

ships. If you take a good trade commissioner who is doing his duty now, and doing it well, and dress him up in the habiliments of a plenipotentiary, and give him that heightened idea of himself and his position, it is as if you were to take an honest and industrious labourer, remove his smock-frock and working clothes, and dress him up in a Sunday suit, and put him on exhibition. You would then have destroyed his usefulness rather than added to it.

Now we come down to the question as to what benefit is to be gained over and above what we now have; and then put on the other side certain possibilities and contingencies which are liable to take place. Every point of contact you make with a foreign nation on the line of an embassy or plenipotentiary minister involves contingent conflict, possibly actual conflict. We have the British Empire, with its plenipotentiary; and the British Empire includes the Dominion of Canada. The British Empire is a sovereign power, undeniably and undoubtedly, and its representative acts in a capacity that is germane and pertinent to the conditions of the institutions which it has founded. Side by side with that embassy we have another embassy, that of Canada, and we have the people of every country asking how that is. We do not know the temperament of the man who is to represent us, nor that of the man who represents the British Government; and as between these two in a foreign court everything depends upon the temperament of those two men. Then we have all other ambassadors and plenipotentiaries, and the newspaper press, and we may have statements made, first by one and then by another, and queries raised first by one and then by another, until the possibilities for misunderstanding grow and grow.

Why is it necessary for us to multiply these points of possible misunderstanding? When we come to the real kernel of the matter, what I stated a moment ago is true, that the very essence of ambassadorial and plenipotentiary representation is the absolute, undoubted and acknowledged sovereignty of the state which accredits to the state to which the representative is accredited. In all the galaxy of ambassadors of the four different kinds that you have to-day in the courts of the world, there is not one which is not a sovereign power, absolutely and undoubtedly. Has Canada that position? This question of the transmutation of autonomy into equality, and then afterwards into equal status, to my mind, causes a difficulty which will run through the whole of our future relationships with foreign countries until experience has

worked out some mechanism by which these inconsistencies may be reconciled, and these points of difference brought to a termination.

What causes apprehension in my mind is that this train that has been started, and is now being accelerated with an impulse that will become greater and greater, will come some day to the point when Canada will have to choose whether to buttress up her positions; when there will arise certain contingencies in view of which she will say: "We are not now absolutely independent, but we can soon become so, and we will take measures to bring that about." I am sorry, and I regret that that train of thought, and that impulse of tendency, have been contributed to by the Government which is now in power in the ostentatious parade of its new liberties, so-called, and its new status, so-called, and in its feverish anxiety to make better relations and to weld stronger links between itself and foreign powers on that status, and to delay what seems to me to be the absolutely necessary obligation of making stronger those links, and ties, and leanings, and connections, which are to be the only guarantee that this Empire will remain a unity, and that we shall remain within it as a part of that unity. That is why I have made these comments, and why I say to the Government: "You have now one toy that you can play with; prove that you can play safely with that, and let this proposed extension to other and remoter foreign countries 'bide a wee' until experience has worked out the proper methods for reconciling distinct incongruities which to-day crop up at every step we take along this path."

We are not all of French descent and English descent in this country, and from time to time as we proceed we shall have a larger proportion of people outside of that category. For those of us who are descended from France and from Great Britain and other British countries, those long and strong lines of culture intimacy remain imbedded in us; they draw and hold and keep us together; but every year thousands are coming into this country who have not that paternity, nor those bonds and links. To that portion of the country these new ideas go without the restrictive influence of the cultural and descent links which bind us to the two mother countries. So my advice to the Government would be—and I for one would feel mightily relieved if it could be carried out—that they should rest with that one embassy which has been founded, where it can work out well if anywhere, and where it has a better chance of working out because of our proximity and our mutual understand-