

tween Canada and the Mother Country in the interest of that small class who have enjoyed the fostering care of the Minister of Finance. He at present is not prepared to run any such risk when it is to protect a commerce that amounts to upwards of \$200,000,000 a year. I have no doubt upon this question that just as the recognition of the principle of local self-government tended to quiet the public mind, to allay dissatisfaction and to cultivate a spirit of contentment towards the Mother Country, so the promotion of the right to deal with and regulate treaties, to enter into commercial relations with foreign States when our interests demand that it will, instead of severing the tie which binds us to the Government of the United Kingdom only tends to make that tie more durable. We know that the people of this country are a progressive people; their circumstances are changing; they are every day becoming more and more a nationality, and we propose not a sham National Policy, which means class legislation, the promotion of the interests of one portion of the community at the expense of the rest, but a real National Policy that will promote the interests of a whole people, give them control over their own affairs, and enable them to manage those matters with which they are especially concerned, and which they best understand. It was said many years ago by Mr. Gladstone that the people of Canada ought to provide for their own defence, that the Imperial troops ought to be withdrawn from Canada, and he said no people could be any more than a dependent population unfit for self-government in the highest sense which did not provide for their own self-defence. I believe that that was true, and I never desired to see the burden of our ordinary defence thrown on the Imperial Treasury. For the same reason, I have no wish the Imperial Government should discharge a duty on our behalf, that we are well qualified to discharge for ourselves. I deny the proposition by the right hon. First Minister. I believe that if we ask for the power to negotiate commercial treaties, we shall have no difficulty in securing it, and so far from its severing the ties which bind us to the United Kingdom, it will tend to prolong the existing relations between Canada and the Mother Country.

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN. I have only a word to say for the hon. gentleman who has just sat down. It is about the correspondence alluded to between Mr. Lefebvre, the French Consul, and myself. The hon. gentleman said that Mr. Lefebvre had not been censured by his Government, or if he had, that at all events the Minister of Public Works of Canada had been censured by Mr. Dilke in England. Is that what the hon. gentleman said?

Mr. MILLS. Yes.

Sir HECTOR LANGEVIN. I may say this to the hon. gentleman that, as a Minister of the Crown in Canada, I was not under Mr. Dilke in England. I had no responsibility to him or any one else then. I was responsible only to the Governor General of Canada and the people who have elected me, and the correspondence which took place between Mr. Lefebvre and myself, took place upon the responsibility of the Government in Canada, especially of the right hon. First Minister, and is a correspondence that can be defended anywhere. There has been no censure either in England or here of the Minister of Public Works. At all events, a censure in England I would not have accepted, because I had no responsibility in that direction.

Mr. DECOSMOS. I am glad that the hon. gentleman on my right has presented this resolution. It is a proof that on his part and on the part of his supporters, they believe the Imperial Government are unable to manage the trade affairs of Canada. We had a statement of a similar nature made by the right hon. leader of the Government when he said they had sent an Ambassador or a Chief Commissioner to England to attend to the affairs of Canada, and to Paris and

Mr. MILLS.

to Madrid. It appears, therefore, to me that both parties in this House are not satisfied with the way our commercial affairs have been managed by England, and now the Opposition ask that some address or despatch, or Order in Council, or Minute of Council may be sent to England in order that Her Majesty may place this country in such a condition that we may be able to attend to our own commercial affairs. Although my hon. friend who has just sat down has labored to show this House all the minutiae of diplomatic affairs and to show us the history of the past hundred years, I think it matters little to us what was done in the respect to this matter. As the hon. gentleman has said to-day it did not require a first-class diplomat to attend to mere matters of business. I am one of those who believe that this country should have the right to negotiate its commercial treaties. I go a step further, I believe this country should have the right to negotiate every treaty. The tendency of this resolution is, as the right hon. First Minister pointed out, in the direction of independence. I see no reason why the people of Canada should not look forward to Canada becoming a sovereign and independent State. The right hon. gentleman stated that he was born a British subject and hoped to die one. Sir, I was a British colonist, but do not wish to die a tadpole British colonist. I do not wish to die without having all the rights, privileges and immunities of the citizen of a nation. The tendency of the right hon. gentleman's remarks is that we must still hang on to the Imperial Government. I believe it would be well for Canada if she would hang on for some considerable time longer, because I believe the Constitution of Canada is not adapted to well-working under Independence. Before this country can assume the position of an independent State its Constitution must be changed. I hold to the view that obtains on the American side, that each Province should be an independent State. As it is now, instead of the Provinces having similar rights to the reserved rights, the expressed rights, they have none. Holding these views I congratulate the hon. member for West Durham in bringing forward the resolution. I also congratulate the Government in sending Sir Alexander Galt to England, to France and to Madrid. Although his mission was very successful, it shows that public opinion in Canada is drifting in the direction pointed out by this resolution. If Canada is ever to become a separate and independent State without the shedding of blood, it will be by a union of the two great parties in this country. Sir, I am one of those who believe that this country is not in a condition to ask for Independence. In the first place, our territory is not complete, Newfoundland lies on the east, and British Columbia on the west, a Province that has been oppressed as much as ever Ireland has been.

Several hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Mr. DECOSMOS. Hon. gentlemen may sneer and laugh, but every word I state will prove to be truths of history, and when the time comes for the people of British Columbia to raise historical monuments, they will raise one to the perfidy of Canada; and it may be that some of those hon. gentlemen who haw-haw now and sneer will find their faces on the panel, and the children of the present generation of British Columbia will point to them with scorn. I repeat that I concur in the object of this resolution. I do not say I can concur in all its terms, but I do heartily concur in the spirit of it. I am one of those who believe that the Imperial Government is not capable of doing the foreign business of Canada, but that Canada ought to do her own foreign business, and I shall therefore vote for the resolution.

Mr. OUMET (in French). Mr. Speaker, without wishing to make a speech, I am desirous of stating in a few words the reasons for which I am about to record my vote in favor of the resolutions. All that is asked for by these resolutions