

make is that the government have done nothing all these years to remedy this juggled tariff by which the United States is able to get our raw material into their country and to prevent our paper manufacturers from getting access to their markets.

Mr. FIELDING. What the newspaper men petitioned for was not for what my hon. friend calls fair play between the United States and Canada, but for a reduction of the duty on paper and we gave it to them. We had to have a fight with the combine to get the duty down and now my hon. friend wants the duty increased to the old combine rate. That is where we differ.

Mr. FOSTER. Was the objection of the newspaper men to the duty, or to the combine which raised the price?

Mr. FIELDING. If the newspaper men got their paper cheap they were not bothering about technicalities.

Mr. FOWLER. You should do that.

Mr. FIELDING. We did, and the newspaper men were tolerably well satisfied.

Mr. FOSTER. Did they not complain of the combine?

Mr. FIELDING. They complained of the price. We told them to prove the existence of a combine and they did and we reduced the duty and they gave us a vote of thanks.

Mr. FOSTER. The newspaper men said that on account of the combine more was charged for the paper than would give a reasonable profit to the manufacturers and they asked the government to break up the combine. The government did that by reducing the duty and injuring a great industry. What my hon. friend (Mr. Perley) asks is: if there is no other way of breaking up a combine than by injuring an industry in which a great deal more people are interested than the half dozen manufacturers. You punish half a dozen combinesters but you punish the labouring men and all the others engaged in that industry at the same time. For example, the iron manufacturers employ thousands of men and if a number of them should combine to raise the price your method of punishing that wrongful combination would be to destroy the iron industry in this country. That is an unscientific method of meeting the case. It is punishing the unoffending labouring men far more than it punishes the men who unlawfully combine. I always believed that was an unscientific method; that it was unduly hard on innocent persons and comparatively light on the men that did the wrong. There must be some method by which a powerful government can break up a combine without destroying an industry.

Mr. JOHNSTON. If my hon. friend (Mr. Perley) analyses the returns he

Mr. PERLEY.

will find that very little news print is imported into Canada. My hon. friend (Mr. Foster) complains of the action taken by the government against the paper combine but there was no other practical means that could be taken to reduce the price because the prosecution of those engaged in the combine would not afford relief to the men who bought the paper.

Mr. FOWLER. Why?

Mr. JOHNSTON. Because these men could continue to pay their fines, but the duty was still there and they could keep the prices up to the top notch at which American paper could not come into Canada.

Mr. FOWLER. Then you would say that the law against burglars was useless because a man who had served his time in prison had come out and burglarized again.

Mr. JOHNSTON. The newspaper proprietors were looking for a practical remedy against this grievance. They considered the matter as practical men, and they reached the conclusion that the only practical way to deal with the question was to proceed as they did.

Mr. FOSTER. Who reached that conclusion.

Mr. JOHNSTON. The newspaper proprietors established the fact that there was a combine and that the manufacturers of news print were fleeing them.

Mr. FOWLER. Did the government act upon the conclusion of the newspaper proprietors that it was a proper thing to take the duty off instead of criminally proceeding against the men who were guilty of the crime of combining. Does my hon. friend (Mr. Johnston) speak for the government in this matter?

Mr. FIELDING. I think in this case he does.

Mr. JOHNSTON. There is no use discussing this question with my hon. friend Mr. Fowler) because he is entirely unaware of what took place. I don't say that the government took action on the findings of the newspaper men, but I do say that the newspaper men represented to the government that there was a grievance; the government appointed a commission which found that there was a combine and as a result the government reduced the duty on paper and the newspaper proprietors were relieved and they were satisfied from one end of the country to the other.

Mr. FOWLER. If my hon. friend (Mr. Johnston) is aware of the facts he is unfortunate in his method of elucidating them. I have not changed my opinion at all notwithstanding the statement of the hon. gentleman which it is difficult to understand. The facts are that it was charged that owing to the existence of a combine the price