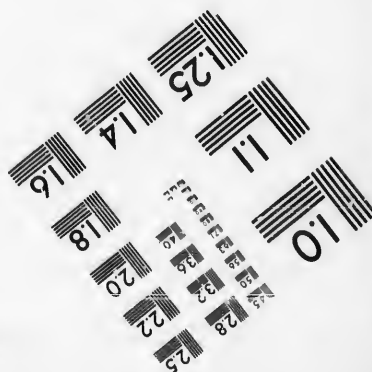
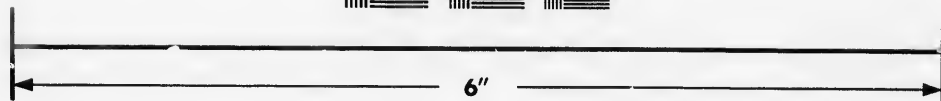
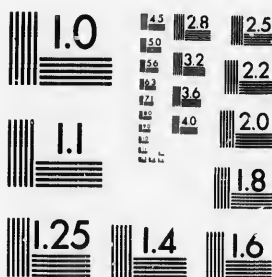


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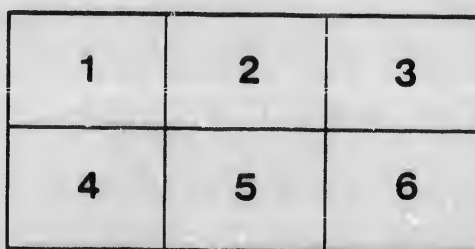
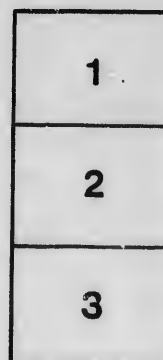
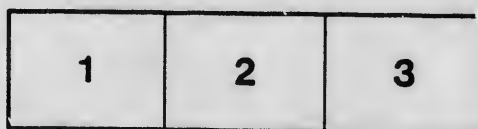
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THE POLITICAL SITUATION

AS VIEWED BY AN

EX-COLLEAGUE OF SIR JOHN MACDONALD'S.

Hon. William Macdougall, Minister of Public Works in Sir John Macdonald's first Government after Confederation, and until recent years one of his leading supporters, addressed a public meeting in Toronto, on November 9th, 1886, in the following significant language:—

It gives me great pleasure to have this opportunity of speaking for a very few minutes to the good citizens of my native city of Toronto. My views upon public matters twenty years ago, thirty years ago, were pretty well known to the citizens of Toronto. (Hear, hear.) Since 1882 I have not represented any constituency, and have not been authorized to speak in the name of any class of my fellow countrymen. I came to this city this morning on private business and found there was to be a large gathering of the citizens of Toronto to hear the leaders of the great Reform party. I felt that I was somewhat of a leader in the Reform party of that day to which I refer, and I felt some curiosity to be present in order that I might hear and judge whether the principles of the Reform party of this day had very much altered. After listening to the splendid speech of your Reform leader, Hon. Edward Blake, and the remarks of the gentleman who has just taken his seat, (Mr. Cameron, M.P., West Huron,) with regard to the conduct of the Administration of the day, it seems to me the line of argument and the kind of appeal which used to be effective in

THOSE OLD DAYS

are quite as effective to-day. I am not here to speak in the name of any political party. I am a Canadian and an ex-politician. I am out of public life, but I am still very much interested in public questions. I read the newspapers carefully. I take both *The Globe* and *The Mail*. I take them both, and I read also the independent newspapers—so called—(cheers and laughter)—and I form my own opinions. I have been allowed to make a few remarks, and I avail myself gladly of the opportunity. I speak to you as an old politician, one, I am sorry to say, of some length of experience. I speak as one who has not agreed in the past, and may not agree to-day, in the propositions that may be put forth by the political gentlemen who sit upon this platform. I reserve my own opinion as to their conduct, but having in view what has been done and what is proposed, I have no hesitation in saying that I think the time has come when the people of this country ought to

