

Then there was a gathering here—a dinner I think, to the then First Minister of Quebec, who is now a Judge in one of the districts of that Province—Mr. Mousseau—at which Sir Charles Tupper said all that could be said during a Session of Parliament when he was still a Minister and had not accepted the office of High Commissioner—he said all that could possibly be said, in view of his existing relations to the Government, to indicate that he was changing entirely his relations to the party. He used words something like what I have now used as to the expected change in his relations to the party and the new sphere which he was about to occupy. This was common talk; it was the subject of discussion in the Ministerial organs, and at about the close of the Session—I think it was after the close of the Session—it was announced that Sir Charles Tupper was about to hold the office of Minister of Railways concurrently with the office of High Commissioner. Why that change? I could understand all that the First Minister has said consistently with his carrying out the first plan—the plan to relieve the hon. gentleman from the worry and care of the position of Minister of Railways, and remove to a country whose climate was considered more salutary for him, and fill the post of High Commissioner, an honourable, I will not say retirement, but change in public service, suitable to the condition of his health, and a position in which he might discharge important public duties, though of a different character from those he had discharged up to that time. But why that change? If it had been arranged that he should occupy the position of High Commissioner and no longer occupy that of Minister of Railways, that would have been another arrangement different from what I conceive to be the highly objectionable arrangement made by which Sir Charles Tupper became High Commissioner and retained the post of Minister of Railways. The hon. First Minister has repeatedly observed that the statement in the Order in Council indicates a temporary character to that arrangement. One might have supposed that some indication would be given as to what that meant, and the hon. gentleman, in his earlier speech on this matter, said the Minister of Railways might expect to hold the office of Minister of Railways permanently, but that the office of High Commissioner was much more temporary; but he gave no indication as to the termination of the arrangement. On the contrary, on various occasions during the Session, on no less than two occasions, has the Minister of Finance alluded to the circumstance that diplomatic negotiations had been entered upon to some extent by the High Commissioner during his residence in England, which were to be renewed by him on his return to that country; and I observe by the papers brought down and laid on the Table, that even he himself speaks of arrangements for his return to England, and the preparation of the mansion, which I presume is to be acquired for the use of the High Commissioner on his return to England. So everything indicates an arrangement intended to be as continuous as the arrangements of offices which are all held during pleasure, and which are dependent on various political contingencies. The hon. First Minister says that during the absence of the Minister of Railways as High Commissioner, he discharged his duties well. He says he has done great things as diplomatist. Of course, we have to take that upon trust. We have asked for papers, but they have not been brought down. We are told negotiations are in progress in certain instances, and that we may expect to hear something about them. But we get no report from the High Commissioner on the subject of negotiations. We hear a great deal about his success. The appointment of Sir Alexander Galt was heralded with a great flourish of trumpets, and we were told he was going to do great things for us in the negotiations of commercial treaties. There was on that occasion much cry and little wool. On this occasion, also—I must confess it is for the first time—the cry is loud,

Mr. BLAKE.

the peans of triumph are sounded; we hear of the great triumphs of this diplomatist. But we have to take the First Minister's word for it. The hon. First Minister also says that Sir Charles Tupper has done great things as an immigration agent; but we do not know what those great things are. I have read the Report of the Minister of Agriculture. I am not now going to criticise what precisely he has done, what good fortune has attended his efforts, what success has attended them up to this time, or whether they are in the future. I do not conceive that any of these points are material. Lastly, it is said that he saved the cattle trade of Canada, that by a peculiar conjunction of the qualities of vigour, energy, and special knowledge, he did what probably no other man could have done—saved the cattle trade of Canada. Well, he was not sent there for that particular purpose. He did not conjecture, I presume, that there would be danger of the trade being suspended, or of some mistake being made on the part of the health officers who were in charge of this subject, in England, or of the hon. gentleman being able to point out, with the assistance of other veterinary surgeons, that they were wrong; nor do I understand any particular merit in these transactions, of which we have heard such great laudations. I cannot conceive that it was anything less than a plain and obvious duty of the High Commissioner, when he learned that there were three cargoes of Canadian cattle in danger, that he should go to the point in the country where the question was in issue, and there call for the assistance of such veterinary surgeons as might be necessary, and take the most vigorous steps. I agree that he did so, but I say that he did neither more nor less than his duty, and I presume that another gentleman in the position that Sir Alexander Galt himself, with his assistance of those veterinary surgeons whom he might have employed—would have been able to accomplish these results. Although the hon. gentleman has renewed the boast, that Providence always favours the Conservative party, still Providence does not grant the hon. gentleman power to absolutely foreknow its decrees; and the hon. gentleman will not pretend that he foreknew that these cargoes were to be landed, that they were to be condemned, and that it was required that a medical man should act as High Commissioner in order to save them. The hon. gentleman in this part of his argument resorted to a common fallacy—a common mode of making good a bad case. It is not because of this success or the non-success of the mission of Sir Charles Tupper, that his appointment is to be either praised or blamed. This motion is not based on any consideration of what his qualifications for the office of High Commissioner are. It is not based on any proposition that he is not fit to be High Commissioner; it is not based on any proposition that he is not fit to be Minister of Railways. It is based on the proposition that the same person should not be at the same time both Minister of Railways and High Commissioner to England. That is the proposition, and no matter how surpassing the qualifications of the man are, as he cannot be in the two places at once, he cannot discharge the divided and incompatible duties of the two offices at the same time. The hon. gentleman says the duties of the office of the Minister of Railways were wearing and worrying, and that the constant wear and worry affected the health of the incumbent. Nobody can doubt that during the anxious period between June and December, in connection with the Canadian Pacific Railway, there would have been a good deal of wear and tear. There was the question of the route through the Rocky Mountains; there was the serious question of the financial condition of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company; there was the question of the appeal of the Government for aid by granting their guarantee. There was the whole of that very important question to be considered, to be maturely and fully considered, as to the railway operation and as to the