

which a country can best be served, whether it be free trade, modified protection, or whatever you may choose to call it. My hon. friend taunted members of the government with having changed their political views: I do not know that any statesman is entitled to very much respect if he is not open to conviction at any period of his life. If, after ten, fifteen or twenty years' experience he thinks he has made a mistake, and that the adoption of another fiscal policy would be beneficial to the country, would that statesman be true to himself, if because he had prejudices in his early life, he would not adopt what was then best for the country? That was not the feeling which influenced Sir Robert Peel when in 24 hours he changed from being a strong protectionist to practically a free trader. It was not the line taken by Gladstone who at the outset was a very strong Tory, but from his experience in parliament, he found they were not the party which brought about the reforms that modern times demanded, and so he did not hesitate to change his political convictions. Nobody reflected on Gladstone because of that. I might come nearer home. Sir John Macdonald was not in his earlier years a protectionist. On the contrary, he was a free trader. His tariff at Confederation was fifteen per cent, and it was only in 1868 or 1869, when Canada was pressed, that he made any increase; so my hon. friend ought not to taunt men with abandoning their views when they do so with the object of bettering the condition of the country.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—What we charge them with is professing one thing and doing another.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—My hon. friend quotes the utterances of gentlemen who fought the national policy, who did not for eighteen years believe in its wisdom or prudence, but thought it too restricted. When gentlemen had to assume the control of the government of this country, would they have exercised statesmanship to have gone back to the views they had announced in opposition? They found it would be folly to resist public sentiment, and they did not dare make those changes. It would take long years to do so.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—I commend the hon. gentleman for his honesty.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—They were not disposed to sacrifice the interests of this country. They adapted themselves to the conditions which prevailed. As opportunities offered, they enlarged the trade of the country by reducing the tariff, and they have done it on those particular lines where there was least resistance, and the trade of the country is largely benefited by that line of policy. If to-day we were applying the tariff of my hon. friend opposite, even after it had been modified in 1894, to the present imports, you would find that we would be collecting four or five millions of dollars more than we are getting from the people of this country. There is that much saved. My hon. friend shakes his head, but I could give the figures.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Surely the hon. gentleman knows that the government raised the tariff, and then took off the percentage.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—On two or three items. The iron duties we cut in two, and since that we have in many lines of the iron trade taken the duties off altogether. If my hon. friend will look at the 'Citizen' of yesterday morning, he will find, under the authority of the Treasury Board, that the duties were taken off a number of articles which are used in manufactures in Canada, where the original article was the raw material—that is, where it was not made in Canada—just as we took the duties off tires and parts of locomotives, in order to aid the locomotive industry in this country. When we have steel and iron works established, as I hope we will in a few years, it may be a matter of consideration whether the government of the day might not restore many articles to the tariff list when we are making them in Canada. So long as we do not make them in Canada—so long as they contribute to the wealth of this country by enabling our manufactures to get the benefit of them it is good policy to admit them at a very low rate of duty, or to remove the duty altogether as we have done.

I do not know that I shall occupy the time of the Chamber any longer. My hon. friend has gone very fully into a number of personal matters. I do not keep a scrap book. My hon. friend, I suppose, has gathered very assiduously his scraps from the sayings of ministers, and endeavours to show they were