

putting their views and actions together to see how far it was possible to assimilate their several commercial systems, and to provide that the industry of one Province might have access to another without meeting any obstacle or burden whatever. (Hear, hear.) Again, they had reason to believe that the European trade of the Lower Provinces could be very considerably developed by an extension to them of the concessions which the French Government, with great liberality had made to Canada. To this country only of all British Provinces had been extended the privileges of commercial treaty between France and England under which our ships and lumber were admitted into France on the same footing as into England. The privilege had been given to Canada alone, because probably it was looked upon as the largest and most desirable colony with which to cultivate commercial relations, under it an extensive trade had been growing up with France, amounted yearly to about three quarters million dollars. The meeting might be instrumental in obtaining a similar favor for the maritime provinces, for whose productions France afforded a very considerable market. He then alluded to information collected with regard to our trade with the West Indies and South America in the event of its being necessary to seek new outlets for our commerce. In conclusion he thought he would be warranted for referring for a few moments to the position in which the House now met from that under which they had last separated for several months. Before the House arose we had been suffering in common with the neighbouring country from the vast civil war then raging, and which had not approached that period when any one would prophecy its termination. It had produced among other lamentable causes a very great and increasing degree of bitterness between that great country and ourselves. At that moment we were suffering not only from the direct effect of the United States, but also from a feeling of insecurity which sprung out of it, and out of irritation in the American mind against this country in consequence of the raids that had taken place on the frontier. Consequently we were suffering not only from the depression produced by the war, but from the fear of hostilities extending to ourselves also.—Every one would remember that from the time the Government announced its intention of sending a delegation to England the feeling amongst the public was one of apprehension. Defences and fortifications were the common talk from one end of the Province to the other.

Hon. Mr. HOLT—“For which you are responsible.”

Hon. Mr. GALT thought the responsibility might rest as fairly on other people as on the Government. The irritation in the United States had given rise to a hostile commercial

policy towards this country, we had been subject to all the annoyance of the passport system unknown on this continent before our trade with the United States had been subjected to greater (if possible) inconveniences by the American Government, requiring Consular certificates, which were both expensive and troublesome. They had given notice of the abrogation of the reciprocity treaty, and this hostile commercial feeling many feared would change to hostility, in a material sense. We were also suffering from a bad harvest, which was considerably below the average, and the country, from all these causes, was in a generally depressed state; politically a very serious check had been given to the policy to which the Government, with the sanction of a large majority in the House and country had endeavoured to carry out successfully, the policy of Confederation. They received a check to that policy to which they looked for an end to our sectional differences, by the result of the elections in New Brunswick. At the same time instead of having the support and encouragement of English public opinion, we had that opinion, to a great extent, against us. Those who advocated a change in the Colonial system, and a severance of the tie which bound the Colonies to the mother country, had got hold, to a great extent, of the public mind in England, and consequently had produced a feeling adverse to Colonies, and which this country had not been accustomed to see prevail in England. Those causes combined had unfortunately produced on the public mind a feeling of insecurity and discouragement, which was productive of the most unhappy results in every possible way. There was a conviction in the public mind that a change was coming, and every one feared it would be attended with great disaster, perhaps with bloodshed and war, at any rate the whole state of the country was one of expectancy on one the hand and depression and uncertainty on the other. The government did not propose to take credit to themselves for changes beyond their influence; it might well become him to congratulate the House, the committee and country on the fact that we now meet Parliament only a few months after the period of this uncertainty with almost an entire change in most respects. We had to congratulate our neighbours of the United States on the termination of their civil war, and upon their return to the habits of peace, with an infinitely less disturbance of their industry and trade than what could have been expected. The American war, from the beginning to the end, had certainly earned our surprise, being in one respect greater and one which gave us the greatest pleasure, being the restoration of peace to a country convulsed with a most gigantic and destructive war. As to ourselves equally with them had the fear of war been dissipated. We no longer stood in dread of armed bands crossing over the fron-

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