

did precisely what these gentlemen say they feel themselves impelled to do now, that is, they strengthened their hands against the United States in dealing with that country, on account of the passage of the McKinley Bill when it was first enacted. What did our opponents say then? Did Mr. Laurier and the gentlemen now associated with him say that the Conservative government did right? No, they said we had been the cause of the enactment of the McKinley tariff and that we were riveting that tariff on Canada by pursuing a retaliatory course. They said we should do nothing of the kind. I heard Mr. Laurier in a speech at Charlottetown tell the fable of the sun and the north wind endeavouring to compel the traveller to take off his coat. It was the same fable he has told so often with regard to the Manitoba school question. It served his purpose with regard to the trade question and our dealings with the United States, and latterly it has served his purpose in discussing the Manitoba school question. He has been following the sunny ways of patriotism. That was the course which he said should be pursued then and which was to be pursued should his party attain to power, and now we find inklings from the speech of the hon. leader of this House, and ample evidence in the speeches of the gentlemen who spoke for the government in moving and seconding the Address, and we have abundant evidence in the press that they are going to find a pretext for going back on their pre-election pledges on the trade question, from the reintroduction of the McKinley tariff in the United States—although that tariff, as far as it relates to Canada, was just as hostile under President Harrison as it now proposes to be under President McKinley. One little difference is all that my attention has been called to, as being more severe against us. There is an increased duty on white pine, and that is about the only difference between the McKinley tariff as it previously existed and as it appears now before Congress; yet hon. gentlemen opposite condemned our government because we stiffened our tariff to meet the hostile tariff of the United States. Now they ask us to excuse them when they propose to go back on their pre-election pledges, because, forsooth, they have to meet this same McKinley tariff. The hon. leader of the House in gently letting himself down from former positions and in reply, I think

to an interruption, or in reply to my hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition, stated that it would be impossible to have even a revenue tariff without protection, therefore, he is going to find some justification for adopting a protective tariff, because a revenue tariff there, may possible give incidental protection. I know that my hon. friend and his colleagues, before election, talked about a revenue tariff, but the only public intimation that has been made of what their tariff is to be is in the matter of bituminous coal, and my hon. friend will not pretend to say that the duty on bituminous coal in Canada is intended for revenue only. If that is his object, I wish him joy of the increased revenue he is going to get out of that duty. He will get very little revenue from it. Its object is simply protection and nothing else, and my hon. friend is evidently preparing to excuse himself for departing from his position as the exponent of the principle of a tariff for revenue only, because it is possible some incidental protection may be given by a revenue tariff.

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—Ontario pays a million dollars revenue on bituminous coal.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—And anthracite coal is free. If the duty is retained upon coal, the main effect of it is protection.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Oh, no.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—It has been one of the strongest points of objection on the part of the Liberal party in the upper provinces that the Conservative government imposed this duty for protective purposes, and although it may be true that some bituminous coal had been imported into the province of Ontario and a duty paid upon it, still the general trend of the duty on bituminous coal is for protection and not for revenue purposes. With regard to the pre-election policy and the course of the Liberal party on this question, I would just read two or three words from the Ottawa platform, which my hon. friend the leader of the government in this House did a good deal towards framing. Here are the words:

We denounce the principle of protection as radically unsound and unjust to the masses of the people, and we declare our conviction that any tariff changes based on that principle must fail to afford any substantial relief from the burdens under which the country labours. This issue we unhesitatingly accept, and upon it we await with