

conclude that arrangement, that the occasion for the delay ought not to have taken place, and that, in this most recent instance which is before us, it is proved that there is, not merely in theory but in practice also, a defect in our present arrangements. Now, Sir, there is a great deal of talk about the efforts of British diplomacy, and I want to point out to you the difficulties that beset negotiations for treaties arising out of that system. I wish to reinforce the position taken by Sir A. T. Galt in 1873, by reading you a few words from the private journal of Mr. Cobden, the Joint Plenipotentiary with Lord Cowley in the negotiation of a French Treaty some twenty years ago. He speaks thus of the result to him of the Foreign Office meddling in connection with the French Treaty:

"This convention was ready for signature, so far as the negotiation here was concerned, on the 18th September, and the delay which has taken place is attributable to our Foreign Office, to their habitual procrastination, the desire to meddle, and I fear also to the willingness on the part of some of the officials in that department, to find fault with my performance. My position is that of a poacher, and their feeling towards me is akin to that of a game-keeper towards a trespasser in search of game."

That is the view which, in the privacy and unconstrained circumstances in which a man writes in his private journal, he took of the situation. There is the true inwardness of Foreign Office management, as he conceived it. Now, there was the case of a gentleman, towards whom this jealousy was extended, though he was appointed at the express wish of the hon. the Prime Minister, and he was trained to the diplomatic service in England. If he was regarded as an interloper, how much more would that apply to a Canadian agent occupying a more qualified and subordinate position as our representative under the present circumstances? How much desire would there be to show that he was wrong, to show what difficulties there was in the way, to criticise, to delay, to create more difficulties, not on the part of the Government, but on the part of these subordinates, which in these matters are very powerful indeed? Once, again, the same eminent statesman spoke on the same subject:

"I am paraded at meetings of plenipotentiaries, with my hands tied, without the power of solving the merest question of detail. When I filled the post of commercial traveller at the age of twenty, I was entrusted with more discretionary power than is now shared by Lord Cowley and myself while filling the office of Her Majesty's Plenipotentiaries. The name might be more appropriately changed to that of multipotentiary, the points on which this delay is created by the Foreign Office are so trivial and unimportant as almost to defy comprehension."

Well, Sir, neither in the character of the transactions of the office, nor in that human nature which animates officials, is there I apprehend any very great change between the year 1860 and the year 1892. In the life of Mr. Cobden, from which I have taken these extracts, a few further words are used with reference to this policy, which may also fitly be brought under the attention of the House. I quote the substance only:

"From the proposed reference to the Foreign Office a most dangerous delay would take place. Lord Cowley did not feel that he could give way, and a copy of the Tariff was sent home. When the Tariff reached London, the Foreign Office hesitated to accept the figures without reference in detail to the Treasury, the Customs and the Board of Trade. The president of the Board of Trade was away on his yacht and nobody knew where to find him. Meanwhile, his Department advised that the Commissioners act should be adopted. The Board of Trade said one of its precedents is merely an opinion-giving Department and our advice is often disregarded, especially when it is right. It was disregarded now, and the Tariff was brought up in the most stubborn of all the circumlocution offices; the French Ministers were astonished at this unintelligible delay."

There, Sir, is, with reference to this treaty, a little practical exemplification of the difficulties which surround negotiations, even when the negotiation is by a British Plenipotentiary, and involving the interests of the United Kingdom. How much greater must these difficulties be when the negotiation is conducted in the manner and under the circumstances by which this treaty was conducted. English feeling is to-

Mr. BLAKE,

day just about the same as it was in 1865, and in that year the Foreign Office, through Mr. Hammond, now Lord Hammond, used these words:

"I am to request that you will state to Secretary Cardwell, that his Lordship concludes that, as regards foreign countries, the agents who are sent from the British North American Colonies will not approve of any independent character, or attempt to negotiate or conclude arrangements with the Governments of foreign countries, but will only, as proposed by the seventh resolution of the Council on Commercial Treaties, as regards negotiations with the United States, enclosed in Lord Monk's despatch of September 23rd, be authorized to confer with the British Minister in each foreign country, and to afford him information with respect to the interests of the British North American Provinces. A similar process has been adopted in various negotiations for commercial treaties, in which Her Majesty's Government have recently been engaged with foreign powers."

That was the idea in 1865. You are told to make no arrangement, you are not to conclude anything at all, but you may talk to the consular representative, you may give him information, and we will keep in our own hands the negotiation and the determination whether what you may deem reasonable, or what you may deem to be feasible, shall be adopted. Something of the same spirit appears to have pervaded the manner of the negotiations with respect to Sir Alexander Galt's appointment. The memorandum which was sent in by the hon. First Minister and two of his colleagues to the English Government upon the subject suggested:

"It is further submitted that the very large and rapidly augmenting commerce of Canada, and the increasing extent of her trade with foreign nations, is proving the absolute need of direct negotiation with them for the proper protection of her interests. In most of the treaties of commerce entered into by England, reference has only been had to their effect on the United Kingdom; and the colonies have been excluded from their operation, a fact which has been attended with most unfortunate results to Canada, as relates to France. This is, to a certain extent, unavoidable, in consequence of the control of all Customs having been granted to Canada; but a necessity has thus arisen for providing separate and distinct trade conventions with all foreign powers with whom Canada has distinct trade. With the differing views held by the Parliament of Canada on such subjects, from those of Her Majesty's Government, there is a manifest difficulty in asking the latter to become responsible for the representations required to be made, and foreign Governments find it difficult to understand our present system. The Canadian Government therefore submit that when occasion requires such negotiations to be undertaken, Her Majesty's Government should advise Her Majesty specially to accredit the representative of Canada to the foreign court, by association for the special object, with the resident Minister or other Imperial negotiator."

That was repudiating it in as far as this particular question is concerned by this statement, as to the position of the proposed officer:

"'He would therefore,' says Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, 'primarily communicate with this Department on the various subjects which might be entrusted to him, and while Her Majesty's Government would readily avail themselves of any information he might afford, and give the fullest consideration to any representation he might make on behalf of the Canadian Government, it would, of course, rest with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to determine in each case in what precise capacity his services might best be rendered in the event of any negotiations with a Foreign Court, on subjects affecting the interests of the Dominion. In some instances, for example, it might be desirable for him to remain in London and advise with Her Majesty's Government there, while in other cases he might, in accordance with the precedents which have been quoted, be more usefully engaged in assisting Her Majesty's Representatives abroad.'"

Once, again, you find a position which is inconsistent with the position taken in the memorandum, indicating the terms of the proposed appointment—a condition of entire subserviency. The Secretary of State for the Colonies is to decide as to the capacity in which the Canadian agent may be made most useful; he is to determine how the agent is to be used. Sometimes he will say to him go there and he goeth; sometimes he will say to him stay here and he stayeth; sometimes the Canadian agent will remain in London and give information to the Foreign Office; sometimes he will go abroad and advise with Her Majesty's representative. How was that answered? It was answered by declaring:

"The Committee would further respectfully submit, in elucidation of the views contained in the memorandum, that the Government of