

Before this speech was delivered, that perambulation, to which I have referred, all over the country had taken place; and I must say that I think that the line of conduct adopted by the gentlemen who conducted it was a very proper and becoming one. They went through the different provinces of the country, through the trade centres and some of the smaller places. They put themselves into communication with the importers, manufacturers, retail dealers and, in fact, with almost all classes. Naturally the farming community and the body of consumers generally did not present themselves in as large numbers in proportion to the share which they formed of the population as the others did, but that was only to be expected. Any one who had anything to say with respect to the operation of the tariff in the different places which these hon. gentlemen visited, had an opportunity to say it: every one was courteously received, and I presume that what he said received consideration afterwards; and you can see, from the tone of the speech of the Minister of Finance, that it was the intention of the government to act, to a reasonable extent at any rate, upon the information which they had acquired during that tour—I do not use the term in any disrespectful manner. The echoes of the tour are to be found in the speech from which I have quoted; but unfortunately, after this speech was made by the then Minister of Finance, something—I do not know whether he was afflicted with many moments of weakness or not—occurred, and in some way or other the good intentions of the government were thwarted. The two ministers, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Trade and Commerce, and the two controllers had gone around and given audience to all classes and after that speech had been delivered by the Minister of Finance one class, the class especially benefited by high duties, seemed to have brought pressure on the Finance Minister and his colleagues, and the result was that the good intentions of the government were, as I have said, thwarted and that the new tariff was really no better than the old. It was just about as onerous to importers as the old tariff, which they had set out to reform, had been. At the same time the reports, which I presume were prepared, of interviews held by the ministers and controllers with the representatives of dif-

ferent classes of the community in the places which they visited have been preserved and will be useful in any inquiry which the present government may think it desirable to make.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—That is if they are in the possession of the government party. They were stolen from me.

Hon. Mr. POWER—I was under the impression that those interviews had been largely printed in the press, and this is the first intimation I have had that they are not among the Government records. I am very sorry indeed to hear that they are not, and I trust that copies of them have been preserved. While I did not think altogether too badly of the old ministry, and I do not look upon the new ministry as angels—they are ministers of light but not angels altogether—I feel confident that, after the Minister of Finance at the next session has announced the alterations which he proposes to make in the tariff, there will be no danger whatever that any protected interests will be able to deflect the minister from the path which he has entered upon. Of course, we cannot know what the exact nature of the measure will be, but I think we can judge fairly well from two or three sources what the general character of the changes will be. In the first place, there is the platform of the Liberal party, which was solemnly adopted at a convention held here in the month of June, 1893, presided over by the honourable gentleman who now leads this House, and there the tariff plank was laid down in fairly clear and unmistakable language. The general principles upon which tariff reform was to proceed were laid down; in short, it is practically to substitute a revenue tariff for a protective tariff; and now, honourable gentlemen, speaking of that, I am not going to quote the platform, but the description of a revenue tariff by the ex-Minister of Finance, which is on the whole, satisfactory. In the speech which I have already quoted, he says:

Another system is to have a revenue tariff which selects a list of articles and places rates of impost upon those articles, chiefly with a view to the quickest, easiest and best method of raising the amount which is necessary, but also with the necessary sequence of incidental protection whenever this selected list includes those things which are produced or can be produced in the country it-