

had been created by the North Atlantic fishery troubles, I took an opportunity to say that the question should be adjusted in a friendly manner, becoming an enlightened and friendly people, by the simple process of give and take, and I do not see now why an arrangement should not be made resembling that effected under the treaty of Washington in 1871, and the treaty of 1854, whereby not only the ports but the inshore waters of both countries were thrown open to the fishermen of both on equal terms, and the markets for the fish of the two countries made equally free. That, it seems to me, would be the sensible way of settling the fishery question. The North Atlantic fisheries would be more valuable to the United States and Canada alike if some such arrangement were adopted."

#### The Canal Question.

"Then," continued Mr. Laurier, in reply to a question, "as to the canal question, the American mercantile fleet upon the upper lakes now numbers many large steamers. There are twenty vessels of four thousand tons, and I hear that your shipyards are turning out vessels of even six thousand tons. The day of small steamers like that of the wooden sailing ship has passed. Between Buffalo and Duluth there is a channel deep enough to accommodate vessels of twenty feet draught. We in Canada are aiming to make a channel of the same depth from Lake Erie through the Welland Canal and the canals below Kingston to Montreal, but the task is a formidable one, owing to the immense expense involved.

"Up to date, we have spent \$60,000,000 on our canals, the major portion on the Welland and St. Lawrence canals, which is a large sum for 5,000,000 of people, and especially when it is considered that we have also contributed very liberally for railroads. It goes without saying that very great benefits would be conferred upon the farmers of the western and north-west states, no less, of course, than upon the farmers of the Canadian North-west, if these great steamers could load at Port Arthur and Duluth, and carry produce without breaking bulk, as they have to do now at the Welland and again at Prescott, right through to Ogdensburg, Kingston, Oswego, Montreal or Quebec, and carry back merchandise and manufactures for the western settlers, at cheap rates.

"Farm produce is low the world over owing to the immense production which modern science—the self binder, the railroad and the compound marine engine—has rendered possible and, so far as I can see, it is not likely to reach its former price for some time, if ever.

"You cannot, if I may be allowed to say so, help the farmer on this continent by any quack device. You can do it only by cheapening the cost of producing the stuff and by reducing the expense of getting it to the European market. A twenty-one foot channel from Lake Superior and Lake Michigan to the Atlantic Ocean would reduce the cost of what the farmer has to buy from the eastern states, and give him lower transportation rates for what he has to sell. I suppose, too, that a reduced rate on the lakes and the St. Lawrence water route would oblige the railroads north, that is in Canada, and south, that is in the States, to meet it with an equally lower rate, and from the seaboard during the season of navigation, so that the farmer far inland from the route would experience equally the good effects.

"Commissioners have been appointed by the governments of the two countries to consider

the question of a deep waterway system, and I am in hopes that a perfectly feasible scheme will shortly be reported—a scheme that will enable the United States to participate in the work and exercise control without in any way compromising the sovereignty of Canada over her own territory. It should be a purely business arrangement with nothing political about it.

#### Closer Trade Relations.

"As to closer trade relations, the Liberals have always been in favour of freer trade with the United States, and I am prepared to make an arrangement with your country for the free exchange of such natural products and such manufactured articles as may be mutually agreed upon. This question, together with those of deep waterways and fisheries and the coasting trade of the lakes should, it appears to me, be all taken up together and dealt with in a broad, serious and comprehensive spirit on one anvil.

"I observe that the bonding privilege has recently been discussed in the United States Congress. Let that question be taken up along with the rest. The alien labour law of the United States, which has created a good deal of unpleasantness, should be included. In short, let us have a thorough understanding and better relations all round. Canadians of every political stripe watch with profound satisfaction the growth of feelings of good-will and affection between England and the United States, and the Liberal party of Canada will do what it can—all it possibly can within its sphere—to aid in getting rid of old prejudices and bringing together the two sections of the Anglo-Saxon family for their own good and for the good of mankind."

I would ask the hon. gentleman if that interview is at all correct, and, if so, to what extent?

The PRIME MINISTER. The hon. gentleman is rather inquisitive. He asks me to speak off-hand as to the correctness of an interview of two or three columns which I have not read for some time. However, I can assure him that it is substantially correct.

Motion agreed to, and House adjourned at 3.40 p.m.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MONDAY, 24th August, 1896.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at Three o'clock.

PRAYERS.

NOTICES OF MOTION POSTPONED.

The PRIME MINISTER (Mr. Laurier) moved that notices of motion be deferred until after the consideration of His Excellency's Speech at the opening of this session.

Motion agreed to.