

Then came a blow which the Conspirators had not anticipated. On December 24th the good old Tory Riding of Cardwell elected an opponent of the Government by over 300 majority. On December 27th, in Montreal Centre a Liberal was elected by over 300 majority, where a Tory had been previously elected by over 500 majority. On December 30th the old Tory Riding of Jacques Cartier elected a Liberal by over 500 majority. Three such blows within a week was appalling, and the crowd became panic-stricken. A portion of the Tory press began to agitate for a change in the leadership.

Parliament met on January 2nd, 1896, and a speech from the Throne was read and the House adjourned. Still no signs of the impending "Bolt." The House was to meet again on the 7th. On January 4th the "Seven Bolters" got in their work. Hon. Geo. E. Foster, Hon. Sir C. Hibbert Tupper, Hon. A. R. Dickey, Hon. Dr. Montague, Hon. John Haggart, Hon. W. B. Ives and Hon. John F. Wood sent in their resignations as members of the Government. On January 7th, the announcement was made in the House by Sir A. P. Caron, the temporary leader of the Government in the House. A carefully prepared statement was read by Hon. Mr. Foster who seemed to be the leader of the "Seven Bolters." This statement has been characterized by old parliamentarians of both sides of politics as the most cold-blooded utterance ever made in a British Parliament, and a Tory newspaper referred to Foster as "Judas Iscariot." Sir Adolphe Caron moved that the House adjourn for two weeks, but the Opposition objected and the House adjourned for the day. It was then that Sir Mackenzie Bowell said, "I HAVE BEEN LIVING IN A NEST OF TRAITORS." No truer words were ever uttered by a public man.

The House met again on the 8th January only to adjourn. On the 9th the House adjourned until the 14th. In the meantime a determined effort was made to freeze out old man Bowell, but the "stubborn old nuisance" hung on. Then the conspirators began to realize that there was a danger of the whole thing going to smash, and that their salaries as "Her Majesty's advisers" were in danger of being lost, and they began to eat humble pie. Eventually a compromise was effected by which Tupper, father, took the place of Tupper, son, in the Cabinet, and the "cats came back." Sir Chas. Tupper eventually succeeded to the leadership of the party only to drag it down to defeat a few months later. He got his seat in the House by the appointment to the Senate of Mr. McKeen, M. P. for Cape Breton, a safe Tory Riding, for which Sir Charles was afterwards elected.

Thus ended, for the time being, one of the most diabolical conspiracies ever hatched. No wonder a leading Tory paper referred to them as "a gang of cut-