

legislation than the fact that when the hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce, at that time Finance Minister, went out of office in 1878, the last loan that he put on the market was a four per cent loan at 96½; and when the late Government went out of power I need not tell the House that our 3 per cents had touched 107, or a premium of 7 per cent. Now, the hon. the ex-Finance Minister dealt so fully and exhaustively with the financial portion of the question that it is not necessary that I should refer to it at any length upon this occasion. But I may remind the House that the exports of last year, after eighteen years of the National Policy, reached the highest figure that they have ever done in the history of Canada; I need not remind the House that the increase in trade over the previous year was no less than fifteen millions. Our trade with Great Britain increased over that of 1895, by \$6,640,995; the increase of trade with the United States over that of 1895, was \$2,302,225. Now, if you turn to the exports, you will find that the exports to Great Britain increased in the last year \$4,822,353 over those of 1895; while our exports to the United States were \$1,547,475 less in 1896 than in 1895. Sir, the Minister of Finance ventured to say to this House that many Conservatives looked back with regret at the departure made in 1879. Why should they? On what ground, I ask him, does he venture in this House and in the hearing of the intelligent people of the country to say that Conservatives look with regret on the departure in the fiscal policy of this country made at that time? Why, Sir, the hon. gentleman knows that if ever there was a record of which every Liberal-Conservative may be justly proud it is the record of those eighteen years. He knows that the country passed out of the depths of poverty into a condition of the greatest prosperity. He knows that the country instead of being in that stagnant and impoverished condition which it occupied during the five years regime of the Liberal party, the country presented evidence from one end to the other of the tremendous value of the policy of protection. But, Sir, I require no further evidence of the triumph of the Liberal-Conservative party than that which the hon. gentleman himself presented to the House when he gave truthfully and fairly the statement he did give as to the financial condition of Canada when the Government was handed over to the hon. gentlemen. There are the figures to speak for themselves. Every evidence that can carry conviction to a mind open to conviction shows that no Government ever had greater reason for satisfaction than the late Government as regards the condition in which they handed over the affairs of this country to hon. gentlemen. But the hon. gentleman was fair enough to say that not only was the country vigorous and prosperous, but the trade was in a con-

dition of buoyancy and expansion. There are no terms in the English language by which stronger testimony can be given as regards the position of the Liberal-Conservative party than those used by the hon. gentleman.

The hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright), true to the extravagant denunciations which he has been so long accustomed to make in regard to the Liberal Conservative party, said that they found the ship of state water-logged, running upon the rocks and the crew deserting her. I did not know we had been charged with showing any very great activity in deserting the ship.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES (Mr. Davies). It was a mutiny, I think.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. It was rather new to me to learn that hon. gentlemen opposite complained that we were too ready to give up the ship of state. But when we did surrender the ship she was in a condition of which any commander might well be proud; we handed the ship over in a condition such as any commander would be glad to receive her. I am sorry the hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright) is not present, as I hate to criticise the statements of an hon. gentleman when he is not in his place. That hon. gentleman ventured to charge the ex-Minister of Finance with having cooked the accounts. I regard that charge as one of the gravest that can be made against a public man. Any Finance Minister who will cook accounts is unworthy to hold such a high position, and I would remind the present Minister of Trade and Commerce, that on the floor of this House I established by testimony, the most clear and incontrovertible, that he was guilty of the offence with which he improperly charged my hon. friend. For the purpose of establishing a deficit against his predecessor, when he came into office in 1874 he did an act such as I trust no Minister of the Crown would ever attempt to perform—he actually took bodily out of the estimates \$500,000 voted by Parliament on capital expenditure, and transferred it to revenue account, so as to create a deficit. I am only repeating, in the hon. gentleman's absence a charge which I have again and again made in his face, and which I challenged him to take before the Committee of Public Accounts, where I would establish it by the highest testimony that could be produced. So I think the hon. gentleman forgets himself when he attempts to charge my hon. friend with that act which no man, so far as I am aware, who has ever filled the position of Finance Minister, has done, except himself.

My hon. friend stated that the tariff was going to be practically the tariff of to-day. When the hon. gentleman made that statement he made a statement which relieved