

minister of Ontario and a leading spirit in that province. We had Sir Henri Joly de Lotbinière, who had been prime minister of his own province of Quebec. We had Hon. Mr. Blair who had been prime minister of New Brunswick. We had Hon. David Mills, the philosopher of Bothwell. We had Sir Louis Davies. We had the present hon. member from St. Mary's division (Hon. Mr. Tarte). I must say, when I recall the names of these men and when I look at the hon. gentlemen now composing the government, it seems certain that those who have gone were giants; I shall not say what the hon. gentlemen are who are left. My right hon. friend (Rt. Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier) who leads the House spoke of the by-elections. I intend to conclude with an appreciation of the by-elections, and I am going to try to give the House what seems to me an impartial view of the opinion of the people outside this House as expressed at the polls in those contests. Sir, we must not forget that in the provinces in which these elections took place, the two governments, both the provincial and the federal, are opposed to us with their great prestige, their strong influence and the enormous patronage which they dispense all through the country. And what happened? Let us consider first the elections in Ontario. In East Bruce, in 1900, the Conservative majority was only 43, but in 1903, the Conservative majority was 209. In East Lambton, the Conservative majority in 1900 was 221, and in 1903 it was 556. Take the case of St. John, New Brunswick. It seems to me the verdict which was rendered there is significant in view of the position taken by Hon. Mr. Blair. In 1900, the Liberal majority in St. John was 997. (I am sorry to have to recall these facts to hon. gentlemen opposite; it is not pleasant to them; but I am not here to be pleasant to them). In 1903, the Conservative candidate, whom we are glad to welcome here was returned by a majority of 264. Now, let us see what happened in Quebec. I take first the case of St. James division. I am sorry, and I know that all the members on this side are sorry, that our good friend Mr. Bergeron was not returned for that division. In 1900, the Liberal majority in that division was 1,641, and this year it was only 636, a decrease of over one thousand. In Hochelaga, in 1900, the Liberal majority was 635, and this year it was under 300. And, Sir, let me tell the House that, if it had not been for the enormous concessions we are called upon to make to the Grand Trunk and for Grand Trunk influence, if it had not been that a great number of the Grand Trunk employees live in that division, my hon. friend (Mr. Rivet) who sits here to-day for Hochelaga would not have been here, but Dr. Bernard would have occupied the seat. Then we come to St. Hyacinthe, the Liberal stronghold, the citadel occupied by the

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Liberal forces for years. That constituency gave a Liberal majority in 1900 of 1,111, and this year the Liberal majority was reduced to 195.

Is the country satisfied with the tariff? Is the country satisfied with the Grand Trunk Pacific scheme? Is the country satisfied with the general policy of the government? Is the country satisfied with the personnel of the government? I say that these figures are an eloquent indication of the sentiment of the country against this government and its policy. In the province of Quebec, in the three elections of which I have just spoken, the falling off in the Liberal vote was 2,256, but we have had other elections since then; in Quebec we have had four by-elections for the legislature, and let me tell the House that if Mr. Ross, in Ontario, is the right arm of the hon. gentleman who leads this House, Mr. Parent, in Quebec, is his right bower and during these elections some ministers of this government went down into each of the counties where these elections were held and it was stated to the electors that a vote for Parent meant a vote for Laurier. That was the sentiment everywhere; that is what was said upon every hustings and the people were told that if they voted against Parent they would be voting against Laurier. There were by-elections in Maskinonge and Portneuf, where in 1900 Liberals were elected by acclamation, and in 1897 Liberals were elected by majorities varying from 400 to 500. In Maskinonge the Conservative candidate was elected by over 100 and in Portneuf by over 250. These are signs of the times and indicate that the country is ready to condemn the present administration as soon as it gets an opportunity to pronounce a verdict.

Mr. HENRI BOURASSA (Labelle). I must beg the pardon of the House if I come wholly unprepared to take part in this debate. It was not my intention to speak either this afternoon or at any other period in the debate, but the representations which have been made by the hon. member for Montmorency (Mr. Casgrain) as to the programme of 'La Ligue Nationaliste,' and his references to the part I have taken in the recent election in Montmagny, drag me into the debate. Fortunately the hon. gentleman has opened the door wide enough for a reply that does not necessitate any long or protracted argument on my part to show—I am sorry to employ the word—the total dishonesty of the policy of the Conservative party. The hon. member has quoted a part of the programme of the new association formed in Montreal a year ago and called 'La Ligue Nationaliste' This league of which I am not a member, was founded and organized and has been kept up by young men of talent and sterling character who thought that the time had come when there might be some organization in this country through which political questions and especially the problems of the future