

to defend their position. However, I may tell the hon. gentleman that whenever a man, however distinguished he may be, expresses his own individual opinions on any public question, that opinion remains his alone, so long as the party has not adopted it—at least, so long as the leaders of the party have not adopted the doctrine as that of the party. But the hon. gentleman says that the Liberals of Quebec have repudiated their principles and their leaders. Sir, I am at a loss to know when such repudiation took place. It is well known that their leaders, during a great many years, were the hon. Mr. Dorion, who is now Chief Justice of the Province of Quebec, and the lamented and deeply regretted Mr. Holton; and, Sir, I do not know when those two great leaders ever were repudiated by their friends, who never had any reason to be ashamed of them. Political parties sometimes find it opportune to modify their opinions regarding some public questions, in order to render them more adapted to actual circumstances; and suppose the Liberals had in some regards adopted such a course, they would not occupy a worse position than the Conservatives occupy to-day, who, after having upheld during forty years the principle of a revenue tariff, repudiated it and adopted the principle of protection. When the hon. gentleman feels the want of speaking of repudiation of principles he need not lose his time in searching out of the ranks of his own party, the subject matter, proper to satisfy his wishes. The hon. member showed some curiosity in the course of his remarks. He said he would like to know what is the programme of the Liberals. I do not feel authorised to tell the hon. gentleman what is or ought to be any special programme of the Liberal party. But I will tell him this: When in Opposition the Liberals find it to be their programme to watch the conduct of the Conservatives, to criticise their actions when they deserve to be criticised, and to warn the people of their faults; and when in power the Liberals find it to be their programme to administer public affairs with honesty and in accordance with the best interests of the country. I dare say my hon. friend, if he was in his seat, would find this a fair and patriotic programme. The hon. gentleman alluded, in one of the most eloquent parts of his speech, to a disturbed period of the history of France, and quoted a few sentences from a great speech pronounced on the occasion referred to, by the powerful and overwhelming Mirabeau, who made the best of his oratorical genius, to carry a certain measure proposing a heavy taxation. The hon. gentleman thought there was a great similarity between the position of those who opposed that measure and that of the Liberals in this House, as well as in the position of those who favoured the measure, and that of the Conservatives of to-day; but we did not want that comparison made by the hon. member, to know that the party of increased taxation in the country is represented in this House by hon. gentlemen opposite. I was sorry that the hon. member attempted to slur the Liberals of Quebec. In speaking of the duty on petroleum, he found it pleasant to say that the Liberals of Quebec, he did not know why, had a love of petroleum, although he would not say that they had any affinity with the Liberals of France, who had exhibited such a love for petroleum, that they had been called *pétroleux*. He would not say that they had any affinity with the Liberals of France, but he insinuated as much. Sir, there is a charge here, and although it is disguised under the veil of insinuation, that circumstance only gives it a character more bitter and perfidious. I know the class of men whom the hon. gentleman called the Liberals of France, and I understand how he meant to characterise them in saying they were called *pétroleux*. But the insinuation that there can be any analogy between the Liberals of the Province of Quebec and those contemptible demagogues, the dregs of the French population, who, at the termination of the Franco-Prussian war,

attempted to burn the city of Paris, and succeeded in burning down some of its finest monuments, I say the insinuation that there can be any possible community of opinion and feeling between those lawless men and the honest, respectable citizens, the law-abiding men who compose the Liberal party of Quebec, is an outrageous slander whichever may be the mouth that utters it, and whenever such a charge is made within my hearing, I feel in duty bound to repel it with scorn and indignation. But it is not the first time that charges of this character have been made against the Liberals of Quebec. For a long series of years they have been repeated over and over again by the Conservative press and by a portion of the Conservative party of the Province; I do not say by all the Conservatives, because I know there are numerous and notable exceptions. Those charges have been made continuously against the Liberal party, not only by insinuation but in plain and emphatic language. We have been represented before the people as a body of men in sympathy with the Radicals and *revolutionnaires* of France, as having community of feeling with them, as being imbued with their principles and, like them, hostile to the clergy and the church. And although the highest authorities of the church years ago pronounced upon this matter, and declared that there was no reason why the Liberals of Quebec should not be considered as being orthodox as the Conservatives, yet we find to-day a portion of the Conservative press and a portion of the Conservative party continuing this same system of misrepresentations against the Liberals, and affecting to be standing in defence of the church against the supposed perversity of Liberal principles. It is fashionable to-day, for a certain press, as it has been formerly, to couple the Liberals of Quebec with the revolutionists of France; it is fashionable to-day, in speaking of the Liberals of Quebec, to associate them in feelings and opinions with the Republicans of France. This is done to-day by a certain portion of the press in Quebec and by a portion of the Conservative party. It is fashionable for that press and a portion of the Conservative party to deprecate, on all occasions, the Republicans of France, and even the French Government. I hold that whatever may be the form of Government that France chooses to adopt, it is none of our business in Quebec; and it is idle for us to comment in public newspapers on that Government, which has nothing to do with the interests of our population. But there is good reason to believe that while a portion of the Conservative press and the Conservative party denounce the Republican Government of France on all occasions, there are others in that party who do not seem to be so horrified as are some of their political associates. We know, Sir, that some of them who stand amongst the most distinguished in that party are proud to carry on their breasts decorations which they received at the hands of that Government, as we know also that some of them did not hesitate to be counted amongst the guests at a banquet which was given at the city of Montreal, in the summer of 1883, in honor of a distinguished Frenchman, a member of the Chamber of Deputies of France, M. Vermond, who was reported at the time by a certain press to be one of the disciples and followers of M. Gambetta. Would you conclude from this last remark that the conduct of these Conservatives I have referred to is liable to blame, for having been present at that banquet, or for having received decorations from the Republican Government of France? On the contrary, in my humble opinion in acting as they have done on those occasions they have shown themselves as being men of good sense and who, whatever might be their political associations, would not let their actions be controlled by the stupid fancies and fanatical notions of a part of their political friends. But let me tell the hon. member for Ottawa that "those who live in glass houses should not throw stones at others."