

ceding years. They succeeded an administration that had been in open, shameful and avowed rebellion; an administration that cared so little for their duties as statesmen as to subject themselves to the laughter of their opponents, while they caused pain and heartburnings to their supporters. When the Liberals came into power, they found want of confidence everywhere; they found depression in trade and they found a state of disorder in race and religious circles such as never existed in this country before, in reference to the education question. That was the legacy left by the Conservatives to the Liberal government, and the Liberals became the residuary legatees of all that. It devolved upon the Liberals to meet the condition of affairs manfully, and how well they succeeded, all who are not politically prejudiced, recognized. I do not say that the Conservative government should be held responsible for their deficits, or for the depression in trade, but I merely point out now that such was the condition of things when the Liberals attained power. For four years the Liberals have carried on the affairs of this country, during which it has prospered, and as an excuse for this prosperity, the Conservatives tell us that it is because we have continued the same old policy. If we have continued the same policy as the Conservatives had, it is rather peculiar that we are not receiving their support. If it is the same policy, the protest made by the manufacturers the other day is a very strange thing. If it is the same policy, it is a remarkable thing that our trade is so much greater than it was when the Conservatives had that policy. Surely like should produce like. Let me ask gentlemen opposite this: If it is the same policy, will any one of these gentlemen say that should such an unlikely thing as a change of government occur, that they will retain the existing tariff in its entirety. There is nothing like testing people. If it is the same policy, why do the Conservatives tell the manufacturers that they are in danger? I was surprised to hear the hon. gentleman from Addington (Mr. Bell) say that when the preferential tariff was made 25 per cent, the manufacturers were told that no further reduction would be made. He must have forgotten the statement made by the Finance Minister (Mr. Fielding), when he told the manufacturers that that was not the end of it, and that they had better prepare for further reductions. The statement was never made that there would be no further preference granted, nor is the statement made now that this is going to be the end of the reduction. I am within the judgment of the House when I say that gentlemen opposite told us when they were in power that the following were sure signs of the prosperous state of the country. The deposits in the savings banks—how we used to hear about these! The deposits in the chartered banks, the advance in life

insurance, the public credit of England—I will not weary the House by giving the statistics; but in all these there has been a larger increase in the last four years than there ever was before in the history of this country. When the ex-Minister of Finance (Mr. Foster) rose in his place and said it was unfair to contrast the last three years of Conservative rule with the three years under the present government, because times with them were hard, I was reminded of what a distinguished French statesman once said—not as a question of morals, but in view of what always happened—that a lie was always a blunder. Was it true? Why, I have here under my hand the precious literature that was sent out to the country in tons during the last elections. For example, here is an open letter which the Conservatives used all over the Dominion; and you will be surprised to learn that in 1896, eighteen years after the time the Mackenzie government went out of power, the fearful spectre of the bad times under Mackenzie was held up as a warning to the people not to allow the Liberals to come in. Listen to the reasons given as a sort of apology for the Conservative party voting as they did upon the Manitoba school question:

As good Conservatives we could not take the tremendous responsibility in reference to the business interests of Canada. Had we defeated the government, who would have succeeded to power? We remembered what happened in 1874-79—how trade diminished, how the revenues went down and the taxes went up, how the debt rolled up to the figure of \$8,000,000 annually, and deficits were the order of each year; how a hundred thousand farmers petitioned for protection, the artisans walked the streets looking for work, and general depression existed in all branches of business.

Eighteen years afterwards the people of this country were called upon to look back to a similar state of things. Never mind what the Conservatives had done; never mind if they voted for the Remedial Bill against their will. The fearful terror was that the Liberals would get into power and bring back the condition of things that existed in 1878. Is it well for the ex-Minister of Finance to say now, it was mean to make the comparison? The Conservative party after eighteen years could take advantage of what was not true, that the Mackenzie government and the Liberal party were responsible for the depression that then existed. I am not using the argument; I am simply pointing out their position when any man uses their own pet argument against themselves. I remember that in the mining towns of Pictou from 1878 downwards, there was not an election held in which those poor miners were not told: 'If you vote for the Liberals, you will have the same dark days that existed at the time Mackenzie was in power'; and those poor fellows, believing that those men were speaking the truth, felt that their bread and but-