

enjoyed a marked degree of prosperity arising from the protection which, under a very low tariff, we enjoy owing to the internecine war that existed in the great republic to the south of us. That happily passed away, peace was restored, and these gentlemen were called upon to administer the public affairs of the country, but instead of adopting such a policy as was demanded by the occasion, they persisted in nailing what they called their free trade colours to the mast, and refusing to adopt any policy for the protection of Canadian industries such as was absolutely demanded. Sir, I need not remind the House that we on this side, in the discharge of our duties then as we are endeavouring to discharge them now, did not hesitate to point out to the hon. gentlemen opposite the course that, in our judgment, they were bound to adopt in order to rescue Canada from the most deplorable poverty and depression that this country has ever seen since the beginning of confederation down to the present hour. Well, Sir, the hon. the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright), in a moment of weakness, I suppose, made a frank confession to the House—I think it was during the last session, or the session preceding it—in which he said, that they had really made up their minds as to the line they should take in the interest of the country, and he, as Finance Minister, had prepared a tariff, but just as he was about to bring it down, a brigade of free traders from the province of Nova Scotia made their appearance in Ottawa, and threatened the hon. gentleman that if he persisted in doing that, they would go into opposition and he would go out of office. Well, Sir, the hon. gentleman concluded that office was of more importance to him than the prosperity of Canada, and he abandoned his tariff which he had prepared, giving a considerable amount of protection to Canadian industries; he abandoned that policy, and pursued that course of free trade folly which landed him and his Government in the slough of despond. And what was the result? The result was that the intelligent electorate of Canada rose in its might on the first opportunity that offered, and swept out of power the hon. gentleman who had admitted that he was only a fly on the wheel and could not do anything in the interests of the country—swept him and his colleagues out of power by one of the most overwhelming majorities that was ever witnessed in this or any other country. I only mention this as a prelude to what occurred. The party opposed to him, the Liberal-Conservative party on this side of the House, declared that if they obtained power they would immediately adopt the policy of giving efficient protection to every Canadian industry that could be carried on properly in this country. Hon. gentlemen opposite will not say that we did not keep our word, they do us the justice to say that when we came into power we fulfilled the promises that we had

made to the people of this country, and we brought down a protective tariff largely increasing the duties on the various products that the people of Canada were able to manufacture. The result was that the country was changed in a marvellously short period of time from a condition of the most abject and deplorable depression into a condition of activity and industry. Under their policy, Boston and New York were made the commercial capitals of Canada; under their policy, money went out of Canada to a foreign country for the products that our people required; under their policy, people finding no employment in this country, were obliged to follow the money, and population was depleted, poverty was rife, and the only industry that these gentlemen were reluctantly compelled to recognize was that of soup kitchens for the poor. Now, Sir, what changed all that? What was it that lifted our country out of that deplorable condition into which Liberal misrule had dragged it? Why, it was that National Policy which, from that hour to this, has created a progress and a prosperity in our country such as we have never witnessed before. What did these gentlemen do? Did they do as we are doing now, hold up both hands for everything that was proposed by the party opposite that was calculated to benefit our country? Not at all. These gentlemen obstructed us with all the power at their command. The English language is not strong enough to furnish them with the terms of obloquy and contempt to pour upon this accursed policy of protection that they pledged themselves solemnly in the face of the country they would scatter to the winds the moment they reached power. Did they do it? Sir, the country is prosperous, but it is not from anything that these hon. gentlemen have done. I stand here to-day in the presence of this intelligent House, I stand here to-day in the presence of a people as intelligent as any to be found on the face of the globe, and I challenge these gentlemen here and now to put their finger on a single act of theirs that has contributed one jot or tittle to the progress of the country. But what have they done? They have done something to make it less prosperous than it otherwise would have been, as I shall be able to show; but when they say that they have contributed aught in any respect to the progress and prosperity of the country, I deny it, and challenge them to the proof. Why, Sir, we have evidence to the contrary out of the mouths of their own supporters, their strongest supporters, that the policy of Canada to-day, whether it be wise or unwise, is the policy of the great Liberal-Conservative party that made Canada what it is, and that has produced every jot and tittle of the prosperity that exists down to this hour. Now, I may say that we did have a wave of prosperity coming over the country, for these things usually go in cycles. What did we do? We not only provided for that