

that day, during the latter portion of the period that they governed this country, to make a substantial change in the tariff of the country; and the issue was placed broadly and squarely before the people of Canada as to whether the free trade policy to which those hon. gentlemen had pledged themselves, and to which they determined to stand, or the protection of Canadian industries to which the Opposition were committed, should be the policy of Canada. The hon. gentleman knows that the result on that issue was not doubtful, and he knows that on the accession to power of the Government of the Right Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald, measures were promptly taken to carry into effect the policy which had been ratified by the people of Canada. The hon. gentleman knows very well that when the tariff was brought down by the late lamented Sir Leonard Tilley, who crystallized the policy of the Liberal-Conservative party into an act of Parliament, the hon. gentlemen opposite said that at all events we had carried out our pledges to the country; they admitted that there had been no faltering in carrying out the policy on which we went to the country, in the Act which we submitted. Now, the hon. gentleman is also aware that in 1882 that same issue was submitted to the people of Canada. For years the hon. gentlemen forming Her Majesty's Opposition in this House stood by their guns, and the battle was fought over that question in the election of 1882, and with a like result. A large majority was found to confirm the verdict of 1878, which had been given in such decisive tones, and it remained the policy of Canada. There was another issue, that of the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, but as that has ceased now to be an issue, I do not propose to refer to it. Then in 1887 the same issue was taken between the two parties in this country, those still standing by the principles of free trade, and those still maintaining the policy which the country had adopted in the protection of Canadian industries, and with a like result. Again the people of Canada declared themselves in a very clear and unequivocal manner in favour of the policy of the Liberal-Conservative party and Government in protecting Canadian industries. In 1891, after these three defeats, hon. gentlemen opposite finding that it did not seem to be exactly a successful policy on which to go to the country, constructed a new policy, and that was a policy of unrestricted reciprocity with the United States. It was a rather long jump certainly from the policy of free trade to the adoption of the highest tariff that perhaps existed in any part of the world; but at all events, without going into that question, for I do not wish unduly to occupy the time of the House, the issue joined in 1891 was on the question as to whether we should continue the policy of the Liberal-Conservative Government and party of fostering and protecting Canadian industries, or whether we

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should adopt a policy of continental free trade, of having one tariff between the United States of America and Canada. The hon. gentleman is aware that the policy of the Opposition, the new policy of unrestricted reciprocity, met with a like defeat, and the policy of affording efficient protection to Canadian industries was still maintained by the electors of Canada.

In order to reach the point at which I am aiming, that of showing the issue which was submitted to the country at the recent election, I shall be obliged to read to the House a few brief extracts that will place in a clear and unmistakable manner before the House the policy upon which hon. gentlemen opposite stood when they went to the country on the last occasion. The hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright), who, as I have stated before, was the financial head of the Mackenzie Administration and who has always been recognized in this House as the great financial authority and exponent of the fiscal policy of the Liberal party, stated the policy of the Liberal party as appears at page 714 of the "Hansard" of 1893. I do not intend to go through the voluminous extracts I could give from various speeches made by hon. gentlemen opposite and the strong terms in which that policy was placed before the country, but I simply desire to place on record a very few extracts in order that there should be a very clear understanding as to what the issue was on the recent occasion. The hon. gentleman said:

The hon. gentleman desires to know our policy. I will tell hon. gentlemen what has been our policy from first to last. Our policy from first to last has been to destroy this villainous protective system, which has been grinding out the vitals of the people of this country. I do not care in what particular way the reptile is destroyed. I do not care whether it is cut off by the head or the tail, or in the middle. I do not care whether it is by free trade, positive or absolute, or by revenue tariff, or by continental free trade.

Then at a later date, in 1894, as will be seen by reference to page 336 of "Hansard" of that year, the hon. member for South Oxford used the following language:—

These hon. gentlemen challenge us—these consistent mortals who are shocked at our inconsistency demand our policy, and in especial they demand mine. Sir, they shall have it. I announced it years ago; my policy from first to last, ever since this infamous system was put on the statute-book, has been to do away with protection—how, I did not care.

Well, Sir, I think that will place satisfactorily on record the views and sentiments of the financial authority of the Liberal party in this House.

I come now to the views expressed by another high authority on that side of the House, the hon. member for Queen's, P.E.I. (Mr. Davies). I may say that the policy of unrestricted reciprocity was not exactly a