

to secure the bargain for a preference with Great Britain, as he might have done, but he has shown that, since 1896, he has led a government that care not a whit for the carrying out of their promises, but are ready to appeal to the people to put them into power, promising that they will effect certain changes, and, when they attain power, care nothing about fulfilling their promises. When we go to the country, to sweep the country as we did in 1878, these hon. gentlemen hope to be able to tell the people that no objection was made to the things they have done—like this old story about the expenditure to which they say no one has objected. They would be very glad to be able to say that the hon. member for Bonaventure had called the whole House to witness that all were proud of the Prime Minister as a public man, and nobody in the House contradicted him. It is for this reason that I am obliged, unpleasant as it may be, to speak out for the grand old county of Lincoln and Niagara, and to declare that we are not all proud of the premier in his official capacity. We are not proud of a premier who promised to reduce the expenditure, who promised to reduce the public debt, who promised to reduce the number of cabinet ministers, but increased them all, who promised to do everything he could think of to catch a few votes, thinking that the people who had begun to say: 'We might as well have a change anyhow,' could be won by these promises to give him their votes, and that if he got into power he would not be obliged to redeem them. And, worst of all, being trusted a second time with power—for the people of Canada are a good-natured people, and they said: Well, the government slipped by the way-side once, but we will give them another chance—he has not even respect enough for the people to tell the people what their policy is going to be. It must be either because they know that the people will not believe them, or because they have no policy, and have been only waiting until the leader of the opposition should give them one that they can do business with. I think the Minister of Finance has given us a good hint. He does not give the opposition credit for pointing the way. But, in a couple of years he will say: Lo, and behold—as the premier said—we now have the same old policy as we had in 1878; the leader of the opposition has approved, and so have all his followers, and we will give it to you; now, gentlemen of the Dominion of Canada, voters and electors why not return us again to power?—the combined wisdom of the opposition could not suggest any better policy than this we offer you, for here is the resolution that they proposed in 1901: we have acted upon that policy, we have got a preference with Great Britain, and you ought to return us to power, because we have given you the

Mr. LANCASTER.

policy that the opposition wanted to give you in 1901 and which we then opposed.

Mr. JAMES J. HUGHES (King's P.E.I.) Mr. Speaker, not being accustomed to public speaking either in or out of parliament, I rise with more than ordinary diffidence, perhaps more than ordinary nervousness, to address this House for the first time, but I presume that the House will give to me that measure of generosity and kindness and forbearance that, I believe, it always extends to members who speak under similar circumstances. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Lancaster) who has just taken his seat, seems to have some grievance against the government, because he says he does not know what the policy of the government is. The government has been in power four or five years, and surely the hon. gentleman has intelligence enough to know what the policy of the government was in that time—and the Finance Minister, in his budget speech the other day, said there would be no change in the policy of the government, and I presume that the hon. gentleman, if he was present on that occasion, must have heard the Finance Minister making that statement. The hon. gentleman seems also to have a grievance against the people of Canada because they returned this government to power on November 7 last. That is unfortunate for the hon. gentleman, but the people generally have their way in these things. I understand that the hon. gentleman is the representative of Niagara. I presume he has lived for many years near the great falls, and, perhaps, the roar and rush of those mighty waters may have influenced his style of public speaking. It did not strike me that the hon. gentleman said anything new upon the question, or anything specific that I am obliged to answer specifically. In the few remarks I am to make, in a general way, I presume, an answer will be found to anything he has said. Now, during the progress of this debate I have obtained some information. I have found, amongst other things, that the opposition do not agree with the government on a great many points. I also found that the opposition do not agree among themselves on a great many points. And I think I have also learned that, generally speaking, or at least, on a good many occasions, each member of the opposition managed to disagree with himself. But, while there was this great divergence of opinion, there were some points upon which we all agreed—Liberal and Conservative, government and opposition—namely, that the country was eminently prosperous, and that in the last few years the development of the trade of the country was something really wonderful, and far greater than at any previous time in the country's history. And I noticed that the government was under the impression that they deserved some little credit for some share of this pros-