

These fears are ungrounded, and when one knows the men who compose the ministry, one may be sure that harmony will continue to exist between the elements that make up our people. The various nationalities which inhabit this country are united under one government and make up but one nation. In concluding these remarks, Mr. Speaker, I thank this honourable House for the attention it was kind enough to grant to me, and I beg to be allowed to express a wish, which I hope will be realized. Let us all unite for the purpose of endeavouring to make secure the progress and happiness of the Canadian people, so glorious with respect to its past and so great with respect to its future.

Mr. LAURIER. Mr. Speaker, since we separated in the month of July last, events of some importance have taken place, chief of which, perhaps, is the fact that there has been a change of Government. When we separated in July, the country was ruled by the Government of Sir John Abbott; it is now ruled by the Government of Sir John Thompson. The country at large, I am sure, as well as this House, will regret the cause which compelled Sir John Abbott to withdraw from the high position which he has filled since the death of Sir John A. Macdonald. Though, in my humble estimation, the career of Sir John Abbott was not as conducive to the public welfare as it might have been, yet it is only the simple truth to say, that in his withdrawal, Canada loses the services of one of the ablest men of his generation. Perhaps the one dominant trait of the character of Sir John Abbott was his apparent want of ambition. He never seemed to care what post was assigned to him, whether he was in the front rank or in the rear; but whatever he undertook to do, he always reached the first rank in that line. He seemed to be endowed with the happy faculty of doing everything that had to be done, and doing it well, while apparently touching nothing. With regard to the change of Government which has taken place, this side of the House is not particularly concerned. It was altogether a family affair. But I am glad to offer the congratulations of this side of the House to the hon. gentleman who has been called to fill the place vacated by Sir John Abbott. There has been no public man in Canada at any time whose advancement was so rapid as the advancement of the hon. gentleman. He came into this House at a comparatively recent date, preceded by a high reputation for ability, which he had earned in his own province, which led everybody, friends and opponents, to expect a great deal from him, and that expectation has been realized by his career since he entered this House. Nay more, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that since the hon. gentleman has been called to the position he now fills, he has developed qualities of which we were not aware. We who were associated with

him all knew that the cast of his mind was positive and practical, but if I correctly read his speech delivered in Toronto, and I think I did, not only is the cast of his mind positive and practical, but he is endowed as well with a pretty large share of imagination, an imagination which not only leads him into the realms of fancy, but also has led him, I think, to take existing facts and turn them upside down. The hon. gentleman, in the speech which he recently delivered before the Young Men's Conservative Association, at Toronto, spoke of the National Policy, and he attributed to it what he called "the prosperity of the country." I may say at once that this is not the flight of the imagination to which I referred. Speaking of the National Policy, he said that it had been travestied by its opponents in a hundred different ways, one of which was that they held it applicable exclusively on the rigid line of a customs tariff; whereas he avowed it had a much broader scope and included much more, even the acquisition of the North-west Territories. This is the language which the hon. gentleman made use of:

You may remember what was the great measure which guided the party in the time of Sir John A. Macdonald; it was the National Policy, a name which has been travestied in a hundred ways, a name which has been held applicable on the rigid lines of a customs tariff, but in the mind of the statesmen of Canada meant far more than a tariff arrangement to Canada. It meant the purchase of the great North-west Territories as a home for the farmers of Canada, thus enabling them to live in their own country instead of going to the fertile fields of the United States of America; thus to have homes of their own under the British flag, and where they can enjoy Canadian institutions.

I was not surprised to see the British flag here, because the British flag is always cast as a gloss over the National Policy; nor do I wonder that those who once pinned their faith to the National Policy, and who still stick to it, notwithstanding the experience of the last thirteen years, should endeavour to find for it as a basis something else than the rigid lines of a customs tariff. I do not wonder that they should try to find for the National Policy a more meritorious basis than a customs tariff, and a great deal may be allowed, I am sure, in that respect for the anxiety of the hon. gentleman. But it is altogether too wide a flight of fancy to bring in the acquisition of the North-west Territories as a part and parcel of the National Policy. Why, Sir, the National Policy was never heard of before the year 1877, when Sir John A. Macdonald was in Opposition; and the North-west Territories were acquired as far back as 1869, and if the merit of the acquisition of the North-west Territories is due to any one man more than to another, that merit belongs altogether to the Hon. George Brown. It was he who, by his powerful advocacy, who with pen and tongue, calling the attention of the country to the vast prairies of the west and their immense possibilities, induced the Government of that day