

pose to touch on any of the different industries, because I deprecate any discussion at this time when we are so near the day when the tariff will be brought down. It might be unfortunate to make statements that might have to be retracted or amended. It was to be regretted that the motion of the hon. member for York (Mr. Foster) covered so much ground which subsequently required to be travelled over by other hon. members in order to show it was necessary that the present Franchise Act should be set aside.

I am not one of those who has the slightest fear as to the Government satisfying the great mass of the manufacturers of the country. Prior to the time of the National Policy we had a great many industries in Canada. No country exhibiting at the Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia in 1876 made a better display of implements and the products of her industries than did Canada at that time; and that display was made under a revenue tariff and under the administration of Hon. Mr. Mackenzie several years before any National Policy was introduced here. It may be said that the National Policy was the beginning of the industries of Canada. This I deny, because, as I have already stated, our industries were previously in a flourishing condition, barring a slight depression, which was felt all over the continent, but which was nothing like the depression that has existed here during the last three or four years. We have had a National Policy for eighteen years. Has the National Policy kept away depression? No, we have had four periods of depression in eighteen years, each more severe than any which prevailed before the inauguration of the National Policy. I say to-night, in the presence of this House, that I do not believe the manufacturers of Canada have any reason to fear any action of the Liberal Government. Surely we have hon. gentlemen in the Government to-day who are equal to hon. gentlemen who have been members of any past Government. Surely we have men who have had experience, men who possess the confidence of the country, and whom the country, in the face of a Dominion Franchise Act which was created for the express purpose of keeping hon. gentlemen opposite in power, returned to office. The country will be prepared to sustain these men in their honest desire to preserve the rights of Canada and carry out the honest desires and wishes of our people, and I believe the Budget when brought down, combined with all other features of a true National Policy which hon. gentlemen are seeking to carry out, will redound to the prosperity, to the greatness and to the future growth of this country.

I desire to reply to one or two suggestions made by the hon. member for East Durham (Mr. Craig). He spoke of provincial governments using the new Franchise Act for the

Mr. FROST.

purpose of advancing party purposes. I should like to ask, what has the provincial government to do with the present lists in the various municipalities? The provincial government has nothing to do with compiling them. Every list issued in Ontario is made up from the assessment rolls of the various municipalities, prepared by men who are connected with both parties. Again, we have a very easy system of getting a revision, by a court of revision, and as the hon. member for West Middlesex (Mr. Calvert) has already stated, we seldom find an appeal taken to the county judge. Every man who wants to vote has the privilege of getting his name on the list. In what way a provincial government could utilize the list for party purposes is beyond my comprehension. I believe, and I hold it to be the opinion of this House, that the only remedy for the present Franchise Act, which is costly, cumbersome and unfair, and which does not give a free expression of the public mind, is to return to a simple system, which we have in our various provincial lists. That is what the people ask for; and that is the pledge which the Liberal party gave the country. That pledge will have to be redeemed, as all other pledges will have to be redeemed, and they will be redeemed one by one. What is the pledge the Liberal party made to the country? It was as follows:—

That the Franchise Act since its introduction has cost the Dominion Treasury over a million of dollars, besides entailing a heavy expenditure to both political parties;

That each revision involves an additional expenditure of a further quarter of a million;

That this expenditure has prevented an annual revision, as originally intended, in the absence of which young voters entitled to the franchise have, in numerous instances, been prevented from exercising their natural rights;

That it has failed to secure uniformity, which was the principal reason assigned for its introduction;

That it has produced gross abuses by partisan revising barristers appointed by the Government of the day;

That its provisions are less liberal than those already existing in many provinces of the Dominion, and that in the opinion of this convention the Act should be repealed, and we should revert to the provincial franchise.

This is the pledge the present Government when in Opposition gave the people, that immediately on attaining power they would introduce a law to sweep away the present iniquitous Franchise Act. That is what the Government are now doing, and their supporters will sustain them in their action, and the sooner the present Act is swept away the better. It is said that we will not have any elections for three or four years. I would remind the House that we shall have by-elections from time to time, and we do not want to carry them out under a bad law. As soon as the new law comes into force we want every member entering this House to have been elected under it