preference were such as to entitle Canada to the desired exemption from the duties on food products in the United Kingdom, the Canadian ministers stated that within certain limitations they were prepared to consider the request of Mr. Chamberlain for further concessions in return for the desired preference in the markets of the United Kingdom. While it was not deemed necessary to enter into questions as to the wisdom or unwisdom of the policy adopted by all governments in Canada—

Mark you, "by all governments in Canada."

—of raising the revenues chiefly from customs duties, the Canadian ministers pointed out that under that policy large industries had grown up which had to be considered in connection with proposed tariff changes. Large reductions of duties had been made in recent years, especially on British imports.

And so on. Now, I ask this house and the country if there is any difference in substance between that proposal and the proposal we made in 1930. Mr. Jebb says they are exactly the same. Let us go a step further:

The Canadian ministers stated that if they could be assured that the Imperial government would accept the principle of preferential trade generally, and particularly grant to the food products of Canada in the United Kingdom exemption from duties now levied, or hereafter imposed, they, the Canadian ministers, would be prepared to go further into the sub-

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ject, and endeavour to give to the British manufacturer some increased advantage over his foreign competitors in the markets of Canada.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. BENNETT: Is it not delightful to hear that cheer now for the sentiment hon. members opposite opposed yesterday? Is it any wonder the right hon. gentleman is an expert in the use of that word? Mr. Speaker, there is the proposal submitted by the Canadian ministers in amplification of the statements that were made before the conference on August 11, 1902.

An hon. MEMBER: That is different.

Mr. BENNETT: I leave the question as to whether it is different. For my part I might perhaps be prejudiced, but great as is my admiration for Canadians I still believe that Richard Jebb has a mental capacity at least equal to that of those who have raised the issue here, especially the last one I heard.

Now let us discuss that matter fairly. That was the proposal of 1902, and it has been lying upon the table ever since, as Mr. Jebb says. But I have not read the most damning part of this statement; it is the part I want to read, containing the threat of so mild a mannered man as the late Sir Wilfrid Laurier. I wanted to finish before I heard your cheers, but I would like to hear some cheers now. Listen to these words:

Meanwhile the Canadian ministers determined to present to the conference a resolution affirming the principle of preferential trade, and the desirability of its adoption by the colonies generally, and also expressing the opinion of the prime ministers of the colonies that His Majesty's government should reciprocate by granting preferential terms to the products of the colonies in the markets of the mother country.

In 1902 they had not any hesitation in presenting such a resolution; they were not bothered about the fine point as to whether it might or might not please Mr. Chamberlain. They did not bother about that any more than I did. Then listen to these words:

The Canadian ministers desired to have it understood that they took this course with the strong hope and expectation that the principle of preferential trade would be more widely accepted by the colonies, and that the mother country would at an early day apply the same principle by exempting the products of the colonies from customs duties.

That was twenty-eight years ago. Then listen to these words:

If, after using every effort to bring about such a readjustment of the fiscal policy of the empire, the Canadian government should find that the principle of preferential trade is not acceptable to the colonies generally, or the