

ter, in tendering his resignation, tendered also the resignation of every member of his Cabinet. Indeed, there was a time subsequent to the prorogation of Parliament last year—a brief moment it was, of course—when there was no ministry carrying on the government of this country. My right hon. friend selected one colleague on the day that he was sworn in; others he selected some three days later, and others later still.

The ministry which we met when Parliament was last assembled was a Unionist administration. It was a Government that had been formed from each of the historic political parties on a basis of assumed equality in numbers and talent. It was formed with relation to a particular issue arising out of the war which was then in progress. It purported to be a war administration, concerned solely with the successful prosecution and termination of the war and problems incidental thereto. Upon its character, its personnel, and its purpose in these particulars, it made its appeal to the electorate and won the support which returned it to power.

The Government which meets Parliament to-day is an entirely new and different Government. Will my right hon. friend contend that in character his is a Union Government? Will he contend that it is a coalition composed of members of both the old political parties, chosen because they are supposed to be of equality in talent as well as in numbers? Will he contend for a moment that it is a war Government with a mandate from the people of this country to carry on their business? Those are questions which I want my right hon. friend to answer when he rises to address the House. The ministry has, as I have said, changed in character, in personnel, and in purpose from the Government formed in 1917.

Permit me to enlarge for a minute on these several points. As I have already said, the ministry which meets Parliament to-day has an entirely different character from the ministry which we met when Parliament was last assembled. That ministry was a Unionist ministry. My right hon. friend will hardly contend that his ministry is a Unionist ministry. He was the first to destroy the word "Unionist"; he absolutely cut it out of the vocabulary of his Government. He will hardly say that his ministry is composed of the members of the old historic parties. He, almost more than anyone else in this country, has

been doing all he can to destroy the reputations of the old political parties and to say that they have outlived their usefulness. Surely he does not believe that any one is deceived as to the character of the present administration through the use of the name "National Liberal and Conservative" which, despite his abuse of the historic parties, he has chosen as that of his administration. Was there ever such a jumble of inconsistencies and insincerities!

My right hon. friend will probably contend that the situation thus created was not dissimilar to situations which arose after the death of Sir John A. Macdonald, when Sir John was succeeded in June, 1891, by Sir John Abbott; when Sir John Thompson succeeded Sir John Abbott in December, 1892; when Sir Mackenzie Bowell succeeded Sir John Thompson in December, 1894; and lastly when Sir Charles Tupper succeeded Sir Mackenzie Bowell in May, 1896. In other words, he will probably contend that in the course of one Parliament one ministry has a right to succeed another as in that period between 1891 and 1896. I presume my right hon. friend will attempt to have the House believe that the succession in office of his ministry to the previous ministry is a case parallel to the cases which I have just mentioned. As a matter of fact, there is no parallel.

The governments of which I have just spoken between 1891 and 1896 were all Tory Governments, holding office by virtue of a policy upon which the electors had passed in March, 1891, in normal times and under normal conditions. They were one in character, in purpose and in aim. The Government which my right hon. friend has formed cannot lay claim to any succession of that kind. The Government which he succeeded was a Unionist Government; the Government that he has formed to-day is a reactionary Tory administration; it is a reversion back to a type of Toryism such as this country has not known for a great many years. Mr. Speaker, my right hon. friend will hardly contend that there is anything of a coalitionist character in his administration. The former Government was a coalition Government, or so-called at all events; it pretended to be such; but the Government of my right hon. friend is wholly different in that respect.

One of two alternatives alone is possible. Either the Government of my right hon. friend is, as it purports to be, an entirely new Government, with a new name, a new Prime Minister, a new set of principles