

ed that he was ready to fight for England as he had fought against her?

Who would have supposed that in seven short years those disjointed and warring communities of South Africa would be united by the bond of a common tariff, by the bond of commercial union, and that it is now contemplated to have this bond of commercial union replaced by a political confederation, under which, on the pattern of the Canadian confederation, two races in South Africa, as in Canada, shall be working towards a common destiny? Sir, I do not say that this consummation has been accomplished, but it is in a fair way of accomplishment, and since it is not improbable to see it realized in a very short time, it has the endorsement of such men as Dr. Jameson and General Botha, of the men of the raid and the men of the war. This consummation, I believe, is probable, but one thing is certain, that such a consummation would be possible nowhere except within the bonds of the British empire, under the ægis of those British institutions, so broad, so free, so just, so fair, and which alone are capable of such majestic development.

My hon. friend from Richelieu (Mr. Lancetot) has spoken eloquently and well of the completion of the treaty with France. This is another opening in the history of Canada. The Liberal party have long claimed for Canada the privilege of negotiating their own treaties and in making that claim we did not intend to reflect in any way upon British diplomacy, because everybody who is familiar with British history knows that the services of British diplomacy have been in their sphere as bright as the services of the army and the navy; we claim that privilege simply on account of the old homely maxim that one's own business is better done by one's self. We thought that in negotiating any treaty that concerned Canada, Canada could do better for herself than could be done for her by any one else. Now, Sir, the privilege has been granted to us entirely; the treaty with France has been negotiated altogether by Canadian ministers, and all the credit of it is due to my hon. friend the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) and my hon. friend the Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Mr. Brodeur). France is a wealthy country and we have reason to believe that this new treaty will develop a new era in the history of our trade relations with France and that increased trade will also bring an increased current of immigration from that gifted country. At all events one thing is certain, whatever may be the benefits of that treaty, and I think they will be considerable—although they are already questioned by my hon. friend the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden)—it can be claimed for the treaty that it is not an unimportant step at this juncture. France and England have filled the world with the history of their quarrels, but a new era dawned in the

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civilization of the world when the entente cordiale took place between the two countries. Thanks, as has been said, to the efforts of His Majesty, a war between France and England would be almost as improbable, certainly almost as criminal as civil war would be, and it is perhaps not claiming too much for us to say that in negotiating this treaty we did our little share to contribute to that entente cordiale.

The hon. the leader of the opposition (Mr. R. L. Borden) in his observations has been very inquisitive and has intended to be very charitable towards some members of this House. He has anticipated, I should say, the usual ministerial explanations that are given when any changes take place in the cabinet. As a rule these explanations are not given in the debate on the address, but I have no difficulty at all in satisfying the very fastidious curiosity of my hon. friend (Mr. R. L. Borden). He wanted to know why I had passed over so many members on this side of the House and selected gentlemen outside of the House to fill cabinet positions. I may say to my hon. friend that, if I have some reasons that I shall give later on, I was not, in adopting this course, taking a leaf out of his book—he has not yet been called upon to form a government—but I did take a leaf out of a lesson given him recently by an hon. gentleman sitting just behind him. In the speech which my hon. friend delivered at the Monument National, he stated in a moment of modesty that from among the gentlemen who surround him he could at once make up a cabinet three times the strength of the present cabinet. Immediately the hon. member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) who spoke after him told him that if he were called on to do that he would do well to call Mr. Tom. Chase Casgrain to his cabinet as Minister of Justice. I look about the House among the gentlemen who could make such a strong cabinet, I look in all directions and I fail to see the figure of my friend Mr. Tom Chase Casgrain. This is a lesson which my hon. friend (Mr. R. L. Borden), if he is ever called on, as he may some time—I do not know whether it will be perhaps as soon as he and his friends anticipate—

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. You will not see Mr. Casgrain on this side of the House after the next election; you will see him over there.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Possibly; I never prophesy. I have seen so many prophecies made on the other side that I do not indulge in them, but if we are to judge of the value of my hon. friend (Mr. R. L. Borden) as an election prophet by the prophecies of his predecessor, I have no apprehension whatever as to the result of the next elections. But I want to say to my hon. friend that when he is called upon to form a cabinet perhaps he will do well to follow