

I apprehend that the greatest possible respect should be shown to the high position which he occupies here, and to the fact also, that in this country, while he occupies that high position it is impossible for him to defend himself from attacks that may be made against him personally. The name of His Excellency the Governor General should be as seldom as possible brought into our discussions. If the matter is not a public one, the least we say about the acts of the gentleman who occupies the position of Governor General the better. If reference to his private acts can possibly be avoided in the public interest, it is my opinion that they should be avoided. I would not say that under all circumstances this House would be debarred from discussing such a question, but I would strongly urge the impropriety of discussing the private acts or utterances of His Excellency the Governor General. If possible it should be avoided, and if it is not possible to avoid it, then it should never be done without the greatest possible respect for His Excellency.

Mr. POPE. Is it possible for the Governor General to act in Canada in the dual capacity of Governor General and Lord Aberdeen?

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to add to any embarrassment, by discussing what it is quite clear suggests itself to your mind; the propriety of Lord Aberdeen speaking on this subject at all. That is not the purpose of my reference. I want to find out where the Government of the day stand in regard to the gentleman whom they are supposed to advise. I say it is an extraordinary thing—not in regard to Lord Aberdeen—it is an extraordinary thing that there has come to pass such a condition of affairs as this: that on a question which now, perhaps more than any other, divides the two political parties in Canada, the Governor General can make a speech on such a subject, give expression to his views, and yet have no Government and no Minister who will dare to say that he spoke by their authority. I believe myself that there is no precedent in the constitutional history of this country, at any rate during the Victorian era, for such an extraordinary course that a representative of the Queen is left high and dry, stranded absolutely, and in such a position that though he has given his views in the most positive manner, with all the weight that attaches to his position, to the electors and public of Canada, he has not now a Cabinet which will dare to say that he spoke their views on that occasion, and spoke after consideration with them: for I venture to suggest that the only occasion on which it might be possible that a gentleman in his position, representing our Sovereign, could speak, would be after he had a Cabinet or a Prime Minister ready to take full responsibility for all that he said

and to adopt those views as their own. Therefore, without dwelling on that subject, because it is apparent how unfair and how extraordinary it may be if we come to this in Canada, that there may come to us a Governor General, an august person, a man having a great influence from the very position he holds, who will throw himself into the political arena without any responsibility whatever, assisting either political party in the country, and yet in this position that sometimes there will be gentlemen in the Government who will accept responsibility for him, and at other times, when it is not convenient, they will decline to take any responsibility whatever. But I wish to point out that Lord Aberdeen, in speaking in Toronto, fell into the very same error as hon. gentlemen opposite; and because of his observations, and what followed them, I think there is great strength in the position of the Opposition that has not been altogether dwelt upon, as to the change that is coming over public opinion in England. Lord Aberdeen, at Toronto, felt that the policy held by the Canadian Opposition on the question of preferential trade was impracticable, and he instanced the unfortunate position in which were the sugar planters and the sugar trade in the West Indies, and the strong claims the planters had, and the strong appeals they were making to the mother country: but he pointed out how absolutely impossible it was, owing to the view that existed in England on the subject of free trade, to expect for them any relief: and the argument was, how much more hopeless it was for rich and abounding Canada to expect any success for preferential trade. Lord Aberdeen's observations were hardly made when information came from England giving the impression that the English Government does intend to come to the relief of the sugar planters of the West Indies. Since Lord Aberdeen was in England a great change has come over public opinion there, and therefore the opinions he expressed on that occasion exposed the weakness of the advice so quickly that it should not, I submit, under any circumstances weigh with the people of this country. The Prime Minister, however, lays too much stress upon and attaches too much importance to the views of Mr. Chamberlain. Mr. Chamberlain is a valuable ally and has seen more quickly perhaps into the subject and its future importance to the Empire than any other man in England. The Prime Minister himself avowed before the election that he was by no means dismayed. But the success of the movement depends on no one man. No movement of any importance could hope to succeed if for its success we looked to the opinions of one man or another, as individuals. We must look to the importance of the cause itself, and the right hon. gentleman, while he is running away from this subject and changing his