

his faithful in Montreal, seeing, no doubt, with regret, that instead of increasing, their number was diminishing at every election. On that occasion the hon. leader of the Opposition expounded views which resembled a great deal those of the most extreme free traders; besides, it was not the first time in his life; but Mr. Mercier, who had a better knowledge of the popular sentiment in the Province, who knew that the views advocated by the hon. leader of the Opposition were quite unpopular; that they were repudiated not only by the Conservatives, but even by almost every Liberal, Mr. Mercier felt alarmed at the opinions expressed by the hon. leader of the Opposition, and he endeavored to limit their bearing to a certain extent. Here are the words which he used under those circumstances:

"When we left power the receipts of the country were not as high as they are to-day; but the Conservatives failed to keep themselves within reasonable limits and they have raised the tariff in an exaggerated manner. But we must be impartial; this increase, large as it was at the outset, did not produce a bad result; it has put an end to deficits, if we are to believe Sir Leonard Tilley, and it has induced capitalists to invest large sums in the manufactures."

Mr. BLAKE. Of cotton.

M. TASSÉ. The hon. leader of the Opposition says that large sums have been invested in the manufacture of cotton. He is perfectly right. But it is equally true that millions have been invested in other industries. Under the Liberal régime there was no large amounts invested in cotton, and although people were then in favor of a cheap country to live in, cotton goods were not sold as cheap as they are to-day, neither were they manufactured in such large quantities as they are to-day. When the hon. leader of the Opposition was denouncing the policy of the Government with respect to duties imposed on cotton, he said: If you put a duty on cotton, cotton goods will be sold at an extravagant price; you will make the fortune of a few speculators, of a certain number of capitalists, to the detriment of consumers. He cannot deny that. To this pretension we have answered that we were not afraid of the profits which might be realised by the manufacturers; that it was not to be expected that they would invest their capital with the sole view of pleasing the public, and that even if the prices of their manufactured goods were to be higher for a certain time, domestic competition would not be long in bringing them down to a normal rate. Well, what are the facts to-day? Facts have so well given the lie to the predictions of our friends opposite that they are now reduced to deplore the losses which the cotton manufacturers have suffered of late years. Facts have so well belied the predictions of the hon. leader of the Opposition on this important question of cotton manufacturing, which has inspired him many an eloquent speech, that instead of blaming the Government to-day he should be one of the first to commend their conduct. The hon. leader of the Opposition, who did me the honor of interrupting me, will admit that there is at Montreal a newspaper, which is supposed to be the organ of the Liberal party in the Province of Quebec, and which is called *La Patrie*. That journal is to-day edited by Mr. Louis Honoré Fréchette, who for several years held a seat in this House as the representative of the beautiful county of Levis. At the last elections Mr. Fréchette was a candidate in the county of Levis; I think it was for the fourth or fifth time. His opponents, it seems, had circulated the rumor that if he was elected, he, Mr. Fréchette, one of the supporters of Mr. Blake, would make it his duty to wage war in this House against the National Policy, which was very natural, I admit, for the National Policy is the great line of demarcation between the Liberal and Conservative parties. Well, Mr. Fréchette, knowing that he could not be elected in the county of Levis if he hoisted the flag of free trade, declared, in a letter, that if he was elected, neither he nor his chief, the hon. Mr. Blake, would work against the National Policy. Perhaps the hon. leader of the Opposition

has read that letter, which was published in the *Chronicle* of the 10th of June, 1882, for the purpose of removing the fears of the electors. The letter said:

"I hear that there is some uncertainty prevailing somewhere regarding my views, as a candidate for the county of Levis, regarding what is generally termed the National Policy.

"I wish to state here what I stated yesterday before the public of Levis, St. Joseph and St. Romuald, that my platform is exactly that of my leader, Mr. Blake, on that question as well as on the others.

"I never believed in the so-called National Policy; I think it has done more harm than good to the country; but I most positively declare that my intention, if elected, as well as the intention of the Liberal party, is not to interfere with that policy, which has been established by the popular will, as a change in the system would probably create a disturbance in our industries and trade, which must be avoided at all hazards. I consider the National Policy as necessary, now that it is inaugurated—and for this the Conservatives alone are responsible—a necessary evil, which could be cured only by a remedy worse than the disease."

This language is far different from that of the member for South Huron, who exclaimed in this House: This tariff cannot stand. Well, I do not think that the hon. member for Durham, who must have read that letter,—

Mr. BLAKE. I have not read it.

Mr. TASSÉ. I know the hon. leader of the Opposition to be a great reader of newspapers, of everything that bears the liberal stamp; I know he takes a great interest in the French and English literature of his party. Did he ever protest?

Mr. BLAKE. I have never read it.

Mr. TASSÉ. The hon. leader of the Opposition says that he has not read it. Well, now that I have read it to him, does he, or does he not, approve it.

Mr. BLAKE. I approve it in part, and I disapprove it in part.

Mr. TASSÉ. Very flattering for Mr. Fréchette, the editor of *La Patrie*, organ of the Liberal party in the Province of Quebec. This disavowal from his chief is one of the finest compliments that was ever paid to a Liberal journalist, to my knowledge, for a long time back. Until now we have noticed what protection had done for Canada, but we have never asked ourselves what we should be without it. I venture to state that, without this tariff, the Canadian market would still continue to be, what it has been under the Mackenzie régime, a slaughter market for American over-production. Without protection we would see to-day 60,000 workmen, and more, without work, without bread, and most of them emigrating in a body, as they did under the old Administration. And the fact that since the 1st of January last only 100,000 operatives have resumed work in the American manufactures, shows what would have become of our market had we not a tariff to protect us against the production of the United States. We would be at the mercy of the American manufacturers, as we were under the Mackenzie Administration. Without protection we would still be the vassals, the tributaries, of the great American Republic. The interprovincial trade, which has made such rapid progress for the last few years, would not have taken the proportions which it has taken, which it is still taking, and which it shall continue to take as long as we are protected. Without protection British Columbia, which last year imported over \$624,000 worth of goods from the Eastern Provinces, would not certainly have imported such a large amount from its sister Provinces. Because, in 1874, when the Liberal party came into power, the total amount of the value of goods shipped from the Eastern Provinces to British Columbia was only \$66,104. Without protection, coal mining and the consumption of coal, which has nearly doubled, owing to the industrial establishments in the country, would certainly not have reached such great proportions. Without protection the Canadian workmen would certainly not have recovered the easy circumstances in