

and gave him power to accomplish this great work for Canada, seeing that though, having such an opportunity as a man does not have more than once in a lifetime to do a great work for his country and gain a reputation that would live through all time in the hearts and minds of Canadians, yet he, dazzled with this Cobden medal craze and desiring to add this brilliant decoration to the others he had obtained, turned his back upon himself and upon Canada. But, when face to face with the men he had betrayed, what did he say? He said:

I have only this to say with respect to this charge of these self-constituted diplomats—

Well, Sir, I have never called myself a diplomat, although the hon. gentleman was good enough to confer this distinction upon me. I hope I have not proved more unworthy of it than the right hon. gentleman himself proved in his great diplomatic feat with the United States when he unbosomed himself to a newspaper reporter and paraded a long series of matters that he intended to discuss with the American republic. And, by the way, I told the hon. gentleman at the time that that kind of diplomacy would not pay, that it would not do to attempt to accomplish a great diplomatic feat in that way; and I think that he has come to the conclusion that I was right. He has had evidence enough of it. He and his colleagues have been down to Washington, they have virtually been on their knees time and again to the Government and the Congress of the United States, and have come back utterly discomfited, so much so that the ire of even the great lover of the United States, the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright) has begun to rise, and we hear him saying at least that we must stand upon our dignity. I do not wish to be understood as saying that the right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) has no diplomatic talent, because I find that, after this good-natured sneer at your humble servant on the subject of diplomacy, he endeavoured to show that he was a practical diplomat, that he had, in fact, exhibited an amount of diplomacy that was really remarkable and most creditable. I can only say that I will give to the House the language of the right hon. gentleman on that occasion, which will show the kind of diplomacy he was prepared to use. He said:

Certainly, if I thought I could have obtained for my country, for the products of Canada, a preferential treatment in the markets of Great Britain, I would not only have been wanting in patriotism, but I would have been wanting in reason—I simply would have been an idiot—if I had failed to obtain such preference. (Laughter and applause.)

I have not used any language so strong as that which the right hon. gentleman has used towards himself. But I cannot contradict him, seeing that it is exactly what he did.

As I have said before, that is diplomacy with a vengeance. He went on to say that he had got the denunciation of the treaties, that there was nothing now in the way, that the coast was clear and the ground ready for discussion, and that the discussion could go on with the hope of obtaining some satisfactory solution of the problem. Where is he now? He has turned his back upon free trade and upon Cobdenism. Returning to his own country he gives it as the only excuse why he did not try to get preferential trade that he could not get it. One is reminded of the old quotation:

It was all very well to dissemble your love,  
But why did you kick me downstairs?

Though he dissembled his love for Miss Preferential Trade, there was surely no reason for kicking her downstairs as an evidence of his affection for her. But the right hon. gentleman is not altogether wanting in diplomatic talent, for he has really adopted the policy of his great French diplomatic prototype. We all know that the name of Talleyrand will be handed down to future generations as that of one of the most accomplished diplomats that ever lived, and the basis of Talleyrand's diplomacy was that ambassadors were sent abroad to lie for their country—that an ambassador could not be expected to tell the truth.

I observe by the conversation going on between the leader, the hon. gentleman opposite and his colleague (Sir Richard Cartwright) that I am being subjected to some criticism. I may possibly have attributed the saying to the wrong person, but we know that Talleyrand's maxim was that a lie was all right if the truth could be reached by means of it.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE (Sir Richard Cartwright). I was just wondering if the motto the hon. gentleman has quoted applied to High Commissioners as well as to Ambassadors.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. Now, having questioned the right of the hon. gentleman to the character of a diplomat, I had occasion to run my eye over the history of Talleyrand and find some remarkable likenesses in the right hon. gentleman, to him. No doubt, he will be deeply gratified to hear what I say, for he knows that I am comparing him with one of the most astute diplomats that the world has ever seen. Those who are interested in the matter will find in Appleton's encyclopedia of biography, under the title Talleyrand, the following:—

Here the question occurs, therefore, What were his convictions? Faith in what any single party might understand by principle Talleyrand had not; yet he possessed some rare quality of mind which, to him, supplied the place of such a faith, and which has been aptly designated a 'supernatural indifference'—an indifference not to his own fate, but to whatsoever event might befall the men or the institutions surrounding