

ing to say that, the views of the people of this country respecting a tariff arrangement made between Canada and the United States which was the subject of a heated political contest a little over a year ago is no great importance in relation to the measure now before the House. I wish to point out further that even had that agreement with the United States become effective by the mandate of the people it could not in any way have interfered with the West Indian-Canadian agreement, because this agreement with the West Indies in no respect deals with any article mentioned in the agreement between Canada and the United States. I think I can safely make this statement—and I have made it, perhaps, once or twice before in the course of my remarks—that had it not been for the inauguration of the British Preference Customs Tariff and its application to the British colonies throughout the world, and its particular application to the British West Indies at a time when the important industry of the West Indies, sugar-cane raising, was in peril, that industry probably would have been in a different condition to-day, and there would have been nothing to justify the commercial arrangement which is now before the House for consideration.

The effect of this agreement upon the trade of the two countries, as I said on the first reading of the Bill, is problematical. I trust it will be productive of good both to Canada and the West Indies, and that at the termination of the period of the agreement, ten years, the result will have been such that there will be a desire on the part of each to renew it for a further period. However, the effect of the arrangement will largely depend, as was stated in the report of the Royal Commission, and as is plainly understood by all who understand the question of trade between Canada and the West Indies, upon the steamship service between Canadian ports and the West Indian Islands. I think the Minister of Trade and Commerce might very well take the House into his confidence before asking us to pass upon this agreement, and tell us what progress has been made in the way of establishing an improved steamship service between Canadian ports and the West India Islands. I should like to ask him whether recently he has entered into any permanent contract for a Canada-West India steamship service. I think we should also like to hear from him, before passing upon this measure, as to what success he has had in the establishment of cheaper and better cable facilities between Great Britain, Canada and the West India Islands.

The agreement in the form presented is, as I have said, practically in the form

Mr. MACLEAN (Halifax)

recommended by the Royal Commission appointed in 1909. In the appendix to that report I find a schedule containing a list of the articles which the commission recommended might be put on the preference tariff list between the two countries. This list has been added to a little. I notice that under the agreement three articles now on the free list in this country are proposed to be placed upon the dutiable list, namely so far as foreign countries are concerned, cocoa beans, lime juice and limes. I trust that the members of the Government will be able to present to the House a justification for the transfer of these articles from the free to the dutiable list.

Further, it will be very difficult to measure correctly the true effects of this agreement upon our trade until we hear from the Minister of Finance as to what amendments he proposes making in the tariff by reason of this agreement. I fear that some aspects of this agreement, which otherwise might naturally be considered at the present stage, will have to be postponed until the annual budget is presented. As I have said, I trust that the members of the Administration will give their reasons for the transfer of these articles from the free to the dutiable list, and I trust that they will be able to show that this change was necessary to consummate a fair arrangement with the West Indies. The only instance in which the delegates from the West Indies asked that anything be placed on the Canadian free list was in respect to arrowroot. I observe that the Minister of Customs protested very vigorously against the placing of this particular product upon the free list, and his views ultimately prevailed. There was however, a slight reduction of the duty thereon. I trust that on some occasion, possibly when the tariff amendments are being considered, an explanation will be forthcoming as to why the request of the West Indies in this respect was not favourably received.

There are many other features of this agreement which might very properly be the subject of discussion, but as they are matters of detail I shall reserve any further remarks I wish to make until the Bill is being considered in Committee.

Mr. MICHAEL CLARK (Red Deer): I shall not, for more than a very few sentences, delay the consideration of this arrangement in Committee, but the rôle of self-imposed silence on the part of my hon. friend the Minister of Trade and Commerce, upon the second reading of a measure is so unusual, that such a spectacle, I think he himself will admit, necessarily begets comment. He has not always been silent upon the second reading of Bills, whether in power or in Opposi-