

to return to office and to continue under Sir Mackenzie; and with them came as a new colleague the man who, they intended, should succeed the man whom they had set out to depose.

And yet a Minister of the Crown to-day made the statement on the floor of this House which I wish parliamentary rules would allow me to characterize as the truth would warrant. Sir, this question has found its way into the pulpit. The ministers of the Gospel have drawn their conclusions as to what has taken place. Have they drawn the inference that these resignations were for the purpose stated to-day by the members of the Government? Not many have spoken yet, but I have one utterance in my hand now. The Rev. Dr. Campbell, of Montreal, is stated by this journal to have characterized their action as follows. I read from this extract:

In his sermon, on Sunday, in St. Gabriel Presbyterian church, of Montreal, the Rev. Dr. Campbell was very forcible in recommending his congregation to do their duty in the approaching civic elections, and deplored the position into which the city had been forced. He then turned his attention to the recent doings of the Cabinet, which he declared were humiliating to every citizen who loved his country and desired her advancement. "Every one of us," continued Dr. Campbell, with impressive solemnity, "should go upon our knees and confess our sins to God because of the shortcomings of the nation."

Well, Mr. Speaker, this afternoon we had the utterance of the leader of the House. Since then, one journal has spoken. The paper I am to read from now is the Ottawa "Journal," published under the shadows of this House, a journal in sympathy with the Conservative party, a high toned journal, a journal which I think is governed by a conscientious desire to promote the interests of the country, even if mistaken as to the party it supports. This paper, has, since the utterance of the Government to-day, given expression to its view of the situation, and though the article is somewhat lengthy, I would ask the permission of the House to read from it. Under the heading "The Reconciliation" that paper says in its issue of to-day, January 15th:

Prior to the public announcement of the split in the Conservative administration, the "Journal" voiced a feeling which was wide-spread, that the Administration had not since the death of Sir John Thompson done itself credit in the government of the country. The gravest count in the indictment made was that the members of the Administration had subordinated statesmanship and public interest to their personal rivalries and suspicions. The ink was hardly dry on the charge before a startling proof of its truth was furnished by the resignations of half the Cabinet on professed personal grounds.

The Ministers who resigned have returned to the fold, and the question is, How is the situation to be looked at now? If there was any truth in the indictment made prior to their resignations, that truth remains. More, it was accentuated by the resignations. The people, by the nature and time of the resignations, were given more reason than ever if they had any at all, to condemn the

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Conservative politics of the preceding year, and more reason to feel that men who had subordinated patriotism and statesmanship to the petty game of office could have little claim to public confidence.

Since that, on the back of that unpleasant culmination, has come the reconciliation. Ministers who alleged that a Premier was so incompetent that their patience was forced to an end at a most trying juncture for both country and party, take office under him again. Is that honesty or patriotism? To consent again to consign the weal of Canada to a man whom they a week ago pronounced unfit. True, a new and strong hand has joined the Government. That does help to excuse them to their party, but does it matter much to the country, which must judge the Government, not by one man, but by its collective personnel and record? On the other hand, we have a Premier who, so painfully attacked, retorts upon his former associates by counter depreciation; yet, within four days, reinstates them as his colleagues. They cannot retract what they said: that would show lying, either then or now—they have not had time to discover an honest mistake—yet the Premier replaces them in charge of the country's interests—these very men whom he four days ago stigmatized as conceited and treacherous. Is that justifiable as regards the nation?

The good of the party! What of that, if it be bad for character and honour? The good of the party! What of that, if it be bad for the people? Is it a wrong to the country that, from the bolters' point of view, we should have an incompetent Premier? Yet they accept him. Is it a wrong to the country that, from the Premier's point of view, we should have treacherous men in the Cabinet? He forces them on us. If either side is right, the country is wronged. If both are right, the wrong is worse. If neither be right, where are the brains the country pays for? We have cause to look to the mother country for standards of public honour, and is there any good reason why our standard should be lower? Is it possible to imagine a British Cabinet presenting the appearance the Canadian Cabinet does to-day, or British Ministers acting as our own are doing? We doubt whether a man in this city will say, yes. They would feel as keen a concern for party good, but, surely, their concern for their own honour would be their first consideration, and their country is the better for it.

Party good! A fine thing when it means public good. If a stout suspicion arises that to those who use the shibboleth, party good means chiefly office, and salaries, and patronage, and swelled heads, the people need to consider whether the time is ripe to give that party a trial in the fire and burn out some of the dross. Is the time ripe now? The answer is, of course, partly dependent on how far the country's general interests may be affected—the national ideal and the business welfare. As to business welfare, the Liberals argue very strenuously that their advent to power will not cause any violent upsetting of trade or manufacturing, and it is a matter for the people to think over. As to the national ideal, there is some reason to think that a change in office would accomplish national good. Since Confederation, now nearly thirty years ago, the Liberals have had four years of power. For eighteen years successively, up till now, they have been in opposition. They are Canadians, but they have had no Canadian responsibility. Possibly a term of responsibility would promote their virility as Canadians, their pride in