

If they found that too much Protection was going to be given, let them say so, and especially prove it ; but it was no argument at all to come forward and say that the majority of the House was bound to sustain anything the Government might propose. He did not know whether these hon. gentlemen, when they spoke so, judged their opponents by what they felt sure they would be were they in the place of the latter, or by what they had been when before in their place ; but there was a thing he knew, and the hon. members of the left knew it also ; it was an easy and agreeable task for the members of the right to help the present Government to make the application of the National Policy, since they had advocated it before, without having the certainty that they would be in a position themselves to bestow it on the country, and since, especially, they had tried before to force it upon the late Ministers, and would have gladly given them the merit of it, should the latter have been wise enough to adopt such a policy. And if he was allowed to speak of himself, in order to give another proof of the injustice of the judgment passed by the hon. gentlemen on the supporters of the present Government, he would say that, far from being actuated by partisanship to sustain that policy, he had advocated it before even the Liberal party undertook to make it a plank of its platform. When that transformed party hoisted up in the Province of Quebec the banner of Protection in 1871, without endorsing all its principles, he looked upon it as a National standard which was destined to lead this Canada of ours into the path of union, greatness, prosperity and happiness. He still thought so ; and it was the reason why he cordially supported the present Government, who were to-day the bearers of that standard. The Liberals had let it fall into the dust of the political battlefield. The Conservatives had taken it up at the very moment, when the country, in distress, needed it the most to be resumed, and now they displayed its glorious colours to the eyes of the world, to let the world know that in this vast Dominion there was a free people, a patriotic people, equal to the task of taking due care of its own affairs. He thought it his duty to rally around such

standard-bearers. It might be objected here as it had been elsewhere : Why did not the leaders of the Conservative party adopt that policy before ? His answer was, that they had adopted it before. Did they not give the highly protecting tariff of 1858 and 1859 ? In many respects it was the same as the one now proposed. It was kept in force until 1866, when, in order to effectuate the grand scheme of Confederation, and considering that the Maritime Provinces had not been educated up to the same political economical principles, and that their opinions could not be changed in a day, it was lowered from 20 and 25 to 15 per cent. on the average. It was true that he had been one of those who thought that it would have been better not to wait too long before raising it again, in view of the fact that, the prices of raw materials, and the salaries of workmen being on a continuous decline in Great Britain and the United States, our various industries were meeting with a competition becoming every day more and more difficult to face. But it was only just to state, also, that this necessity was much less felt during the administration of the Conservative party, from the establishment of Confederation till the resignation of the Macdonald Government, in 1873, than under the following Government. They all knew that the great depression in every branch of industry and business was posterior to the resignation of the Conservative Government and the accession of the Liberals to power. He was touching here the very point of political economy where his hon. friends of the left were most in error. They spoke as though there were, in fiscal politics, invariable principles or rules applicable indiscriminately to all countries and all circumstances. Nothing was more erroneous than such an assumption. What was good for one country might not be so good for another. What was advantageous to-day might become disadvantageous to-morrow. There was nothing absolute in that ; all was relative ; all depended upon the circumstances, not only in which a given country was placed, but even upon those in which others, with which it had commercial relations, might be, or become, placed. An example, well known to every attentive observer of events, would