Africa. At Durban in Natal I was met by a young Canadian from Ontario who represents there the commercial interests of the Dominion. We have an agent at Cape Town, and I trust the government will soon have an agency in British South Africa—a colony founded only yesterday but which already under the governorship of Sir Percy Girouard a French Canadian is producing enormous quantities of cotton and coffee and tea, and will be able to buy and consume in large quantity the products of Canada. And, if we are subsidizing steamship lines, and bonusing the construction of railways, and appointing commercial agents in the four corners of the earth, why should we refuse an invitation to trade with the United States ; an invitation which by the way came this time from Washington to Ottawa, and did not go from Ottawa to Washington. Why in the name of common sense should we refuse to develop our commerce with the 95,000,000 of neighbours to the south of us, the greatest consuming people in the world?

The policy of reciprocity with the United States is not new. My hon. friend (Mr. Sproule) is an old parliamentarian, and having read the history of our commercial ventures he knows full well that ever since the fight for responsible government in Canada the question of a reciprocity agreement with the United States has always been the first article in the programme of both political parties. Let me recite briefly the circumstances under which the first reciprocity treaty was negotiated. And my hon. friend from East Grey (Mr. Sproule) having given what I think to be a biased recital, may I be permitted to give my version of the history of trade negotiations between the United States and Canada for the last 50 years. We know that when Lord Elgin came as Governor General in 1847, it was just one year after the repeal of the corn laws in England ; laws under which Canada in a degree benefited by a preferential tariff in the mother country. If the corn laws were not completely repealed in 1847 it was because Sir Robert Peel had provided a gradual sliding scale which delayed the result for some years. In 1847 when Lord Elgin assumed the governorship of Canada we were fresh from a revolution; discord and discontent were abroad in the land, and in 1849, the Rebellion Losses Bill was passed, and the parliament buildings burned in Montreal, and Lord Elgin stoned in his carriage on his way to Monklands. A few months afterwards when the sliding scale had run its course, and the corn laws were completely abolished, there was in Canada a deep sentiment of distrust in the mother country because forsooth the Canadians of those days thought they were not supported by the mother country as they ought to be. Then was published the annexation manifesto to which memorable document was attached names famous in Canadian history—Sir John Abbott, Sir David Macpherson, Luther Holton, A. A. Dorion, Sir John Rose ; I need not mention others. At this juncture the leading men in both political parties appeared ready to pass under the stars and stripes because, as I said, there was a deep sentiment of distrust caused by the friction in trade relations between Canada and the mother land. It is a notable thing that the only time there ever seemed to be any annexation sentiment in Canada was a time when we were refused the advantages of a reciprocity treaty with the neighbouring republic. Need I remind the House, however, that our predecessors in political life were labouring under a delusion, and that the statesmen of Britain were not averse to a reciprocity treaty between Canada and the United States. They had more faith in the loyalty of the Canadians of that day than has my hon. friend from East Grey (Mr. Sproule) in the loyalty of his fellow countrymen of to-day. I hold in my hand an historic document which I have obtained from the archives, it being a letter of instructions from Lord Grey to Lord Elgin, Lord Grey was colonial secretary, and writing to Lord Elgin on his assumption of the Governor Generalship of Canada, and within a week of Lord Elgin's departure, under date Downing Street, 31st December, 1846, he said :

> This is an occasion upon which I cannot with propriety enter into any discussion of the grounds upon which this change of policy has been adopted.
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> But without doing so I may express my firm conviction that eventually the welfare of the colonies even more than that of the mother country will be promoted by the abandonment of a system of artificial restrictions upon trade. Looking to the great natural advantages possessed by the British colonies, and especially by the fine provinces of North America, I cannot doubt that adopting a policy of which the object is to render industry productive by leaving it to follow its natural channels of employment, and by affording every possible facility to commerce, must lead to their rapid advancement in wealth and prosperity.

So Lord Grey, in his instructions to Lord Elgin, on the very day after the Canadian rebellion, on the very day when the Corn Laws were repealed in England, was advising the Governor General to give to Canada the benefit of a convention with the United States of America, to do away with the artificial barriers existing between those two countries, so as to develop trade and industry, so as to make the colonies of North America prosperous provinces. As a result of the annexation manifesto, Lord Elgin proceeded to Washington and negotiated the famous