

May 5, 1874

matter. He had no doubt hon. gentlemen opposite were shocked and grieved and disappointed at the language used. (*Hear, hear.*)

At the same time, while he said all this, there was a great deal to be said in favour of the gentleman who was appointed. He was a Canadian, his father occupied a position of respectability and prominence in the country, and he had himself attained a considerable position in the literature of England. It was very natural that the Government of this country should look with a favourable eye upon him, and try to utilize him. He hoped, however, that no negotiations with the Imperial Government, in which the Government hoped to be successful, would be placed in his hands; and, indeed, his own opinion was that the appointment should have been as immigration agent and agent for general matters alone, without any connection whatever with political matters of high importance.

The appointment of colonial agents had been found to work detrimentally against some of the Australian colonies, and he was afraid the same thing would result in regard to Canada. If they had no colonial agent to represent them they could go direct to the Colonial Office, and he had himself found that the different Colonial Ministers were ready to give every attention to representations made on behalf of the Dominion. An agent would be an obstruction in this respect, because everything would have to pass through his hands, and he would have neither power nor influence enough to press it upon the Ministers' attention.

Again, unless he got an enormous salary he would be unable to maintain the social position which would enable him to introduce Canadians who might go to England into the desirable circles. Even if we did give him such a salary he would not be recognized by the Corps Diplomatique. He (Right Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald) was glad that the agency was confined to immigration and such special matters as would be entrusted to Mr. Jenkins by special instructions from the Government.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said the right hon. gentleman would not expect him either to defend or blame Mr. Jenkins for the speech referred to. It was made entire upon his own responsibility as a member of the British House of Commons, and in no way connected with his capacity as Agent General for Canada. He thought, however, that the right hon. gentleman had characterized rather strongly the pungent description Mr. Jenkins had given of his political opponents.

Mr. Jenkins was selected as Agent General for Canada in the first instance because he was a Canadian and living in England, and because he had an intimate knowledge of Canada and everything relating to it and especially of immigration matters. It would be remembered that he was Secretary of the National Emigration League, and that he was the author of several productions of note upon emigration both to South and North America and the Australian colonies. It would also be known to those who were acquainted with political society in England that he possessed in a great degree the confidence of the great body of the labouring classes and of trade unions. He was practically their legal agent in London; and thus, having an intimate connection with the great

body of people from whom our emigrants were drawn, he was a highly desirable man to have in that position.

It was for these reasons, and because they believed him to be a man of unimpeachable character and great activity of disposition, that the Government wanted to have him appointed resident agent and Chief Emigration Agent in England; and although he was not vested with ambassadorial powers, still it was well to have a man of established character and status in society to whom might be entrusted from time to time even political missions to the Imperial Government.

The Government did not deem it advisable, in commencing a somewhat radical change in the administration of emigration affairs in England, to give plenary powers to anyone; but they had no reason to doubt that Mr. Jenkins would execute faithfully and well any mission entrusted to him as their agent, and they believed that the scheme was one which would result advantageously to the country.

He did not agree with the right hon. gentleman opposite that the plan of appointing resident Colonial agents had been a failure with regard to the Australian Colonies; and it was well known that a member of Mr. Gladstone's Cabinet had resigned his seat in order to accept one of these positions. He did not think there was any reason to doubt that the plan the Government had adopted would be eminently satisfactory. He did not think that the courtesy of the Colonial Minister would cease or be at all decreased because the Canadian Government had appointed an agent. (*Hear, hear.*) It was a complaint that reached the Government from all quarters, that if residents of the United States went to London, they could, through the American ambassador, get introductions anywhere, while Canadians were looked upon as British subjects, and not entitled to special privileges. That was to some extent correct, but Canadians were as much strangers in London as the United States people, and the Government thought it was necessary to have such an agent as Mr. Jenkins to introduce them, and such an office as his for their accommodation. He could do all this, in his opinion, without in any way indicating to the Imperial Government any desire to transact our business independently of them.

He did not anticipate that any evil results would follow the appointment of Mr. Jenkins, but if there was anything in the appointment, or in the policy which dictated it, which upon experience, appeared to work injuriously, there was nothing to bind the Government to persist in it. He, however, hoped that the high position attained by Mr. Jenkins in England as an author, as a speaker, and as a politician would serve to bring the Dominion more into notice and further advance its interests in the mother land. (*Cheers.*)

Mr. WRIGHT (Pontiac) said he was very glad to hear of Mr. Jenkins' appointment. He knew him at McGill College, where he was a very promising and successful student. He contended that anything Mr. Jenkins might have said at Dundee was said in his capacity as a member of the British Legislature, and as an adherent of a political party there, but it had nothing to do with his duties as a representative of Canada, and would in no way injure his