

HON. MR. ALEXANDER—He was well aware as to the average, but 35 per cent was the prevailing tariff upon all manufactured goods such as enumerated in the last schedule. He would ask whether the arrangement of that sliding scale in the manner proposed would be fair and reasonable and just between a country of forty millions of inhabitants and the Dominion. He was surprised at a people of such prosperity making such a proposal to a young and rising country like the Dominion. The honorable gentleman then observed that he came to the important question as to how the industrial interests of the Dominion would be affected by the addition of so many articles to the free list. We could not look but with pride and gratification to the great success which had attended such industrial enterprise, giving employment to so large a part of our young population—giving such an impetus to the growth of our cities and towns, and constituting so large a share of the general prosperity. It would be replied that such a treaty would give such manufacturers 40,000,000 more customers. But he would now ask the members of the Government whether they were prepared to advance and propound the doctrine, that a young country, with limited capital, a deficiency of skilled and mechanical labour, and not very advanced experience, was capable of measuring arms either with the neighboring Republic, and still more with Great Britain, which has been and continues to be the master of the world in the manufacturing arts. It was well known that one of the considerations which prevailed to make the United States postpone this treaty, was that they were afraid of the workshops of England, because free trade between us would involve free trade with England in regard to those items set forth in the proposed treaty. The hon. gentleman concluded by showing how great had been the prosperity of the country since the union—how all our industries had prospered, and admonished the Government to be cautious how they entered upon an experiment of so critical and hazardous a character—one which might prove disastrous to so large a number of our best

citizens, and throw out of employment large masses of our people. He (Mr. Alexander) was sure that the hon. gentleman, the proposer of this treaty, was actuated and impelled by the highest motives,—by a sincere desire to benefit his country; but this question was one upon which the most opposite opinions were entertained, and conscientiously entertained, by the first commercial men of the Dominion. The interests of the agricultural classes were so deeply interwoven with the industrial art that were they to adopt free trade the decline of the one would necessarily follow that of the other. The advantage of protection were instanced by the prosperity of Great Britain, a country which had been built up by a protection policy. He was sure that everyone was persuaded that the hon. gentleman who went to Washington was actuated by nothing but an earnest desire to make this country more prosperous than ever it had been before, but he hoped he would not forget that free trade and protection were questions on which opposite opinions were entertained, and conscientiously entertained, by the greatest and most influential of their manufacturers. (Hear, hear.) He considered that the question should be postponed till the country had had longer time to consider it.

HON. MR. LETELLIER, who addressed the House in French, sustained this action of the Commissioner at Washington, which he contended was a faithful reflex of the opinion of Canada with regard to the treaty, and complimented the hon. gentleman who had so honourably discharged that duty. If the treaty had been refused now, there was every prospect, he thought, of a different determination being arrived at in the future, when the advantage resulting from such an arrangement would be more fully appreciated. The question had been largely discussed in that Chamber, but he could not but regret that criticism had not been avoided till the production of the papers. They might then have been able to form a different conclusion. He would like to justify, not the position of the Government, but the position which he had taken in the matter, but he would wait till the necessary information was before the House, and he deprecated their