

MR. R. L. BORDEN, (CARLETON, ONT.), THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, SUPPORTS COL. HUGHES' MOTION.

He said:—I desire to add only a few words to what the Prime Minister has said. I am very glad indeed to learn that the right hon. gentleman regards the relations of Canada with the empire as so entirely satisfactory, for it is not more than eighteen months ago when he himself announced in this House, that they were so absolutely unsatisfactory that we must attain to a greater share of the treaty making power. I do not know what my right hon. friend then meant; that is what he said, he may have meant something else and it is for himself to explain at the proper time. The right hon. gentleman certainly took very strong ground at that time with regard to the relation of this country to the rest of the empire by reason of the occurrences which led up to the Alaska boundary award. However that may be, if the right hon. gentleman entertained any doubt on that subject he has changed his mind. I agree with him that so far as the development of our relations with the rest of the empire are concerned, they can come around by a process of gradual evolution and as they might be required. That has been the history of our country for the last one hundred and fifty years; it has specially been the history of the advances we have made in our rights of self government from 1837 up to the present time. It has been step by step that we have gained the almost complete—I might say absolutely complete rights of government which we enjoy in Canada today. Another thing that might be added is that in respect to all these matters the initiative has been taken by the people of Canada through the public men of Canada. It is therefore a very worthy subject which the hon. member for Victoria (Mr. Sam. Hughes) has brought to the attention of the House. Even those of us who may not be disposed to absolutely agree in all his remarks, nor in the words of the resolution—indeed those of us who see some little difficulty in practically carrying out the absolute scope of his resolution according to the propositions suggested in it—must come to the conclusion that he has brought before the House a very interesting question, and one on which it is well worth while that the House should deliberate as it has done today. As to the financial features of the resolution, I for one have been of opinion for a number of years, that the material prosperity of the empire, and the ties which bind its different portions together, may be improved and strengthened by a system of mutual trade preferences within the empire. I have advocated a policy of that kind, so far as this country is concerned, both in this House and upon the public platform. I have seen no reason whatever to take back anything I have ever said on that question and I absolutely believe at the present time that that policy is a good one for this country and for the empire as a whole. I realize to the full, that while we are at perfect liberty to form our own conclusions in Canada as to the wisdom of that policy for the empire at large and for Canada especially, nevertheless it is within the right of all other portions of the empire to come to a conclusion for themselves. A movement was inaugurated by Mr. Chamberlain in the British Isles some two or three years ago; it is a movement that no one of us expected to see begun for the next fifteen or twenty years, although most of us believed that it would be inaugurated sooner or later. It has encountered a great deal of opposition, and what the outcome of it shall be at the next general election we do not know. In so far as it touches the material welfare of the British Isles it is a matter entirely for the people of the British Isles. Speaking for myself as a Canadian, I am heartily in sympathy with the movement and I believe that the people of Great Britain, the people of Canada, and the people of the dependencies of the British empire could come together upon a business basis and make an arrangement by which each would give to the other certain preferences and certain advantages in trade matters which they do not extend to other countries. If this could be accomplished, it does not seem to me there is room for doubt that it would result in great benefits not only to Canada but to all portions of the empire. I for one sincerely hope that many who are within sound of my voice, may live to see that great project become an accomplished fact.

COL. HUGHES IN REPLY.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES.—I am highly gratified with the result of the debate. We have obtained an expression of opinion from the First Minister, and also from the member for Richelieu (Mr. Bruneau) and also from the leader of the opposition as well as in the very comprehensive address of the member for Brantford (Mr. Cockshutt). I would like to compliment the hon. member (Mr. Bruneau) upon the very able speech he delivered, but I regret that my want of familiarity with the language in which he addressed the House has prevented me following his speech closely. However, I knew enough of it to learn that the first to uphold colonial representation in the imperial parliament was a French Canadian. I learned among other important and new facts contained in that speech, that the time is not far distant when others of that race in Canada will be found advocating the same imperial policy.

The able speech of the member for Brantford (Mr. Cockshutt) was most exhaustive and must bear great weight in moulding opinion upon this great subject.

I again thank the hon. member for Richelieu for his remarks, although, as far as I could glean them, they were not strongly favourable to the views I have presented here to-day. Nevertheless, they were kindly given, and they opened up the discussion of the whole sub-