

their harbors? Does the hon. gentleman know what that means? It means paralysis of our trade; it means ruin to our people. The hon. gentleman will be called to account for it, if it should happen. The hon. gentleman knows well that this *modus vivendi* was proposed by his own plenipotentiary with the avowed object of preventing, by any possibility, that state of facts arising which might bring the Nonintercourse Bill into force; and we urge this upon him now because we feel the gravity of the crisis. We do not want to be brought into a commercial war with the people of the United States. I do not believe nor does anyone on this side of the House believe that we could not live in this country if we were cut off from intercourse with the United States. No doubt, we might live in a sort of way, but I hope that the stoppage of intercourse will never come in our time or in the time of our children. We, on our part, desire to bring closer and closer the commercial relations which have existed in the past, which exist to-day, and which I hope will exist in the future, between us and our friends to the south. We desire to make those relations as free as they possibly can be made; and we desire that any advance which is made by the people or the Congress of the United States should be met by us on this side of the line. We desire to welcome it, and to meet it by kindly feeling and by kindly measures so that a treaty may be arranged between the two countries, consistent with the rights of both and calculated to develop the natural trade which should exist between two great English-speaking peoples. We are in favor of the broadest and freest commercial relations, consistent with our political autonomy. We believe that, if a Government were in power that desired to make those relations with the United States, a better time for doing so never existed than exists to-day. Though an irritated feeling may have existed a year or two ago, as Sir Charles Tupper stated in this House, I believe that, if we reciprocated the kindly feelings which are expressed in that country, we would find an answer there. In any case, it is well that the policies of the two parties should be laid before the country. We are for conciliation. We are in favor of negotiating with that people in order to remove all difficulties, and we are not for going back to the state of affairs which existed in 1855 or in 1886. We do not desire commercial war or other any kind of war, but we desire that our trade and our intercourse with them should grow, and that everything in the way of that should be removed as far as fiscal regulations or treaty arrangements can do so, and that should be known to be the policy of the Liberal party. We have proposed that to our friends opposite, though we may lose a tactical advantage by doing so, but we believe that it is in the true interests of the country, and we hoped that it would be accepted by those hon. gentlemen.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. We must all sympathise very deeply indeed with our friends on the Opposition benches in the disposition to self sacrifice which has moved them to ignore all the "tactical advantages" which they see they are losing by the motion now before the House. I venture to say that, if there is any "tactical benefit" which they will lose, it will not be from any intention on their part to sacrifice any political advantage in regard to this matter, but from the unfortunate misjudgment which is characteristic of their whole policy. Having addressed the House at some length on this subject on a former occasion, I had intended to allow the vote to be taken without saying anything now, but, considering the wide range which the debate has taken, the charges which have been heaped up against the Administration, and the violence of the language we have just listened to against the First Minister, I may perhaps be allowed to take up a little of the time of the House in replying to charges which have been refuted a hundred

times before, but which are repeated each time with greater violence and persistency. If I may be permitted to refer so far back as to the speech of the hon. gentleman who moved the resolution which is before the House, I would do so in order to call the attention of the House to the great range which this debate has taken, in order, I suppose, that hon. gentlemen opposite might not derive any "tactical advantage" from it. The leader of the Opposition ransacked the history of the country, and blamed the Government not simply for the policy which the Premier has laid before the House and before the country since the year 1867, for he took a wider range and blamed the policy which has been pursued in this country for the last twenty-five years. The hon. gentleman went back and endeavored to trace the history of the conditions which led so many English-speaking people to sympathise with the Southern States in the war of secession, and he concluded his observations on that subject, after drawing the attention of the House to the fact that, if this was a fault at all, it was a fault shared by almost the whole civilised world as well as by nearly the whole of Canada, by saying:

"I can understand that being the feeling in European society, but I am at a loss to understand how it was that Canada, which in that day, as now, was a purely democratic country, did not throw its whole sympathy into the cause for which the North was then fighting. Not that we could do anything to help it. The North could fight its own battles. But if we had shown anything like sympathy with the supporters of the American Union in their struggles with the rebels, they would have given us their friendship in return, as they have always been ready to do to those who sympathised with them. But finding a hostile people on their border, the first thing they did, when they had the opportunity, was to cut us off from the reciprocal trade relations which we had with them. This is the first fault which, I think, has been committed by the Government of Canada."

It is gratifying to know that when the hon. gentleman went back to a period in the history of this country prior even to Confederation, to find matter for an attack on the First Minister, he could only base that attack upon the existence, in all quarters of the civilised world, of a measure of sympathy with the Southern people; and that though he declared that that was the first charge which he had to make against the Government of this country, he was unable to mention a circumstance or an act in respect to which he could impute fault to the Government of this country. I mention that for the purpose of showing how disdainful these gentlemen are of deriving any "tactical advantage" in this debate, and how eager they are, at any rate, not to be limited in their field of discussion and of criticism, because the facts are not at hand to justify the criticism. Now, Sir, following down the history of this subject for more than twenty years, we were treated in the admirable address made by the leader of the Opposition, and we were treated in the less admirable address—if I am compelled to say so—to which we have listened this evening, to one long and persistent attack upon the Administration with regard to the fisheries question traced down to this hour. We were told that, at every point of the controversy, at every turn of history, we had been false to our duty to the country, and that we had failed to take any step either to solve this question or to protect the rights of the country in regard to it. The leader of the Opposition said that the repeal of the fishery articles of the Washington Treaty came, and that nothing was done; and we were told to-night that that was another illustration of the dilatory policy of the First Minister, who folded his hands and let events take their course, and attempted to redeem them when it was too late. It is old history, it is threadbare history, but it is true, nevertheless, that the efforts and sacrifices which the First Minister and his Government made to renew the fishery articles of the Treaty of Washington, and to keep them in force, and the sacrifices which he proposed to make, from first to last, and not his inaction, met with the condemnation of the Opposition