

particular in the fiscal policy of Canada may be advocated, and advocated strongly in this House, on the ground of its being desirable with a view to our relations with the mother country. I do think that now, when we have to look to the support of England on most important questions—when we are looking to Great Britain to defend us on our inland waters—and nothing can be more important than that—and when we look, on the other hand, to her naval force being employed for the defence and the maintenance of our rights in the valuable fishing districts on the American coast—when we are calling on England, too, to assist us with the whole force and power of the empire in any possible quarrel that may grow out of her relations with the United States—I say that, under these circumstances, it is well worthy the consideration of this House whether we cannot adopt such a policy as will be more in accord with her views, as will meet more clearly the requirements of the great public of the British empire at large—and whether in meeting our own immediate difficulties, we may not, at the same time, have the opportunity of doing that which is at once both graceful and useful to our fellow-subjects in the mother land. (Hear, hear.)

After referring to the state of our trade with England, I am induced to say a few words with reference to our trade with another nation, the most important European country after England—the Empire of France. I think, addressing as I do an assembly composed of Englishmen and Frenchmen, it is unnecessary for me to apologise for saying a few words with reference to the importance of drawing more closely together the bonds of sympathy and interest with a country to which many of our fellow subjects are united by the ties of race and kindred. (Cheers.) It is not mere words of sympathy that ought to unite us, but those ties between friendly nations that benefit each materially. On reference to the statistics of trade we find that no country in Europe is, setting aside England, as large a dealer with us as France, or has a trade more advantageous to us. France, following up the free trade policy initiated by England, has opened to Canada all the ports of the empire and her colonies. Duties upon all the products of our country, except one, have been reduced year by year, till they have almost entirely disappeared. There has been one exception, which was of great moment to us, as it affected one of the largest interests of the country—the ship-building interest. In the case of ships, the policy of France was not immediately as free and liberal as it was in regard to every other article. I have now, however, the satisfaction to state, with the permission of the Consul-General of France in Canada, that the duty on Canadian ships going into French ports is now reduced from twenty francs per ton to two francs. (Cheers). I congratulate the ship-building and lumbering interest on this great reduction, which I regard as important not merely with reference to the particular advantage it will give us in selling ships in French ports, but as regards the greater probability of inducing merchants to place cargoes in those vessels to seek a market in