

interviewed and had made a very positive statement in regard to the coming elections, he thought it worth while to take up fifteen minutes in his speech before a great audience to point out how the Minister of Finance had made certain statements which he should not have made, and if he had made them how diametrically opposed they were to the facts of the case and to the statements made by other Ministers. Sir, the fact as regards that was that I had never seen the reporter to my knowledge, and I was certainly not interviewed.

Mr. LAURIER. I apologize to the hon. gentleman certainly, and I beg to assure him that I will never believe another report that appears in a Conservative paper.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. FOSTER. After the hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House get through with the satisfaction which this illusion has given them, I think it will be my duty to prick that bubble as well, and to say that unfortunately for that version of the case, the interview did not appear in a Conservative paper.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. What paper was it?

Mr. FOSTER. If I wait a little while, I am sure I shall get from hon. gentlemen that same delightful consistency and concurrence of opinion as to the paper that characterizes their utterances on other parts of their policy. The hon. gentleman then spoke of the elections which have taken place on the 17th day of April, and endeavoured to draw a good deal of comfort for himself and his party from the result of those elections. Amongst other things he claimed a victory in the city of Quebec in the election of Mr. Dobell; and, to prove that a victory for his party and his policy, he read the principal planks in the platform placed before the electors by Mr. Dobell, in which platform the hon. gentleman read word for word, article for article, what has been in the main the political creed and faith of the Liberal-Conservative party for the last thirteen or fourteen years. The hon. gentleman says that Mr. Dobell is in favour of an increase of foreign trade. So is the Liberal-Conservative party, and so it has been; but in every endeavour the Liberal-Conservative party has made to increase our foreign trade, by great lines of railway to open up and develop the resources of the country, without which our products could not be sent to foreign countries—in every effort which this party has made to subsidize great lines of steamers to make quick and regular communications with the great trading countries of the world—my hon. friend and his adherents have opposed us tooth and nail upon the floor of this House; and yet, forsooth, he claims Mr. Dobell as a supporter of his policy, because Mr. Dobell

very wisely is in favour of an increase of foreign trade, which foreign trade has been continually increasing under Liberal-Conservative rule, which foreign trade under the regime of the hon. gentlemen who had power in this country from 1874 to 1878 decreased from \$200,000,000 odd down to about \$154,000,000, and has increased from that small sum \$250,000,000 under Conservative rule. We are quite satisfied with Mr. Dobell, and we shall be quite satisfied with any gentleman who comes to this House as a representative who has for one article of his faith a desire to increase the foreign trade of Canada, for the foreign trade of Canada can only be increased by the development and the increase of the internal resources and the internal trade of this country. Well, Sir, he says that Mr. Dobell proved his sympathy with the party of gentlemen opposite by saying that he was in favour of reciprocity with the United States on a fair and equal basis. These are almost the very words that have been in the platform of the Liberal-Conservative party for these many years. But Mr. Dobell did not say that he was in favour of Unrestricted Reciprocity with the United States. He did not say that he was willing to pull down the tariff wall between ourselves and one country at the expense of putting a discrimination amounting to prohibition against every other country in the world in its trade with Canada. And although Mr. Dobell did say that he was in favour of lowering the tariff rate, in so far as it could possibly be done, consistent with the best interests of the country, we do not see in that expression of his, nor can it be found there, proof that he favours free trade as it exists in Great Britain. Well, Sir, my hon. friend was rather mild, and, for him, somewhat tame in his criticism up to this point. But he braced himself for the occasion, and he regained his old vigour when, by some good fortune, he happened to light upon the idea conveyed by the word depression. In one moment the exultant spirit of the war-horse returned, and he laid about vigorously to show into what a terrible state of affairs Canada had been plunged. He sought to show that this was a most serious time in the history of Canada; that we were burdened on the one hand with a national debt which was crushing the life out of us, and on the other hand by the taxation which must be imposed to meet the expenses of the country. And he ended up with the statement that it was this protective tariff and this protective principle which was the root of all the evil, which was despoiling the country, and which had brought it to this crisis. But, curiously enough, he went on directly afterwards to say that it was impossible to avoid periods of depression. But he stated, and wrongly stated, if he will allow me to say so, the belief of the Liberal-Conservative party by whom the National