

people to take your commodities, you must be willing to take theirs; and, whilst you establish, support and maintain, as a part of the general permanent policy of the country, a system of obstruction and restriction as to the importation of those commodities which other people have to give you, it is a farce to talk of extending your foreign trade. It is, therefore, curious that, at the very moment at which the Government is engaged in the pursuit and improvement, as they say, of a policy obstructive to foreign trade, they should propound to us this other policy. As to the internal or domestic reasons which render it necessary that we should continually solicit the action and support of the Imperial Government I do not find it easy to conjecture what these are; the only one which occurs to me at the moment is the proposed guarantee, or other material aid towards the construction of the Pacific Railway. With a very considerable flourish of trumpets, it was announced, as a part of the policy of the Government, that the construction of this road should be presented to the eyes of the English people as an Imperial and National work to which it was their duty and interest to contribute, and the Government was at its own instance, directed and authorised during the late Session, to take measures to procure material aid from the Imperial Government. No doubt, Sir, that business has been accomplished as successfully as the other affairs which have engaged their attention, to which they have given some degree of publicity, but it is one of their good deeds of which we have heard nothing. Neither in the Speech from the Throne, nor in any other way has the result of the English mission been announced to us. Is the complete success upon this subject reserved for the present to be administered to us as a *bonne bouche* at some more critical period of the Session, or is this in truth the important concern in which Canada still requires support, and which makes it necessary that we should have an agent at the doors of the Imperial Government, in order that the solicitations necessary to success may be made with that importunity which experience has proved to be requisite? Perhaps after all, the importunities of last summer have not been successful, and we

MR. BLAKE.

are now to reiterate these importunities through a special representative. I have more than once stated my opinion of Sir Alexander Galt, who needs no eulogy from any member of this House. But, although he may become the Agent of the Canadian Government in London, still, to become the colleague of gentlemen opposite, led as they are, would have been for him impossible. We have his views so late as September, 1875, when he wrote thus:—

“I continue to belong to that section of the so-called Conservative party which regretfully acquiesced in the condemnation passed by the country upon the late Administration, and I cannot blame those members of our party who found it their duty to sustain Mr. Mackenzie's efforts to carry on the Government, which he would have been utterly unable to do if dependent only on the support of his immediate political friends. The exigency of the hour necessitated a breach in the former party, and had I then been in Parliament Mr. Mackenzie would have received from me all needful support. This necessity has now passed away, and the Administration must henceforth be judged on its own merits, and not supported from any alleged fear that their resignation would absolutely restore Sir John A. Macdonald to power. My conviction in reference to this latter contingency is, that notwithstanding the great and acknowledged public service of that gentleman, it is impossible to ignore the circumstances that led to his defeat. I regard his election as a regular leader of the Opposition in Parliament, as a grave mistake, which tends to perpetuate the breach in the party, and must ultimately lead either to the formation of new party lines or to the final adherence of many of our friends to the so-called Liberal ranks.”

Men may alter their political opinions; convictions may change on measures, and on policy: new light may dawn on various questions of expediency, under the influence of reason and full discussion; but, upon a question of this kind which had been discussed for years—not a political but a moral question—the judgment of a gentleman deliberately expressed, in language all the weightier for its temperate firmness is obviously irrevocable, and it was therefore quite impossible that he could have become the colleague of the gentleman who leads the government. But, of course, while he could not act with, he may properly act under him; while he would not be a principal, he may rightfully be an agent or a representative. But perhaps even in the capacity of a representative, endeavouring to secure the assistance of the Imperial Government in