

party. In a newspaper which is edited by one of the lieutenants of the hon. leader of the Opposition—I refer to the hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Mills)—the *London Advertiser*, the following words could be read concerning the programme of the Liberal party a few days before the opening of the Session:

“We trust that the leaders of the Reform party, in the House of Commons, will avail themselves of the present Session to enunciate their views on those public questions which are likely to present themselves for solution at the next general elections.”

But that is not all. Last year the *Montreal Witness*, which is also a Grit paper, published a correspondence from a person who occupies a prominent position in the Liberal party of Ontario. I think it was Mr. Robertson, of St. Catharines, a well known Liberal. This friend of the Liberal party complained in that correspondence that his party had no programme, and that his chiefs were deficient in energy and unanimity. Here are a few of the complaints he made:

“A general survey of the condition and prospects of the Liberal party in Canada leaves, on the observer, three distinct impressions. 1st. That the Liberal chief displays a great want of energy; 2nd. That his leading organ is conspicuous for its timidity and want of nerve; and 3rd. That unanimity is entirely wanting. Whether Mr. Blake and the *Globe* are influenced by public opinion, or public opinion is influenced by the attitude of the Liberal leader and his organ, may be open to dispute. It, however, is certain that Mr. Blake is making no serious effort to rally the forces of Liberalism, and that the *Globe*, while so bold and even dictatorial, is now a veritable slave to every class or organisation which may wield any political influence. There is scarcely any question of real interest to the people of Canada which the *Globe* has the courage to thoroughly and impartially discuss. We have *ad nauseam* editorial upon editorial, written in a strain of dull mediocrity, on the crimes, real or supposed, of the Dominion Government.

“A study of the political system gives no great encouragement to those who look for an active and aggressive Liberalism, and for any well-united and well-concerted attack on the present abuses of authority. A homogeneous Liberal party in Canada has no existence. There are Liberals in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime Provinces, but there is no union between what should be sections of one great army. Local issues determine to a great extent the results of elections in some of the smaller Provinces, and are not without their effect on the smaller ones. No great principles, no common policy, unite the Liberals of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick with those of Quebec and Ontario. The battle of Dominion elections is fought by regiments recognising no common commander, and the result is anarchy and defeat.”

And this is not the only Liberal paper from which I might quote. Here is another extract from the *Waterford Star*, of the 26th of January, 1885. An article headed “Reform Platform” concludes as follows:—

“We repeat that what the Reform party needs at the present crisis is aggressive leaders and representatives in Parliament and fewer good-Lord good-devil men. We have endeavored to keep posted as to the politics of the day, yet if any one asked us to define the policy of our party, we would have to say, with the *Mail*, “We haven’t got any;” at least, we haven’t been able to discover it. We write the above in no captious spirit, for the mere purpose of fault-finding, but because a sense of duty compels it. We have suffered two ignominious defeats as a party at the polls, and will suffer a third unless we become more aggressive and take steps to define our policy and divide the House on it, to show the people we mean business and not mere clap-trap.”

Well, if the Liberal members, if the Liberal papers, if the Liberal electors, have that same opinion of their chiefs, and come to the conclusion that they have no programme which could be accepted even by the Liberal party, I ask them how the Conservatives who, for a thousand good reasons, have no confidence whatever in the opinions and policy of our hon. friends opposite, could be converted to their opinions. But that is not all. Some time ago the Liberal party gave a great dinner in the city of Montreal. On that occasion the member for East Quebec delivered a speech, in which he expounded certain views which will astonish those who have not yet read it:

“Gentlemen, remember one thing: if the whole population was composed of such men as the members of the *Club National* we would be independent already.”

So that the hon. member for East Quebec is in favor of immediate independence, even at the risk of throwing us into the arms of the United States.—

“But such men as you are a minority in the country.”

Mr. TASSÉ.

That has been known for a long time.

“If to-day we are not independent, if we are still a colony, the fault, if there is a fault, does not lie with the metropolis, but with the Canadian people who, let us admit the fact, do not deserve their independence.”

So that the member for East Quebec thinks that the Canadian people do not deserve their independence.—

“Gentlemen, before we get our independence, the people of our country must be taught to be patriotic, for I do not hesitate to say that they are deficient in patriotism.”

According to the leader of the French Liberals, the people of this country are deficient in patriotism. This is a high compliment, which will, no doubt, be appreciated at its full value.—

“I can say it unhesitatingly, because their answer is written in plain letters on the ballots of our representation. Look at what is taking place in Quebec. Out of sixty-five members, you will find fifteen in the ranks of the Liberal party. Am I to be told that we are a patriotic people? Am I to be told that the people who has not resented the abominations of which we have been the victims since the month of October, 1879, is a people of patriots? For my part—I regret it for the country’s sake—but I repeat it, our people are deficient in patriotism. What, gentlemen! when the party who has been guilty, on the 29th of October, of the darkest treason ever mentioned in the history of any country; when the party who has cut down the head of patriot-martyr, when that party has, under such circumstances, found grace before the people, and when the people, instead of nailing these traitors to the pillory, have absolved them, and what is more, have rewarded them, am I to be told that patriotism is to be found among such men? If we had our independence what would we do with it? I fear that we would rank with the nations where public interest is made subservient to private interest. I fear that we would come down to the rank of the people of Mexico, Guatemala, South America, and ever so many others.”

Well, I would like to know what the supporters of the hon. member for East Quebec think of such an astounding opinion. I should like to know from the hon. member who will address the House after me to-night, what he thinks of his chief, when the latter says that the people of the country are lacking in patriotism because they do not claim their independence? Not content with underrating their own country, the Liberal chiefs have become so enraged with disappointed ambition that they even insult the people. The member for East Quebec wound up his remarks by saying:

“Now you will, perhaps, ask me, before I am done, what the chances of the Liberal party are. To-day we are not very numerous”—

I believe our friends opposite hold a similar opinion on this point.—

An hon. MEMBER. We have the quality.

Mr. TASSÉ. I have no doubt that is the opinion of our hon. friends opposite. Only the people do not hold the same view. Let us hear more from the member for East Quebec:

“At Ottawa we are hardly more numerous than we are at Quebec. Here we are fifteen out of sixty-five; there we are sixty out of two hundred and ten. I have often thought that the Liberal party was like the saints, that is to say, our Kingdom is not in this world.”—

It takes a great stretch of imagination to find points of resemblance between the Liberal party and the saints, even on this point:

“But I begin to have ideas which are more bright and pleasant.”

I do not see why the French leader should begin to see things under a more pleasant aspect, for in spite of repeated contests his party has never exceeded the number of the small *Rouge Pleiade*, whose memory is far-famed. I do not think that the Province of Quebec have more confidence to-day in the policy of the Liberals than they had formerly. On the contrary, all the elections which have taken place, or nearly all, have about maintained the glorious position held by the Conservative party the day after the great contest of 1882. And while, on the one hand, Mr. Laurier complains that his country does not deserve independence, we see the hon. member for East York swearing by all that is good and great that he intends to die for the English flag.