

what is best for Canada as Canada, and what is best for Canada as part of the British Empire. I have no doubt whatever our true policy is to obtain self action in almost everything which relates to our own business. Only one Act, I think, of this Parliament has been disallowed by Her Majesty, that was one relating to the Governor-General's salary, if I recollect aright. We have the most perfect freedom of action in legislation. Why, Sir, twenty or thirty years ago—certainly forty years ago—it would have been accounted extremely dangerous by all British statesmen, Whig and Tory alike, to have accorded to us the freedom we now possess, and to have trusted to us the legislation connected with half a continent under the British flag. Now, Sir, English statesmen know that British interests are just as safe in our own hands as they can possibly be in theirs. They know also, and must be taught if they don't know it, that a Canadian Privy Councillor is Her Majesty's Privy Councillor, and as such they occupy no inferior position, and although the position may not be precisely similar to that of Austria and Hungary with reference to the capital in each country, they discharge duties very much the same, and there may be other changes which may, perhaps, draw us quite as close as we are under our present relationship. But whatever may happen we know this as an established fact, that we now have perfect liberty of action in legislation, and that Great Britain trusts Her Majesty's Ministers and Her Majesty's Ministers trust us, and why should we not have the same freedom of action in negotiating business with other countries. The hon. gentleman spoke of the ambassadorial duties to-day as if they were something that required a training school, a college for training diplomats, whereas a business man, a statesman who has any knowledge of commercial affairs, knows tolerably well what will suit and what will not suit, and surely men enough can be found in our own country to discharge those duties with which we have hitherto trusted English statesmen, and generally greatly to our sorrow. I for one give my cordial support to anything that will extend our liberty of action and make us entirely equal in all respects to other Legislatures and the Ministers of the Mother Country itself.

Mr. McDOUGALL. I must repeat an observation I made on a previous occasion, that it is unfortunate, and inimical to the fair discussion or consideration of a great matter of public interest, that it should be presented to this Parliament under the circumstances in which this resolution comes before us. But, Sir, it is one of the privileges of an Opposition in Parliament, and it is availed of by them, and has been availed of by hon. gentlemen on this side when they sat on the other, to bring up their views, no matter how embarrassing it might be to the Government of the day, and the Government of the day in that case voted down, without any hesitation or difficulty, propositions which, perhaps, they approved, because they came up under such circumstances. And I have no doubt that a great many members of this House, without perhaps expressing otherwise their opinions with respect to this important matter, will find themselves in a position, politically, to take the same course on this occasion. But, Sir, for myself, occupying, perhaps, a peculiar position in this House and country as a public man, I cannot sit here as a member of Parliament and hear the views and statements made by responsible Ministers of the Crown with regard to the consequences which are likely to follow from the assertion on the part of this Parliament of its desire to have the control of its own commercial affairs and the settlement and management of commercial treaties with other countries without protest. Thirty-two years ago I had the honor—I consider it an honor to-day, when I look back upon that time and at what has since transpired—to propound a political platform, as the editor of a public journal. In looking over the various propositions, the opposition that was made to them, the ridicule that was heaped upon them, the opposition offered

Mr. MACKENZIE.

to them by hon. gentlemen in this House, some of whom are Ministers to-day, I take courage, for I can, in being able to look back upon that time and upon the events which have since occurred with respect to those propositions, and to-day I find every one has substantially been passed upon and adopted into the constitution and laws of my country, except one, which is embraced in the resolution moved by the hon. member for West Durham, viz.: That Canadians ought to have, and also should seek to have the right to make commercial arrangements with other countries suitable to our own condition and wishes. We have made a good advance in that direction. We have been permitted through communications which have passed between this Government and the Government of the Mother Country to send an ambassador, as he is called, with semi-plenipotentiary powers, and in connection with the English representative he has discussed various questions with France, Spain and other countries. But I do not know that our experience of that step in advance, so far as it goes, is calculated to give us very much confidence in its beneficial results, and I, for one, unable perhaps to understand all the delicate relations which exist between Canada to-day and the Mother Country, cannot see what damaging effect it would have upon the relations of the Mother Country with us, in what respect the tie which binds us to the Mother Country would be weakened, by simply agreeing to an arrangement by which Canada itself would, through its own agents, propose and make arrangements with any country which might be willing to make an arrangement with her, under the protection, under the supervision and with the support of the Mother Country. Why, what is the spectacle we have before us? We have here a Government representing what is called the Conservative party in this country, which claims, to be, and many of its friends claim it to be *par excellence*, the custodian and rightful heir of British principles. Yet we find them going as an opposition to the country at the last election and proclaiming a policy with respect to our Tariff which we all know was obnoxious to British statesmen of both political parties and by the British people, as being contrary to their policy, and objected to their views of what was for the interest of Canada itself, because Free Trade and Protection do not form a dividing line between English political parties. The present leader of the Conservative party, Sir Stafford Northcote, is as strong a free trader, if we may judge by his writings and speeches, as is to be found perhaps in the ranks of the Liberal party. English parties, I say, are not divided by any such line; and yet in this country we proposed, and I was one of those who concurred in the proposition to change our Tariff, to impose duties upon foreign commodities and upon the products and manufactures of the Mother Country herself so as to serve our own needs and purposes, to obtain revenue for the conduct of our own affairs and to afford protection to our manufacturers. We considered that those local and Canadian objects were of more importance than any consideration of what might be in accordance with the policy of the Mother Country or the political relations subsisting between Canada and the Mother Country. Hon. gentlemen opposite who took the platform against this policy resorted to the argument that it would tend to weaken the connection between Canada and the Mother Country, but this argument did not have very much effect even in the ranks of their own party. I take the decision of the people at the last election on that question as the strongest evidence we can have that the wishes of the people of Canada, that the rising aspirations of the young men of Canada, are in favor of our assuming our own independence in the management of our own affairs, and especially in regard to all commercial matters. I believe that is the