

ment knows, the manufacturers know, every intelligent member of the Liberal party knows that the tariff which will be brought down to parliament in the course of the next few days will be as highly protected as any tariff that has been submitted to a Canadian parliament.'

I scarcely think that my hon. friend will prove to be a true prophet in the statement he has made. This government never posed as a free-trade government.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—The government of Canada, antecedent to 1874, had maintained a revenue tariff. When the government of 1874, with my hon. friend on my right (Hon. Sir Richard Cartwright), as Finance Minister were in power, there was a revenue tariff, the average rate being 17½ per cent. In theory they favoured free trade, but it was impracticable under the circumstances then existing. You cannot violently change the tariff of the country. That was done in England when the change was made from a moderate tariff to free trade, but it was done in the face of starving millions who, unless that policy had been adopted, would have been unable to live absolutely.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—Why was it promised?

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Who promised? Promised what?

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—Your platform.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—It was never promised.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—Oh, oh.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—Free trade was the ideal aimed at, but the hon. gentlemen in their last term of eighteen years made it impossible for any government to adopt free trade. What did we find when we came into office? A vast number of industries not naturally to be supported in Canada had been artificially constructed, hundreds of millions of money had been invested, and was this government when it came into power to sweep all that away and confiscate that property? No, they were not so unpatriotic as to do anything of the kind. Whatever their views were on the subject of free trade they felt it was simply impossible. Their task was to moderate, to modify, to soften, and that is what they

did in the tariff of 1897, and to that tariff is largely due the increased prosperity of which I have given a few illustrations. More particularly the British preference which brought down even that tariff to one-third eventually of its ordinary basis. So that the tariff was brought, by that action, as low as it was reasonably possible to bring it. And what was the effect? Our trade with the British islands which had been steadily falling, which had in 1896 fallen to somewhere about twenty-five millions, and gradually got down to twenty millions, is now going up by leaps and bounds. It has now reached, if I am correctly advised, in the neighbourhood of \$60,000,000. The hon. gentleman's criticisms were not well placed, and I think he will find he has not been altogether a true prophet when the budget speech has been delivered. I make no observations as to what is likely to be done, but certainly it will not be the high protective tariff which the hon. gentleman has foreshadowed.

The hon. gentleman maintained that our tariff of 1897 was no change from the protective policy. I maintain that it was. It went as far as we were justified in going. That was the opinion of those who criticised it at the time. I have under my hand here a speech of Sir Charles Tupper when that tariff was going through the House. What did he say about it? He foreshadowed destruction to the industries of Canada. He believed that it was going to destroy the enterprises that were built up by the government of which he had been a member. He stated that the industries of the country would be paralyzed and asked if hon. gentlemen were prepared to vote for the destruction of Canadian industries. He declared that a deeper wrong could not be inflicted upon Canada than would be inflicted by the adoption, of the proposed tariff.

That was the opinion of a gentleman who was prominent in the councils of the Conservative party when our tariff of 1897 was introduced. Was his prophecy correct? What has been the prosperity of the factories of Canada, with the single exception of the woollen factory? They have been expanding year by year, and millions of additional capital has been invested. They would have been larger to-day if they