

argument, applied to an altered condition of things. What were our circumstances when responsible Government was established in this country? We were simply great municipal corporations; we sought to build roads and bridges; to provide for internal improvement, and to furnish facilities of communication between one portion of the Province and another, and one settlement and another; and the result of those local improvements has been that the whole of British North America has been prepared for the establishment of this Federal Union. We have increased in wealth and in population, and we have at the present time a more extensive commerce than the United Kingdom had a hundred years ago. To-day the commerce of Canada amounts to \$200,000,000; we carrying on trade with the West Indies, South America, the adjoining Republic, with Spain, to some extent with France and Germany, and to a very large extent with the United Kingdom. The question that presents itself to us is, should we direct the policy and control the operations of our people in the field of commerce as we have controlled them in ordinary local affairs? It is just as necessary to exercise the principle of self-government in the one case as in the other. It is not held, that before we possessed local self-government the United Kingdom desired to do us any harm. They desired to further our interests as far as they attracted their attention, their actions being such as they believed would be most beneficial to us; but we know they were not the best judges of our circumstances, that they did not take the same interest in this country as we felt ourselves, and every attempt to extend to us those kind attentions was felt to be an injury rather than a benefit. By the concession of the principles of self-government we were enabled to deal with those matters in the way in which the people desired. We have outgrown that condition. Our interests are no longer confined within the limits of the Dominion. Our relations with foreign countries are more extensive, as I have said, than were the relations of the United Kingdom with foreign countries a century ago, and we have just the same interest in promoting our external interests as any other people with the same wealth and commerce, in any other portion of the globe has in theirs, and the Government of the United Kingdom and its officers are no more competent to take charge of those external relations than of our internal and domestic affairs. This is a reasonable proposition. Why should we not seek to promote our own commercial well-being? Why should we entrust our external relations to other people who are pre-occupied with other affairs? Certainly we have more leisure, we have a greater interest in attending to what we believe the commercial well-being of this country than it is possible any other people can have, and it can no more interfere with the existing relations between Canada and the Mother Country, than can legislation upon the Tariff, upon property and civil rights, upon the ordinary domestic affairs of the country. I say that no people have so much interest in our well-being as ourselves. I was reminded, by an observation made by the right hon. leader of the House, of what came under my own notice some years ago at Buffalo. A Canadian vessel carrying a cargo of poles, was obliged to throw a large portion overboard. The result was that when the vessel reached port, duties were charged on what were shipped and not on what reached port. The owner brought the matter under the notice of the English Consul, but he not being responsible to the Government of Canada and not feeling specially interested in the subject of the complaint, paid no attention to it whatever; and I said then if we had had a consular agent at Buffalo, responsible to the Canadian Government, who might be removed for neglect of duty, his conduct would have been wholly different from the ambassadors and consuls of Great Britain. They are looking for promotion to the Government which appoints them. They look after the affairs which

affect the well-being of the people of the United Kingdom. They know the Government of the United Kingdom is responsible to the Parliament that sits at Westminster, and not to the Parliament that sits at Ottawa, but if they do anything at all by way of promotion of commercial interests, they do it by looking after the interests of the people of the United Kingdom and not those of any dependency or colony. If we wish the Agents and Ambassadors residing at foreign ports to take a special interest in the commercial well-being of this country, we must have men whose positions are more or less affected by the attention which they give to the interests of the people of this country, and it is only in this way that these people will ever seek to promote our commerce and give our manufacturers, merchants and farmers that information regarding foreign markets which will stimulate industry at home and contribute to the well-being and prosperity of this country. The hon. the First Minister told us of the ranks of Ambassadors and the different ranks to which they are raised in proportion to the dignity and importance of the country they represent, and I could not but think from the observations he made that he was reading the condition of the diplomatic corps of foreign countries as it existed a century and a-half ago rather than as it exists at this moment. Hon. gentlemen will remember a description given by Macaulay of the difficulties of negotiating peace between England and Holland on the one side and France on the other, how the Ambassadors were afraid to approach each other for fear that they would seem to be making improper concessions, how they watched each other's legs for fear one would sacrifice the dignity of his country by taking the first step; and we know that at the Treaty of Onabruck, before negotiations could be entered into, a circular place of meeting had to be erected with as many doors as Ambassadors, as no one would consent to another taking precedence of him by entering first; and in order that all might be on a footing of equality a round table was made and placed in the centre of the room. Well, Sir, I did not know that in these days of common sense and commerce men wasted their time in that way, and I think the hon. leader of the Government must have been looking at the musty records of former periods rather than at the acts of living men of common sense in this day. Now, Sir, the hon. gentleman told us on a former occasion, when a subject similar to this was brought before the House by Sir Alexander Galt, that if we were to appoint an Ambassador to negotiate a treaty with a foreign State the first question would be: Who are you, who do you represent, where do you come from; and it would be said: We do not know such a country as Canada; and that they would refuse to negotiate with us. The hon. gentleman said something very much like that to-day, but he also made statements of fact hardly consistent with this line of argument. He told us that Sir Alexander Galt had gone to Madrid, that he had been put into communication by the British Minister with the Premier or representative of Foreign Affairs in the Spanish Government, and that that hon. gentleman was most happy to enter into active negotiations with him, and the hon. gentleman assured us that Sir Alexander Galt was just on the point of succeeding when he failed to succeed. If the hon. gentleman's statement is correct the Government of Spain, at all events, made no objection to entering into negotiations with Sir Alexander Galt as the representative of Canada. I would like to call the attention of the House to this fact: Supposing Her Majesty, instead of sending Sir Alexander Galt there with letters to the British Minister, and the British Minister giving him an introduction to the representative of the Spanish Government, he had been appointed by the Queen a Plenipotentiary extraordinary to deal with this important question of the trade relations between Spain and Canada, will the hon. gentleman pretend that the Spanish Government would have refused to acknow-