

about reciprocity between this country and the United States. Well, Mr. Speaker, I think we should approach the subject of mutual preferential trade on a higher ground. I think we should approach it in the hope and belief that by closer commercial ties between the colonies and dependencies of the empire and the mother country herself, we shall strengthen the ties that bind together all portions of the empire; and, if we look at the question merely from a material point of view, surely my right hon. friends the Minister of Trade and Commerce and the Prime Minister must admit that our market is in the mother country and not in the United States. And surely they must know that in the markets of the mother country, the strongest and most formidable competitors we have are the people of the United States. Therefore, when my right hon. friend the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright) proposes mutual preferential trade within the empire solely as a means of procuring reciprocity with the United States, I for one entirely disagree with him.

Let me now come to another subject, which has been before the Joint High Commission, and as to which my right hon. friend has made some rather important declarations, not only in this House, but on more than one occasion during recess. My right hon. friend says that he stands for greater power to negotiate treaties on behalf of Canada. If I understand him rightly, he wants Canada to have the absolute right to negotiate her own treaties with all countries, and that that right should in no respect be overborne or done away with by any imperial influence. Well, my right hon. friend has not always acted in that spirit because, when I took the ground during last session, and I think in the session before, that this government, in disallowing certain legislation of the province of British Columbia, was going beyond what the public interests demanded, he took the ground that the action of the government was governed entirely by imperial interests. I have never objected to imperial interests being considered, but I pointed out on that occasion that the very legislation which had been disallowed in the province of British Columbia had been allowed by the imperial government itself in other dependencies of the empire. I will stand for any greater powers which may be required for the fuller development of our national life. My right hon. friend looks upon the freedom of Canada as a gift. I consider it a birthright. He says that he gave a preference to the mother country because of the gift to us by the mother country of our splendid freedom. I submit, Mr. Speaker, that our freedom is not a gift but a birthright, and I consider further that the rights we have acquired with regard to the negotiating of treaties are not a gift but our own birthright, which comes to us gradually with

the development of the country. Does my right hon. friend not know that in 1871, Sir John Macdonald was a commissioner to negotiate a treaty with Washington? Does he not know that since 1880 Canada has not been included in any treaty without her consent? That was due to the initiative of Sir Alexander Galt. Does he not know that Sir Alexander Galt and Sir Charles Tupper negotiated since then treaties with France and Spain? Does he forget that Sir Charles Tupper went as Canadian commissioner to Washington in 1888, and that in the Joint High Commission itself, out of the five men who represented Canada, four were Canadians? My right hon. friend is trying to draw a red herring across the trail of the government in this regard.

The results of the Alaskan boundary commission—which I shall not discuss to-night, because the papers are not before the House—have been, in some respects at least, unfortunate for this country and have given rise to great dissatisfaction. My right hon. friend, either in an ebullition of anger or for the purpose of diverting the attention of the country from the question at issue, said we should have greater treaty making powers.

Now, I want to point out to my right hon. friend that the whole question of the Alaskan boundary was confided to Canada for the purpose of negotiating with the United States. A commission was appointed in which there were four Canadians and one British commissioner, Lord Herschell; and to that commission were entrusted the most full and absolute powers with regard to the negotiations concerning the Alaskan boundary. Does my right hon. friend say that he objected to the presence of Lord Herschell on that commission, or that Lord Herschell in any way hampered or disagreed with the Canadian commissioners in the negotiations that went on? I do not think that he will say that, and I will tell him why. When a commission had to be appointed under the treaty with regard to the Alaskan boundary, it was my right hon. friend and his government who asked that one British commissioner at least should be appointed, Lord Alverstone, the chief justice of Great Britain. Surely, if one British commissioner was demanded by this government in a commission of three, my right hon. friend cannot complain of the presence of Lord Herschell in the commission in Washington. Last year the right hon. gentleman Rt. Hon. Mr. Wilfrid Laurier (was inclined to blame me because I said that I thought it would be well if this government had suggested to the imperial government that three Canadian commissioners should be appointed. He construed that into a charge against Lord Alverstone. I denied that my suggestion involved any such charge, and I deny it now. It is no insult to Lord Alverstone to say that I