

spect to external affairs or in respect to our own political development? Have we been like sponges or jelly fish, occupying a merely passive role in that regard, and has everything that could be done been done by the mother country? One word as to that. Look at the diplomatic handling of our affairs by the mother country ever since 1782, to begin at the beginning. I do not pretend that for what was done there was not fair justification. We had an immense territory, we were a small people, and the government of those days had to look after the interests of a vast empire, and it was then, be it said, under the control of foreign nations with regard to its dependencies which it very soon was obliged to abandon, and had it not abandoned that policy and those notions, not one, I venture to say, of those dependencies would have the British flag over it to-day. I shall not allude to what took place in 1782. Most of the gentlemen who sit in this House have read the story of our negotiations with the revolted American colonies, when the British government sent to Paris to meet such men as Adams, Benjamin Franklin and Jay, Mr. Oswald and Mr. Vaughan, who had no knowledge whatever of this country, no diplomatic experience whatever, and who, if they had had their own way—and I think if Lord Shelbourne himself had had his own way—would have taken a course which would have resulted in there being no Canada at all. Had not Mr. Strachey, as every one knows, the special diplomatic envoy of England, arrived at the last moment to save the shreds of British territory which exist on this continent to-day, everything would have gone by the board. Mr. Oswald was anxious to give up the whole of Canada, Nova Scotia and all the rest of it; he called this country the back land, a swamp that was of no value whatever, and when Mr. Vaughan saw that, he ran to Franklin, that keen old fox, and his associates, who were more than a match for these two men, and induced them to give up most valuable territory.

As I say, the two negotiators at that time were anxious to obtain the consent of the British government to give up Nova Scotia and Canada as of no value whatever. I do not wish to enter into details, but they gave up a territory of over four millions of acres, constituting to-day seven of the most fertile and magnificent states of the American union, to which Jay Adams and the others recognized that they had no right whatever. Thus to-day we are deprived of that fertile region communicating with our northwest and are bound to traverse an arid desert which will ever remain a barrier between our fellow citizens in the west and ourselves. They gave up the Indian territory; that is his-

tory familiar to all. And when they did that, everybody knew, except these two innocent gentlemen themselves, that the ultimatum of the American congress was reduced to this: Give us independence for the thirteen colonies and ask for no indemnity for the loyalists who have suffered through this war. That was the ultimatum: But Benjamin Franklin and Jay took it upon themselves, as they themselves afterwards explained and as is explained by their biographers, to insist upon this piece of precious territory which had been conquered by our ancestors, which belonged at one time to France and was ceded by France to England. This was given up in spite of the fact that the American congress never wanted it. I do not see anything in that that greatly shows anxiety to protect our rights. If you go further, what about the sacrifice involved in the Ashburton treaty? Lord Ashburton said it was a mere marsh of the state of Maine, and said in the British House of Commons that it would have been absurd to go to war about that territory. Or about the western territory belonging to us, the state of Oregon. If any man wants to know the value of this territory in Maine, let him read the history of the Intercolonial, by Sir Sandford Fleming, and learn what a sacrifice on our part was involved. I say that anybody who looks carefully through these negotiations will arrive at the conclusion that England was governed at that time by principles of expediency and not purely by a desire to maintain integrally the territory that belonged to us and our descendants. And, as to the Washington treaty, is there anybody in this House, who, knowing what has been published since that time, has any doubt but that there was then seriously debated—even when we had acquired importance, when this country was a confederation and was extending westward and intended to cover the whole of the northern part of this continent—is there any doubt in the mind of any man that the question of ceding Canada was discussed as a complete settlement of the Alabama claims and the claims resulting from the civil war? Is there any man who doubts that the British plenipotentiary at Washington—I think it was Sir Edward Thornton—stated that he was ready to give up Canada but did not like to do it without the consent of the people? If it were necessary to prove this, I would take up time quoting the authorities. But we need not go back even so far as this. Everybody knows, as a matter of the present generation, the history of the Alaska difficulty. We abandoned all our rights under the Clayton-Bulwer treaty for valuable privileges at the very time that this Alaska