

ly insinuated that Mr. Foster was plotting for the premiership himself. All through the speech the ex-premier referred to the seven ministers who resigned as "traitors," thus confirming the expression "Nest of traitors", which he used at the time.

Sir Mackenzie related an incident, again on the authority of Mr. Costigan, which took place in Mr. Foster's house on New Year's day when Mr. Costigan called to pay his respects and was approached by Mr. Foster to join the conspiracy. Mr. Foster said that Sir Charles Tupper was in a position to secure in the new cabinet, Sir Alex. Lacoste, Chief Justice of Quebec, and Sir Adolphe Chapleau, who was then the only influential Conservative leader in the Province of Quebec. On the reconstruction of the cabinet with Bowell thrown out and Sir Charles Tupper as Premier the Foster programme was to go to the country. Mr. Foster as acting leader of the House of Commons had solemnly pledged the established government and parliament to the holding of another session for the introduction of a Remedial Bill. When asked how he would get out of this pledge his answer was that a new Premier would be at liberty to declare that a remedial bill should be introduced immediately after the election on the reassembling of the new Parliament. This evidence places Mr. Foster in a very bad position. The following extract from Sir Mackenzie's speech is interesting as a record of some dramatic moments:—

Upon that same New Year's Day I called at Mr. Foster's house to pay the accustomed New Year's greeting, and on comparing notes with Mr. Costigan am led to the conclusion that we were in the house at the same time, I in the drawing room paying my respects to the ladies and Costigan in the library closeted with the conspirator receiving information and being solicited to join in the coup for my overthrow, yet these gentlemen declared no 'nest of traitors' existed, an that they 'remained loyal' until they say, I broke faith with them.

The first intimation I had of the plot was a message received from the Hon. John F. Wood, then Controller of Customs and a

member of the cabinet, who told me that 'something was transpiring which would require my serious consideration' or words to that effect and that I must be prepared for it, but declined any further information, voluntarily declaring that no matter what occurred he would prove my friend and remain true to me. The manner in which he proved his allegiance was by joining the other six and resigning with them. He repeatedly afterwards sent a friend of his, who by the by is a Liberal, asking an interview with me to enable him to explain, personally to myself, why he had taken the course he did. My reply was 'no, I will not meet him. No explanation he can make can justify his treachery.' I never met him for that purpose and consequently no explanation was ever made. It may and no doubt will be said, it is all very well to make those statements about a former colleague who is dead, and cannot reply. I would not have referred to this branch of the subject were it not that, fortunately, the gentleman who brought the message direct to me, and conveyed my replies, is still living, and should it be necessary can be produced to confirm every word I have uttered upon this subject. It was not long after this that I learned from a deputation which waited upon me consisting of the Hon. John Haggart and the Hon. Dr. Montagne, with a request that I should resign and make way for Sir Charles Tupper. I need scarcely say this was a surprise. I listened to them and they departed as wise as when they entered the room as to my intentions or the course I might, in the future, take. Receiving no information from me as to what I intended to do, the caballing continued, the rendezvous being the office of the Hon. Geo. E. Foster, then Finance Minister.

When the conspiracy was at its height, one of my colleagues, Mr. John Costigan, accidentally dropped into the office of the Minister of Justice, and the conversation at once turned upon the difficulties, and dissensions in the party, which had occurred, when Mr. Dickey, then Minister of Justice, expressed the belief that if Sir Charles Tupper and Sir Mackenzie could meet and have a conference he believed