

Whole, resolutions destined to give effect to the tariff changes which I have already proposed to the House. I venture to present this statement, Sir, in the fullest confidence that it will commend itself to the judgment of the House—I trust I may say to both sides of the House, for there is and there should be no party question in such a matter. I am inclined to think that if we desired some momentary popularity we might have pursued another course. I think there is a general and perhaps a justifiable feeling in the minds of the people of Canada, that in the years that have passed our American friends have not treated us generously or fairly with regard to these commercial questions, and consequently there is a strong disposition—at all events there has been a strong disposition—rather to resent any further communication with them. But, that is of a time that has gone; that is of a time when Ottawa went to Washington: Now we have reached a time when Washington has come to Ottawa, and that, I think Sir, is a matter which must be a source of gratification to us all. And though for the moment, by what is called the 'stand-pat' policy, by refusing to do anything, by bidding defiance to the United States, there might be a momentary hurrah, I am persuaded that as the difficulties of the maximum tariff would become apparent, as great industries in Canada would be found to suffer, as men would find their capital impaired and as other men would find themselves thrown out of employment, even though it might be temporary, even though in the end we might have been able to overcome it: I am strongly persuaded that the feeling which at a moment might be one of gratification would change to a feeling of anxiety and alarm, and that in the end many a man would turn to the government and say: Was it not possible to have averted this disaster? was it not possible by some moderate concession to have given the President of the United States an opportunity to pursue a more friendly course? And, if it could then be shown that some small and comparatively unimportant concessions could have effected a settlement, that the government could be rightfully charged to make these small concessions, that government would be condemned, and deservedly so. I present this question, Sir, with the fullest conviction that the small concessions we make are reasonable concessions for the purpose of meeting the United States—the President of the United States and his Secretary of State particularly—in response to their good will. I accept the assurance of their good will for the present and of their good intentions for the future, and I am satisfied that in making this friendly

arrangement we are doing that which is best for the future of Canada.

Mr. SCHAFFNER. I wish to ask the Minister of Finance a question which I am sure will be asked of us: What concessions have the American government made to us?

Mr. FIELDING. If my hon. friend cannot find an answer to that question in my speech he would not find it in anything further I can say.

Mr. T. S. SPROULE (East Grey). The minister has introduced this subject in an exceptional way on a motion for the House to go into Committee of Ways and Means, which practically makes it a portion of the budget debate. I would like to ask the minister that this matter be left open so that it may be discussed at a later date, because owing to the absence of the leader of the opposition and the ex-Minister of Finance and others who did not expect such a discussion to-day it would be very inconvenient to proceed with the debate. Now, with regard to the correspondence, in my judgment the House is entitled to all the correspondence that has passed between the Finance Minister and the President of the United States or the government of Canada and the government of the United States.

Mr. FIELDING. I can assure my hon. friend that there is no correspondence of that nature. What I referred to was correspondence that might have taken place between the British ambassador and the Secretary of State at Washington, which perhaps might be deemed to be confidential. I can assure my hon. friend that there is no correspondence on the part of this government which is not substantially before the House.

Mr. SPROULE. I have always understood that when two nations are negotiating in this way each makes memoranda of what each proposes whether that is accepted or rejected, and that memoranda is always available for parliament afterwards. In negotiations of this kind the confidential correspondence must be very limited, if indeed there be any such. All we have is the three letters which are all dated on the 26th of March, whereas there were negotiations carried on for quite a time previous to that. My hon. friend (Mr. Schaffner) asked a very pertinent question from the minister as to what concession we had received from the United States in return, and as the minister was unable to answer I presume we have received none. If we accept the statement of the minister, the only duty cast on the president was to interpret a question of law as a judge on the bench would, and we