

financial policy. All these things in turn had to be done, and it is not necessary to point out, if under ordinary circumstances, as the hon. gentleman has said, the duties of the Minister of Railways involve constant worry and work, that during this half year they involved exceptional worry and exceptional work. All the more necessary was it that there should be a responsible Minister in charge of the Department, who had not other things to do. The hon. gentleman has said that those duties were discharged by a Minister who had himself an important Department to take charge of—the Minister of Agriculture, who was in charge of a Department, two branches of which were very active, or should have been in very active operation during those six months. There was the question of immigration, in respect of which our expenditure is so enormous—a vote, if I remember aright, of something like \$550,000 being asked—a great portion of which is expended in ways which required constant supervision and closeness of attention on the part of the Minister. The practical result of the operations connected with the vote, the mode in which immigrants are brought out, the class of immigrants who are brought out, the arrangements for their being distributed through the country, are generally, and were last year, of particular importance, involving as they did, the coming out of a new class of immigrants, the dealing with the question, not merely of the Manitoba immigration, but the question of the Irish immigration into the country, and other points of that kind. Another branch was the Census Branch, one volume of which we have not received, which has been delayed very unreasonably, as it seems to me, and which should have been attended to much earlier. These things required and demanded the attention of the Minister, and the Minister whose attention they demand and require is charged, in addition to these duties, not for a temporary period, but for a period of six months, with those duties which had been too much for the undivided attention of the Minister of Railways. It was not possible that they should be thoroughly attended to; for I attribute to the want of the attendance of the Minister who had the undivided responsibility and the sole charge of the Department of Railways and Canals, the fiasco in reference to the guarantee and the accession of the Government to that plan which turned out so absurd and abortive a failure, and which necessarily led the country into the great entanglements and enormous engagements into which it has been plunged, by the succession of events which followed the agreement of the Government to endorse the Canadian Pacific Railway Company to the extent they did. Now I maintain that there is an incompatibility between the holding of these offices, in point of residence. The hon. gentleman says that the resident Ambassador continually crosses from Paris to London to vote with his party in the House of Lords. He says Lord Lyons and Lord Cowper did so. But I would ask him how long does it take to cross from Paris to London and back again? I do not remember how often, on great party divisions, the English Ambassador does cross, but I know that he has a residence in Paris, that he is generally there, and that if he crosses, it is very exceptional for him to do so; just as the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland may cross once or twice when there is a discussion of Irish affairs in the House, and when he, as a member of the Government, goes over to give the weight of his presence and information to the great council of the country, with reference to the particular functions he has to discharge. But to draw an analogy between the Minister at Paris going over once or twice during the Session to the House of Lords for a particular occasion, and being absent three, or four, or five days from his duties at Paris, and the Minister of Railways going from Canada to England, being away six months, and then going back four or five, or six, months, and then returning six months to England, seems to me perfectly absurd—I do not think another word is suitable

for such an argument as that. The hon. gentleman says that I did not maintain that these offices are incompatible by the same person. I said when the arrangement was made, you want a person with reference to commercial negotiations, to see how the treaties are going on, and it is important that we should have an Agent there. Well, I said, appoint your agent *pro hac officio*. Oh, no, that would never do; the negotiations are always going on, the hon. gentleman said. It is impossible to tell at any moment when they may not commence; it is a question of moment, a question of hours; it would be quite impossible to assume that the wheels of the negotiations should stop in order that we may send a man over; we require a resident representative agent, and we are choosing a resident agent, who is to reside half the year in Canada and the other half in England—and that, the less important half. That is the proposal of the hon. gentleman. The office is that of resident representative agent in London, and the duties of the office require him to be there. The arrangements, for instance, at this moment, with reference to the immigration of the approaching season, do not require him to be there; he is residing in Canada just now. These important negotiations, to which reference has been made—the hon. gentleman's diplomatic triumphs still in the bud—must stand; the blossoming of this century plant is deferred because he is out here in the chilly Canadian winter; and we must wait for it until he goes back. The hon. Minister of Finance says the negotiations will be resumed when the representative resident agent becomes the resident agent once more; but how far might they have proceeded if the resident had remained resident? What is the sense of creating an office with a resident agent, so that the negotiations may go on constantly, instead of sending a member of the Government over from time to time? What is the sense of deciding that you must have a man on the spot, and then appointing one whose duties require him to be absent from the spot half the time, leaving behind him your negotiations, the beggarly amount of which, ever since this Government assumed office, may be summed up in the one word—nothing, absolutely nothing. Not one single thing has been accomplished up to this time, in order that the hon. gentleman's plan may be carried out, of having a resident agent in London residing one-half of the year in Canada. But the hon. gentleman says it is quite consistent that he should be Minister of Railways, because some one else can discharge his duties: and he says this has been done in the past. Of course it has been done in the past, temporarily. When illness or some other temporary exigency called a Minister away, his duties have been discharged by a colleague. That is of necessity, not of choice. Illness requires a Minister to leave, and nobody says that because he requires to leave for a month, or for two or three months, he should resign. Then what are you to do? Necessity calls for some temporary arrangement, however inadequate, for the discharge of the duties of his office in his absence. So if some public necessity calls a Minister as a Minister, as a member of the Government, as having the discharge of a great Department in the discharge of a portion of the duties of his office, to go abroad—say to British Columbia, say to Washington, say to England—he is still discharging one part of his duties as Minister and as a member of the Cabinet. The hon. First Minister went to England as First Minister on more than one occasion. While absent, he was discharging a portion of his Ministerial duties. A portion of his Ministerial duties in Ottawa could not be discharged while he was away, and therefore some one else discharged that portion. The hon. Minister of Railways went abroad as Minister of Railways; there was a portion of his duties to be discharged while he was away, and some one else discharged those duties which remained to be discharged at home. But these arrangements cannot be compared with the arrangement, not