

lous criticisms that have been made by political partisans, and in contending that because a commercial treaty is very advantageous for one party, it does not follow that it may not be equally good for the other. It is very easy to fancy things that might advantageously have been included or omitted in any such arrangement—but it must be always borne in mind that, when two parties sit down to make a bargain the result arrived at cannot be what each desires to obtain, but what both will consent to. The merit or demerit of every such compact must therefore be tested by looking at it in its bearings as a whole, and not by minute dissection of minor points. I shall not waste time by entering into any elaborate argument as to the advantages which must flow from throwing down the barriers in the way of international commerce between two countries so contiguous to each other as are the United States and this Dominion. We have ample proof of this in the commercial history of Great Britain since the union of the three kingdoms. We have it still more markedly in the great material results directly flowing from the free interchange of products between the several States of the neighbouring Republic. And nowhere can be found a more gratifying illustration of the grand results that flow from commercial freedom than we have in the progress of our own Dominion since the accomplishment of Confederation. Though the customs barriers against inter-traffic between B.N.A. Provinces have only been removed since July 1867, the united foreign commerce of the Provinces has risen from an annual average for thirteen years before confederation of \$115,000,000, to the enormous amount in the seventh year after it, of \$240,000,000. Twenty-five years ago the subject of commercial reciprocity was, I believe, quite as well if not better understood by the people of Canada than it is now. It is twenty-one years since the Treaty of 1854 went into operation; but it took six years to negotiate it, and during that time the people of the Provinces became thoroughly conversant with the various advantages which flow from such arrangements; and if the statesmen who conducted the negotiations of those

years were present to-day, they would hear with astonishment that any member of this chamber entertained a doubt as to the enormous advantage which must accrue to both countries from the consummation of such a Treaty as that which has been recently discussed. It is only nine years since the old Treaty of 1854 was brought to a close by the action of the United States Government. The wonderful success which attended that Treaty, is shown by the fact that the interchange of traffic between the United States and the British North American Provinces, during the thirteen years of its continuance increased from \$33,000,000 in the year immediately preceding that in which the Treaty went into operation, to no less than \$84,000,000 in 1866—the year in which it was repealed. Since 1866 there have been several negotiations with the United States for the renewal of the old Treaty. I will briefly refer to each of them, not for the purpose of drawing invidious comparisons,—for I hope nothing will cross my lips to-day to excite party feeling—but simply for the purpose of showing clearly the past history and present position of the Reciprocity question. Such questions as this, should, I think, be regarded from a higher point than that of mere partisanship. We are all alike concerned in the prosperity of our foreign commerce, and in securing good relations with our powerful neighbours—and to these ends we should all heartily contribute, whatever party may be in power, or charged with the negotiations. In the negotiations of 1855-6 for a renewal of the Treaty, offers were made to the American Government by our then Finance Minister, Sir A. T. Galt, which, in my opinion, ought not to have been made. The Government then existing in Canada was the Coalition Government, formed in 1864 for the special purpose of carrying confederation of the whole British North American Provinces. I was a member of that Government—and, as is well known, it was in consequence of the policy adopted by my colleagues in the conduct of the reciprocity negotiation that I felt compelled to resign my position as President of the Executive Council. I resigned because I felt very