

this question, I have no fears for the Liberals of Canada. We do not boast of our loyalty, but we have it in our hearts, and not upon our lips as the hon. gentlemen opposite have it, and we do not fear that we shall be seduced away from what we believe to be right in principle. The right hon. gentleman said that this policy was hostile to Great Britain. Again I deny it; but, Sir, I am free to admit, that I, for one, when I made up my mind in favour of this policy, looked up first and last to the interest of Canada and not to the interest of England. I am a British subject and I never forgot it yet; but while I am a British subject I remember that I am also a Canadian and I sit in the Canadian Parliament. Let the British subject who sits in the British Parliament look after the interests of England. When this Confederation was organized (and no one knows it better than the right hon. gentleman himself), it was organized with a view of forming a nation of this United Canada. The hon. gentleman must have foreseen, since this was to be a nation, that some day or other the interest of this young nation would come in contact with the interest of the motherland. It is absurd to suppose that, situated as we are, the interest of Canada will always be identical with the interest of Great Britain. Some day must come when these interests will clash, and whatever the hon. gentleman may be, for my part whenever it comes to that, and, however much I must regret the necessity, I will stand by my native land. Let me ask, Sir, why did your ancestors, and why did my ancestors, leave their native land? Nothing is so dear to the heart of man as the land where he first saw the light of the world, the land which is associated with his family ties; but, Sir, did your ancestors leave their motherland in Great Britain and Ireland, and did my ancestors leave France, because they loved their motherland less? No, Sir: the truth is they were not satisfied with the condition of their own country, and, therefore, to make their condition better, and for the happiness and comfort of their families, they parted from their native land, not because they loved it less, but because they loved Canada more. Now, Sir, we are agitating, and we have agitated this policy of unrestricted reciprocity, because we believe it is in the best interests of the country, and not because we love England less, but because we love Canada more. I have again and again affirmed for my part that I am as fondly attached to British institutions as any man of English blood, but I have never hesitated to say, and I again repeat, that whether for ill or for good, whether for my condemnation or my justification, whether for right or for wrong, as long as there is in me the breath of life, my guiding star, and my only guiding star, shall be: Canada first, Canada last, and Canada forever.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I have listened with great interest to the speech of my hon. friend. It has much of his eloquence, much of his facility of language and much of his happiness of expression, but it has a tone of bitterness and a tone of exasperation which is not usual in the speeches of the hon. gentleman. I can, however, quite pardon the feeling which has induced and prompted that speech. If there ever was a party disappointed, and if there ever was an hon.

member or a public man disappointed in the result of the late election, it is my hon. friend. The certainty which he had in his own breast, the confidence which he had that the country was with him—a confidence in which his party all joined—was so great, that the disappointment must have been dreadful. The hon. gentleman went to bed on the night of the 4th of March confidently believing that he would be sent for in a few days to form a Government, but the illusion disappeared by nine o'clock on the following morning. I can pardon, therefore, the feeling the hon. gentleman has, and the only thing that I feel personally aggrieved at is his assertion that there was on the part of the Government a dishonourable abandonment of the statement in this House on the subject of dissolution. It was known by everybody, it was stated by myself, it was stated by my colleagues, that we had no intention of dissolving—that to all appearances Parliament would last for its whole term; and, therefore the postponement of revising the lists was announced. But, if the hon. gentleman will follow up the debate, he will find that, after my hon. friend the Secretary of State made his speech, I stated distinctly to the House, that I would make no pledge that there would not be a dissolution; I stated that it would be unconstitutional to make any such pledge. One thing, however, is clear, that the hon. gentleman and his friends did not like the dissolution; and it is strange that they should not like it when he was so confident that the result would be a triumph of his party, and the defeat forever of the Liberal-Conservative clique that had so long misgoverned the country. But the hon. gentleman, perhaps, has not the advantage, or the happiness rather, of bringing all his friends with him. I think the hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright) stated on two separate occasions that he had no objections to a dissolution, because the voters' lists were all on his side. Is it not so that that statement was made? And it is the fact, Mr. Speaker, that if either party has suffered from the delay in the revision of the voters' lists, it is the party of which I have the honour just now to be the leader. Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have won; it is a Pyrrhic victory to be sure; it is the forerunner of defeat, so the hon. gentleman says. Well, I think my friends and the country can put up with a prognostication of that kind, which is to be fulfilled five years hence unless there is to be another dissolution. The hon. gentleman knows perfectly well, because I can see that he has been looking into the authorities, that it is quite understood among public men that the propriety or impropriety of a dissolution is not discussed in Parliament; the prerogative of the Crown is admitted. While a dissolution is threatened, if Parliament is sitting, there can be remonstrance against the proposed dissolution, but when once it is granted, the prerogative of the Crown is admitted, and admitted without a remark.

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell). Legally?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. As Todd says:

“By general consent the alternatives of resignation of office or of dissolution of Parliament are now left to the discretion and responsibility of Ministers.”—

And so on. The whole tenor of modern parliamentary decisions is this: that an appeal to the