

enough to inquire why we thought the Canadian Government deserved some reasonable measure of the confidence of the people. Well, Sir, I am happy to tell the hon. gentleman that it seems to me there are good and sufficient reasons why the present Government should ask and receive the confidence of the majority of this House and the confidence of the majority of the people. The hon. gentleman could not deny, he did not dare to deny, that to-day the credit of Canada stands at the highest point which the credit of the Dominion has ever reached. The hon. gentleman could not deny, although he tried to minimize the force of my hon. friend's statement, that the trade of Canada has been extending by leaps and bounds for the last eighteen months. In olden times does not the House remember with what energy and emphasis my hon. friend and those behind him insisted on the fact that the best, the most startling and astonishing proof of the great success of the National Policy was that in one year, I believe, the exports exceeded the imports by something like \$1,000,000 or thereabouts. In our first twelve months the exports exceeded the imports by \$17,000,000; for the next six months the exports exceeded the imports by \$20,000,000. How those hon. gentlemen would have glorified themselves had they had such a record to show, and yet how easily and carelessly almost, the ex-Finance Minister passed it over to-day. Sir, it is a matter which I think warrants the Government receiving the confidence of the House and the country that, as I have said and as my right hon. friend has said, never since the day of confederation has Canada, as a country, been treated with anything like the same consideration on the part of England and other countries as Canada receives to-day; and I say with confidence that we owe that consideration to a very large extent indeed to the policy of this Government, which the hon. gentleman tells us has done nothing to secure it. It is a matter of no trifling moment, as he knows right well, that treaties with important countries like Germany were denounced because they conflicted with the policy of Canada and because the Canadian Government requested the British Government to do so. And as a trifling proof that the confidence of the people has not weakened in the right hon. gentleman and his colleagues, must I recall to the hon. gentleman's memory the long roll of Liberal victories that have marked the course of the Liberal party since it came into power? Does the hon. gentleman consider it of no consequence that whereas we met Parliament eighteen months ago with a majority of 22—I think that was what the hon. baronet claimed when members were selected for the various committees—now I think we can count 47 good men and true to support the Government. Does the hon. gentleman consider it a matter of no moment that

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT.

Prince Edward Island has declared itself Liberal by a most decisive majority? And what does the hon. gentleman say in regard to Nova Scotia?

An hon. MEMBER. Only shreds and patches.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. And the hon. gentleman will also remember that five gentlemen were introduced by my right hon. friend and his colleagues the other day, and I think not one new member was introduced by the Opposition.

An hon. MEMBER. Beware of the Ides of March.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. We will take care how to cross that river when we come to it. The plain fact is this, to my mind, that we have had almost too much good fortune. I am not desirous of seeing the Opposition weaker. I have learned the truth of the advice given by an old and eminent English statesman that the best guarantee of good government is to have on the other side of the House an active, well organized and unscrupulous Opposition. Two of those requisites are there already, and I hope hon. gentlemen may yet secure the third. I will not for one moment deny, I do not desire to deny that the task of the Government of Canada is in many respects a delicate and difficult one. We are bound on the one hand to take advantage of our opportunities and to make the most of them for the good of the country; we are bound on the other hand—and we have had our lesson during the eighteen years we spent in the wilderness—we are bound on the other hand, to avoid discounting the future as was done so freely during that period. Sir, it is a matter of common notoriety that every day, almost every hour, any quantity of projects, many of them projects of merit, are submitted for the consideration of the Government. Now, with respect to these I have to say frankly, that it is not enough to secure the co-operation and aid of the Government, that the project should be good per se. We hold that more than that must be shown. It must be absolutely necessary in the general interests, and it must be one which promises reasonably speedy results.

It is no fault of ours that we came into power to find this country saddled with a very heavy debt; it is no fault of ours that we find this country saddled with a very heavy expenditure; that we find it saddled with a very heavy taxation, although we have tried to reduce it to a reasonable extent. Nor is it any fault of ours that we have heavy direct engagements to meet, which were left behind by the hon. gentlemen opposite. Here I may take the liberty to criticise one of the illustrations given by the hon. gentleman (Mr. Foster). He was good enough to tell us that all the