

six years, as leader of a great party, posing as a statesman, and asking business Canada to entrust its immense commercial interests to his charge, he has propounded six utterly inconsistent and different basic principles of tariff and trade legislation.

Can anything be more ridiculous? What do business men think of it? As a gyrating tariff weathercock, excellent! But as a political economist and statesman in a business country, absurd!

The truth is that Mr. Laurier knows nothing of business and economic trade principles. He strains after catch cries, tries one, finds it does not work, tries another and so on and so forth.

Surely our bankers, our shippers, our traders, our manufacturers, or agriculturalists and artisans want a man of convictions, not of fanciful theories.

### Mr. Laurier and the Manitoba Schools.

1. He attacked the Government for delay.

The minority he declared was suffering an injustice—an outrageous injustice. The Government should act at once; the Act of 1890 should be disallowed. Delay was insufferable; the Government was censurable therefor.

2. He attacked the Government for insincerity.

Why go to the courts, he asked. It was merely a pretext for doing nothing. The question is one of fact, not of law. The Government is cowardly, it dares not act, it shelters itself behind the tribunals; meanwhile injustice remains and Confederation is imperiled.

3. In the session of 1895 he attacked the Government for not bringing in a bill.

You have the decisions of the courts, he said; your powers are known, the grievance is affirmed, where is your bill? You dare not bring it, you are still insincere, and, what is more, cowardly.

4. In the autumn of 1895 he demanded a commission of enquiry.

We don't know the facts, he declared.

We are ignorant. Full five years have shed its light on the question, still our knowledge is inadequate. Give a commission, and let them inquire into the facts. True, I have always been against delay; true, the commission will cause more delay; no matter, I will eat my words, but now I plant myself squarely on the platform of further delay and a commission.

(5) In the beginning of the session of 1896 he wants the bill. Where is the bill? he demands. We don't want estimates, we don't want general business, we want the bill. Is the government still cowardly and insincere? If not, let us have the bill.

(6) And now he wants neither the bill nor a commission.

The bill came down. Mr. Laurier rose to speak upon it, and behold! This man who for years had the denounced government for delay, for cowardice, for insincerity, who had demanded justice, a commission, and the bill suddenly turned round—repudiated his commission of enquiry business, and proposed to kill the bill by moving the six months' hoist. Could anyone more completely swallow himself?

But a large number of his followers refused to follow him. He had led them to demand justice to the minority and a bill. When he was ready to turn, they were committed to remedial legislation. Within two weeks the house and country witnessed the unique spectacle of—

(a) Mr. McCarthy leading a little band of obstructionists and the Protestant section of the Liberal party in a crusade against remedial legislation.

(b) The Catholic section of the Liberal party broken loose from their party and their former leader, and refusing to follow Mr. McCarthy.

(c) The Liberal leader—limp and nerveless—wandering disconsolately among the toppling ruin of his hopes—a leader without a following, trotting along at the heels of Mr. McCarthy and his obstructionists.

What a leader! What a tactician!