

either given his support to the resolution of the hon. member for North Simcoe or he should have resisted it; but he has done neither. He has submitted a resolution which may mean little, or it may mean nothing. It says to the Imperial Government: Oh, this is a matter about which we do not wish to worry you or offend your prejudices. We suppose that you may think that it is inconsistent with the position of a dependency that we should undertake to have a voice in our external relations at all; and if so, we are not going to press the question upon your attention. Now, I say that a more feeble resolution could not be submitted to this House, and I trust that the hon. gentlemen on that side of the House, any more than the hon. gentlemen on this side, will not give such a resolution their support.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. Mr. Speaker, if we except the superlatives in which the hon. member for Bothwell nearly always indulges, as, for instance, that this is the most feeble resolution that could be adopted, and the most ridiculous that could be devised—

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). I did not use the word ridiculous to-night.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. At the beginning of the hon. gentleman's speech he used an expression quite equivalent to that. I am only quoting him from memory—

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). Your memory is bad.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. I am sure that it is, and if I could repeat the exact superlative, I am sure that it would be stronger than that which I supply from memory. But, I say that with the exception of these superlatives, which are always to be expected and which we always receive in the kindest manner from the hon. gentleman, there is only one statement in his speech from which I must dissent as a statement of fact. I dissent entirely from his proposition that he would have got on better in his argument if the papers had been brought down which he referred to in replying to the hon. Minister of Marine. The hon. member for Bothwell does not do himself half justice when he argues that his imagination is not a great deal better than the facts. The hon. gentleman would not have been able to argue this question or any other with regard to our relations with the United States, if he had not been in a position to draw largely, indeed entirely, from his imagination. When I have said that, I have mentioned all that I propose to dissent from in his speech, so far as his observations upon facts are concerned. The rest of his argument, and the argument of the hon. gentleman who leads the Opposition, I listened to with a great deal of pleasure, because it was perfectly apparent that one-half of these arguments would vanish into thin air when these hon. gentlemen came to read the resolution in amendment, and the other half of their arguments were strongly in its favour. The hon. leader of the Opposition, for instance, said that this amendment was an extraordinary variation from the policy which we laid down a few days ago, and he proceeded to argue that it was so because we were not expressing any opinion on the part of this House, but were proposing to consult with the British Government and to ask what their opinion was. When the hon. gentleman has leisure to read

the resolution, he will find that it expresses a definite opinion—the very definite opinion expressed from these benches when this question was last under debate, that negotiations should be opened up with Her Majesty's Government with the view of having that policy and those wishes carried out.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). What policy?

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. I will tell the hon. gentleman in a single moment what policy. When the hon. gentleman heard me making the argument to this House that what we desired was something more than an *attaché* and something less than a representative clothed with plenipotentiary powers, and that a mere officer on the staff of the British Minister would not be as effective or as independent an officer for us as would be desirable in the interests of Canada, the hon. gentleman interrupted me to remark: "That would be a matter of arrangement with Her Majesty's Government." I argued at the moment in reply that while we asked for an *attaché*, we might find that the powers which this House desired to clothe him with were quite inconsistent with the status of an *attaché*, and that therefore it was unwise to commit ourselves to the particular name and designation of the officer; and when the hon. gentleman asks me now what we are to communicate with the British Government about, I tell him that it is precisely to make that arrangement which he suggested in answer to me in that debate might be made with Her Majesty's Government, and the only impediment to which was the mention of "an officer attached to the staff of Her Majesty's Ministry."

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). Then the hon. gentleman has left out half of his resolution.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. No, I have not left out anything, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member says that the argument of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries is an admission that the representations which are made by the British Minister at Washington are ineffectual and insufficient; that the Minister of Marine had to go there and ask to be heard; and that he therefore admitted that we require fuller representation there than we have. Sir, the resolution proposed by way of amendment admits that, and invites this House to affirm it. But the point on which we differ is this: We are not at all sure, on the contrary we are very doubtful, that the particular kind of officer we are willing to appoint shall be heard as representing Canada. If we are not able to get an officer who can be heard, we do not want any officer at all. We would not have sent as High Commissioner to England, one who was to be an officer in the Civil Service of Great Britain, in the position of a clerk in the Department of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Nor are we prepared to accept as our representative at Washington any person who is to be a mere servant in the British legation there. The hon. member for Bothwell has told us that there is a great falling off in our policy of this session from that of last session, when we proposed a fiscal policy for the whole Empire; but I tell him that there is a greater falling off in his policy of to-night from that of two weeks ago, when he was advocating the right of this country to negotiate its own treaties, and practical independence for Canada, whereas now he is willing that our representative should be the servant of the British Ambassador at Washington—a man to whom his master