

but simply because we think it is well that there should be a clear statement of the desire of the government of Canada to enter into an arrangement with the people of the United States. The American people, in view of the events of 1911, might be justified in emphatically declaring that they do not want reciprocity; and I would not blame any American who, if he met me, might say: "What is the use of your talking about reciprocity now? You had a chance to have reciprocity in 1911 and you rejected it, so that there is not much use in your talking about the matter at this time." I think there is much to justify that view if any American were inclined to advance it. At all events, we are persuaded that it is a wise policy that there should be at least no room for misunderstanding, but that we should have it clearly and distinctly made known, in the most precise and formal way possible, that this is our desire now.

The right hon. gentleman has taken a new line on the question of reciprocity. He discusses the events of 1911 and takes the extraordinary view that the reason why he would not support the Reciprocity agreement of 1891 is because it lacked permanency. Why, he says, if only we had the assurance of permanency it would be all right.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I did not say that; I said that there would be something to be said for it and much to be said against it, but that it would be a great deal better for us to have some assurance in the matter.

Mr. FIELDING: I happen to have before me just what my right hon. friend said, and I will quote him to justify my statement of his position.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Very well, read what I said.

Mr. FIELDING: I have the exact words of the right hon. gentleman, and in order that there may be no misunderstanding on the point I shall quote precisely what he said:

If we enter into a commercial arrangement with them, there would be something at least to say for it, if conditions were such that we knew there would be permanency to such arrangement.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes, that is part of what I said.

Mr. FIELDING: And further, the right hon. gentleman goes on to say:

But I said before there would be something to say for such a treaty if there was any guarantee or hope of permanency.

In other words, he wanted the assurance of permanency. He says:

In that case we would know what to do; investors would know what to do; agriculturists would know what to do; ranchers would know what to do; men thinking of going into any line of trade or production would know just what to expect.

Can you not see the great demand there for permanency, for a guarantee, an assurance of permanency?

Mr. MEIGHEN: The minister, of course, left out a part of the quotation.

Mr. FIELDING: If my right hon. friend thinks it important I can, of course, read the whole extract. I did not omit any part that was vital.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Oh yes, you did.

Mr. FIELDING: The right hon. gentleman has his remarks at his hand, and if he thinks fit to do so he may read what I have omitted; I simply wanted to avoid wearying the House with a long extract. He said further:

But is there any guarantee of permanency or can there be any guarantee of permanency under any conceivable circumstances? I ask that question, and I ask it seriously, because in my judgment it is the root and the heart of the whole situation. There was no permanency inherent in the 1911 treaty. Each country reserved the right to depart from it at its will. That the United States insisted on; that the United States will always insist on.

Will my right hon. friend tell me what is his warrant, his authority, for the statement that the United States insisted upon anything of that kind? That is the material part of the quotation. He states that the United States insisted upon that qualification; I want to know where he got his authority for that assertion?

Mr. MEIGHEN: For the reason—

Mr. FIELDING: Oh no; not the reason. the authority. I want the right hon. gentleman's authority for that statement of his.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I know it is there.

Mr. FIELDING: It is not there.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Not in the treaty that the hon. gentleman made? Was it not provided that it was not to be permanent but was to be cancellable at the will of either country? It undoubtedly was, and in every treaty that was ever made in the history of the country that provision has been embodied.

Mr. FIELDING: In the first place, my right hon. friend is referring to the treaty; and in the second place he is not answering my question. I am not disputing his statement as to what is in the agreement itself; that speaks for itself. But the right hon. gentleman says that the United States insisted upon