

tions to the leader of the Government on his accession to office. He has been in opposition for the past 18 years. He has been for a great many years leading the opposition, and to-day he has received the merits of a long service to the country in the cold shades of opposition by being placed at the head of the country. I feel quite sure from his character and ability that he will do justice to the position he occupies, that he will be judged by the merits of the policy that he advocates and the faithfulness with which he carries out the pledges he made to the country on attaining office. In advancing towards the principles of free trade I can assure him, so far as any support I am able to give, it will be given most heartily and cordially. I have long felt that the abolition of protection is an absolute necessity for the safety, welfare and prosperity of the country. I have also felt that there is no medium between free trade and protection, and that it is impossible to run with the hare and hunt with the hound, and for that reason I have nailed my colours to the mast for free trade and will do my best to continue to advocate those principles and point out those ideas in order that they may as rapidly as possible be reached. For that reason it has been a source of gratification to me that the present government has taken its place at the head of affairs as opponents of protection. I think myself it is generally conceded that they have presented to the country a strong government. It cannot be denied by the present government or by the country generally but that the people have shown themselves to be Liberal-Conservatives. The voting that has taken place I think shows that pretty clearly. When confederation was first established in 1867 the party was formed into a Liberal-Conservative party. Sir John Macdonald in order to bring about confederation united the two political parties that were at that time existing and formed what is called a Liberal-Conservative party. With the exception of five years during which the Liberal party were in power that Liberal-Conservative party has been in power until the present moment and it is possible that it would have continued in power if the past government had not gradually abandoned the liberal principles of their party and adopted ultra conservative principles. Their legislation was alto-

gether conducive towards class interests as against the interests of the people, and they have gradually drifted further and further back, becoming more and more conservative in the hands of what is called the monopolies of the country rather than in the hands of the people. They fell a victim to the principles or want of principles in protection which are inseparable from the purchase and sale of legislation, a commercial system that will undermine the best regulated political family in the world. For that reason the country has decided against them; but, as I said before, there are clear indications that while the Liberal government is now in power that Conservative element which has always been manifested in the government of the country is still present in the minds of the people, and I think in our worthy leader here, from the utterances he has put forth, we have assurance that this conservative principle will be preserved, so far as he is concerned. What makes me say that the country is to a large extent still Liberal-Conservative in their views is the fact that the plurality of votes in the last election, according to a calculation I read, were 413,000 for the Conservative party, and 397,000 for the Liberal party, and 80,000 of an independent vote. Now, while the Conservative party cannot claim any comfort from that vote presented to the people in that way, because the 80,000 of the independent, uninfluenced by the ties of either party, were opposed to the policy of the late Conservative government. But while they were opposed to it in that way they took an independent position in order that they might watch from an independent standpoint the proceedings which would take place when the new government took the reins of office. For that reason I felt myself that it is possible that it will cause the present government to toe the mark more closely in the conduct of affairs, and also to be more particular than it might otherwise have been, if the majority had been overwhelming on their side, in carrying out the pledges and principles on which it is generally understood they have attained to power. Now, in the past election and for some time, I have ranked myself among the Patrons of Industry. In the stand I took in the last election I allied myself with the Patrons of Industry, which is an organization of the farming community. And while I do not pretend to be in accord with all the