

WORDS FROM AN OLD REFORMER.

The following is an extract from the address of Mr. Hay, the National Policy Candidate in Centre Toronto. Mr. Hay is the largest furniture manufacturer in Canada, and was for forty years identified with the Reform Party. His words carry weight :—

In years past, as most of you are aware, I was associated with the Reform party in this Province. I supported that party because I believed that in carrying out the professions then made its leaders would promote the welfare of the country. I have left it because I have found those leaders unfaithful to their professions in every important respect—especially in their extravagant and wasteful management of the public funds—and because I am well satisfied that the commercial policy to which they are now pledged will, if persisted in, prove ruinous to our best interests and destroy the future of Canada.

I have adopted the principles of, and joined hands with, the Opposition, because I am at one with its leaders on the vital question of a national policy, and because the experience of the last five years has convinced me that, under their rule, we may expect far wiser statesmanship and a greater prosperity than we can hope for, from the men now in power. So long as the present unfair and one-sided tariff relations with the United States subsist, no Canadian industries can flourish, exposed as they are to ruinous competition whenever it may suit the Americans to make our country a slaughter market; while we, through their prohibitory tariff, are denied the opportunity of even legitimate trade with them. No business man, be he farmer, manufacturer, or other employer of labour, can flourish while the country is distressed. And when the employer suffers, the men whom he employs, and the community in which they live suffer also. Under our present system I am well assured that our condition cannot improve, and that the country must become poorer and every industry more unprofitable, and that, a further contraction of business must take place, accompanied by a consequent

reduction in the number of those employed and the wages they receive. Our present rulers are either unable or unwilling to take any action to remedy this disastrous state of things, and at the same time are increasing enormously our annual expenditure, so that we shall have to face a deficit this year equal at least to those of the two previous. Five years more of a like management of our affairs will bankrupt our national credit, and most seriously prejudice the position of the people individually. These convictions are not singular with me, but are held by many who have heretofore acted with the Reform party, and who join with me in thinking that the welfare of the country is more to be desired than the promotion of party interests. Under these circumstances, then, I may surely feel encouraged in seeking to promote so far as I may, such an alteration in our commercial policy as shall secure the extension and prosperity of our Canadian industries of every kind, agricultural, mining and manufacturing, rather than their contraction and decay.

I am also strongly in favour of a most thorough system of retrenchment and economy in the public expenditure. Unless this is done we can in no wise remedy the evil caused by the extravagant course pursued during the last four years. The present Government, although pledged to economy and retrenchment, has largely increased the cost of every branch of the public service and added enormously to the national debt, and this too, in the face of a waning revenue and a general distress. I shall, therefore, if elected, endeavour to bring about a substantial reduction in the cost of governing the country, which at present I hold to be wholly out of proportion to our means, feeling assured that under a prudent system of economy, and with a wise commercial policy, our present unfortunate position may be entirely reversed.

Further than this, I am prepared, in accordance with the principles I have always professed, to resist to the uttermost any attempt to encroach on the well established principles of Parliamentary control and responsible Government, as any such action strikes at the very basis of our constitution.