

nation (as they termed it) in connection with the canal tolls so far as transshipment at Ogdensburg was concerned. What we did state, and I repeat it here on my responsibility as a minister of the Crown, apart altogether from my own position, personally, and in defence of my own and colleagues honour, that we made no such promise. I have in my hand an extract from this despatch in which it is acknowledged, unintentionally perhaps, that the statements which we made on our return were literally true. But General Foster goes on to say that they, Mr. Blaine and himself, drew certain inferences. I, nor my colleagues are responsible for any inferences that Mr. Blaine or Mr. Foster may have drawn from any remarks we made on that occasion. We are not in the habit of expressing our views in such a manner as to lead to any misapprehension. Mr. Blaine paid me the compliment of saying: "You are an Englishman, and a frank man." I admitted it. I was neither ashamed that I was born in England nor of being frank and outspoken in any opinion that I had to express to him, or in any other matters, particularly, where the interests of my country were at stake. I added that I had been a resident of Canada for about sixty years and thought I might lay claim to being a tolerably good Canadian by this time. I was surprised at the position the hon. gentleman took in reference to the Sault Canal. There was one remark he made which was true, and with which I am fully in accord. He said that the Government of the day seemed to act with a good deal of bravado, or words to that effect, and to boast that they would be independent of the United States. I hope I may live long enough to see the time—though I am now pretty well advanced in years—when we will be under no obligations to the United States in trade relations, or in anything else. It is my desire to have, if possible, the most friendly relations with the United States and all the rest of the world. It is my desire to see free intercourse, as far as is consistent with the protection of our own interests; but I do not wish to be placed, nor do I believe that any patriotic Canadian wishes to be placed in the position—if I may use the term—of playing second fiddle to, or being dependent on, any foreign power in order to get to market with the products of our country. With respect to Mr. Blaine—

I speak respectfully of him, because our intercourse with him was such as to make me—while I differed materially and essentially from the position he took—admire the man for the frankness with which he gave expression to his views. I like to discuss questions with a man who speaks frankly and openly, and when he turned around upon us and put almost the same question that the hon. gentleman put in this House yesterday—"what do you want to go to the expense of constructing that canal for?" I simply replied, "to be independent of you, Mr. Blaine. You forget, perhaps, that your predecessor recommended to Congress the adoption of a policy of non-intercourse with this country. You may not bear in mind, in all probability, what the effect of non-intercourse would be. The only means we have of outlet at certain seasons of the year for the products of our great North-west, which are yearly swelling by millions of bushels, is by the railway. We are but five millions, and you are sixty-five millions, and we cannot afford to be at your mercy to shut any outlet we may have now, or hereafter, in order to cripple the trade of our country; and by that threat of yours of non-intercourse, you have put us to an expense of over \$3,000,000, but we have readily spent it. Being an independent people, we propose to govern ourselves, amicably with you if possible, but if not, we will do it alone." That is precisely our position. I must confess that I was surprised to hear the leader of a great party in this country give expression to a regret that we had spent money in the construction of that canal. It was a fatal mistake that was made by the late Sir Francis Hincks (then Mr. Hincks), when he did not seize the opportunity originally of having the canal built on the north shore of the Sault instead of allowing the Americans to build it. My hon. friend is old enough to remember the discussions which took place at that time, but unfortunately, there were politicians in that day who entertained views similar to those held by some hon. gentlemen at present, and they were willing to sacrifice their own country and let the Americans get control of the carrying trade and the means of outlet and inlet of our great North-west at the expense of their own country. I was a young man at the time, but I remember distinctly taking the same view then that I do now—that a fatal mistake had been made. The hon. mover of the