

consideration of the question, he will ask the House to defeat this proposal, on the ground that we are playing into the hands of the British authorities. On the other hand, we have my hon. friend from East Grey, we have his leader, the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Borden), we have the hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster), and probably my good friend from St. Antoine (Mr. Ames), clamouring that this agreement made by the Liberal government with Mr. Taft, is most anti-British, anti-Imperial, and tends to weaken the tie that binds us to the mother country. Sir, in this agreement, we received the help of that statesman who represents Great Britain and Canadian interests as well at Washington, Mr. Bryce, the eminent writer, the great reformer, whose name will live as long as beats a British heart in Britain. Mr. Bryce helped the case of Canada, and assisted my hon. friend, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding), and the Minister of Customs (Mr. Paterson). What a different policy was followed by Mr. Bryce from that followed by the British representatives who, in 1871, accompanied Sir John Macdonald to Washington when the dearest interests of Canada were debated. Sir John Macdonald, in a letter to his friend, Dr. Tupper, who was his colleague in the government, was not afraid to write the following lines:

I must say that I am greatly disappointed at the course taken by the British commissioners. They seem to have only one thing in their minds, that is, to go home to England with the treaty in their pockets, settling everything, no matter at what cost to Canada.

How different is the attitude of the British statesmanship from that of the British statesmanship of 1871. What a difference between the representatives of Great Britain under a Liberal government in England, and the representatives of Great Britain under a Tory government in England. Mr. Bryce helped Canada in this agreement. Mr. Asquith, the Prime Minister of England, who voiced the sentiments of Great Britain and of the British Empire—for there is no man, except the King of England, above the Prime Minister—is satisfied with the agreement.

We see it stated that this agreement is a blow at British investments in Canada, and that henceforward British investors will hesitate before they invest their capital in Canada. Mr. Chairman, I am not of British parentage, but I know one thing: British capital will be invested where it pays the British investor. In Great Britain or wherever I have met the Anglo-Saxon in my lifetime, I have always discovered, to my discomfiture at times, that with an Englishman, in matters of business, senti-

Mr. LEMIEUX.

ment is not allowed to intervene. In this connection, nothing is more striking than the view of Great Britain on this very question of British mutual preference. We all know that Sir John Macdonald, as far back as 1885, advocated a policy of mutual preference between the mother country and Canada and the colonies. He was the foremost colonial statesman of the day, and in 1885, when he went to London, he spoke as follows:

Commercially, British federation may be achieved on a basis of give and take. If you will give colonial produce such immunities as you give to no foreign nation I will commit myself to the expression of belief that the colonies will give British goods and only British goods, preferential treatment.

And what did Lord Salisbury answer to that pressing request of Sir John Macdonald?

I fear that we must for the present put in the distant and shadowy portion of our past, and not in the practical part of it,—

Listen to the business man.

—any hope of establishing a customs union among the various parts of the empire.

And later on, in 1887, the first intercolonial conference was held, and a resolution was adopted favouring a policy of mutual preference. But nothing was done. In 1891 the colonies urged the imperial government to denounce the treaties with Germany and Belgium, which prevented imperial preference. Lord Salisbury declined courteously to take action. In 1891, my hon. friend, sitting on this side of the House, joined with his fellow members, and with the Canadian Senate in passing a resolution in favour of the denunciation of these treaties, because it was stated in England that even if we obtained mutual preference they would have to include Belgium and Germany, because we were bound by old treaties with those countries. The House of Commons passed a resolution asking the mother country to denounce these treaties. But no action was taken. In 1892 the House of Commons made a formal offer of a preferential tariff; in 1893, the Ottawa conference passed a similar resolution. What was the answer of Lord Ripon then colonial secretary? He said:

A consideration of these practical difficulties and of the more immediate results indicated, of a system of mutual tariff discrimination, has convinced Her Majesty's government that, even if the consequences were confined to the limits of the empire, and even if it were not followed by changes of fiscal policy on the part of foreign powers unfavourable to this country, its general economic results would not be beneficial to the empire. Such theories are really a weapon of commercial war, used as weapons of retaliation, and inflicting more loss on the country employing it