

And after that see the state of things in 1896! There was reserved for these gentlemen even lower depths in 1896, when we had the spectacle of seven Ministers of State deliberately deserting their flag in the face of the enemy, when the Prime Minister of Canada was justified in having described himself as having lived "in a nest of traitors."

If these men ask for further proofs of the desperate position in which Canada was at that time, they shall have them. Every man remembers the condition of Ontario in 1896, when from one end of Ontario to the other the value of our farm lands had been reduced by half, when in many cases those farm lands had become absolutely unsaleable, when thousands of our farmers were groaning under, not only ordinary mortgages, but chattel mortgages covering everything they possessed.

PROGRESS UNDER LIBERAL RULE

Sir, let me compare the progress of Canada in the fifteen years which have elapsed from 1896 to 1911 with the progress of Canada under Conservative rule from 1881 to 1896. Here you have two periods of exactly equal length. In the first period from 1881 to 1896 the trade and commerce of Canada increased by exactly \$40,000,000; in the second period, from 1896 to 1911, the trade and commerce of Canada has increased by \$540,000,000. In other words, the advance of Canada in that important particular was just as great on the average in one year of Liberal rule as in fifteen of Conservative misgovernment.

Or take another test. In 1896 we were able to induce 1,300 men to take up homesteads in the Northwest; in 1911 we had no difficulty whatever in locating 36,000 homesteaders in the self-same area.

In the matter of population in the ten years from 1881 to 1891, the total growth of Canada was just 500,000 souls, of whom about one-half were emigrants from European countries. In the ten years from 1901 to 1911, I think I am justified in assuring you that the census will show an increase in population of 2,000,000 strong.

SUM IN ARITHMETICAL PROPORTION

And if any of our Conservative friends should have a turn for arithmetic, I would suggest to them the following sum in arithmetical proportion: As 40,000,000 are to 540,000,000, as 1,300 are to 36,000, as 500,000 are to 2,000,000, so, gentlemen, is the exact arithmetical proportion between fifteen years of Conservative drag to fifteen years of Liberal performance.

I may add for Mr. Foster's special information, that in the ten years from 1881 to 1891, his own Province of New Brunswick appears to have increased its population by 30 souls, while in the adjacent Province of Quebec investigations made in 1901 established beyond the possibility of doubt that the census enumerators employed by the Government of the day had discovered in 21 ridings something like 40,000 more inhabitants than the parish priests had been able to find in the January preceding, facts enough, if facts were wanted, to show that the census of 1891 did not under-estimate the population.