DISMISS THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION

and put a better one in its place. (Great applause.) In 1878 I visited a good many constituencies and spoke from a good many platforms in conjunction with, or at the same time as, Sir John Macdonald. He was then in Opposition, and a Reform Government was in power. One or two questions were then agitated which seemed to me to be well adapted, if embodied in the laws of the country, to promote the prosperity of our country. One of these was a subject which the hon. leader has alluded to to-night. It has been called the National Policy. I was a free trader in principle; I am to-day if I can find another free trader to trade with. But I would like to see the free trading country that will reciprocate with us before I commit myself to free trade as a positive policy. At that time,

it seemed to me our position alongside a great protective nation compelled us to frame our policy in accordance with peculiar circumstances which we could not alter, and I therefore advocated a change in the tariff of the country. The Opposition came into power and adopted a change in the tariff. But I am sorry to say that they went far beyond the principle advocated and beyond the reason which was given for the change of policy. (Loud applause.)

A PROTECTIVE POLICY

may be very good at 25 per cent. and very oppressive at 35 per cent. (Hear, hear.) I must confess I was a good deal disappointed, not only in the extreme length to which Sir Leonard Tilley proceeded in the forming of his tariff, but with regard to some other matters of very great importance, some other matters which have been alluded to to-night. I felt that, looking at my own antecedents, at the arguments I had used before the country, I could not continue to support the Administration, and I took my own course—an independent course—in Parliament. Now, you have heard to-night some of the transactions which will justify I think, any honest, independent, patriotic Conservative, in withdrawing his confidence from the Government calling itself Liberal-Conservative, which has been guilty of such transactions. (Loud and prolonged applause.) It so happened that, in returning to my profession at Ottawa, and having in charge the interests of clients having claims upon or transactions with the Government, a good many of these matters came to my knowledge in a way which it would be improper for me to detail upon this platform. But

THIS ONE FACT

was impressed upon my mind—that the supporters of the Government in Parliament and many of their supporters outside of Parliament were engaged in a conspiracy to use the public property and the public wealth for their own private and individual advantage. (Great cheering.) And if the members of the Government did not participate in the benefits, they allowed these transactions to go on and to this extent; at any rate they were *articeps criminis*. Seeing this I took the course which seemed to me the proper one, of withdrawing my confidence, and in 1882 I was a candidate in opposition to the Government in the great territory of Algoma. I carried that constituency; I carried a majority of the legal votes, but I was beaten by five hundred votes of the navvies engaged in constructing the Canadian Pacific Railway who were loaded on trains at Rat Portage and carried down to Port Arthur, voting, each of them, at every polling place between those two points. (Cheers and laughter.) The

CONSTITUENCY BEING NINE HUNDRED MILES LONG

by I don't know how many broad, was rather too large to justify a man not famed for his riches in entering a protest. I made a statement of the facts and left the electors to remedy the grievance if they felt disposed to do so. What I have to say to-night shall be very brief. I believe it is in the interest of Canada, in the interest of every honest man in Canada, Conservative or Reform, that a change of Administration should take place, that the Government, which has promoted or permitted transactions of the kind detailed here to-night—no matter what their claims for the past may have been—should be declared to have lost the confidence of the people of the country. And if the people have regard to the interests of their country for all times to come, it is their duty to find some other Government to take their place. In this country, as in most others under constitutional

systems, there are, by some process of political events, generally two great parties. In this country we have practically but two political parties, two organized parties, two parties that can at the impending general election make their influence prevail—the Reform party and the Conservative party. I believe if any remedy is to be applied to the diseases of the State, we must look to one or other of these parties to apply it. I do not think we can look to the Conservative party. They have winked at these practices. They have tolerated those who have been guilty of them. In a great many constituencies they are prepared to support these men, covered as they are with the charges which you have heard, and which, as Mr. Cameron has said, have not even been denied on the floor of Parliament. I do not, therefore, think that their continuance in power is likely to remedy the

DISEASES OF THE STATE.

Now, don't you think it would be a wise thing to give the hon. gentleman with his great ability, with his great Parliamentary experience, with his strong denunciations of the frauds and wrongs—the presumption I think is, that the hon. gentleman (Mr. Blake), if power was placed in his hands, would undertake to vindicate his right to the confidence of his countrymen, by introducing measures and adopting a policy which would be very different to that which he has condemned. (Applause.) I have been opposed on several platforms and in Parliament to Mr. Blake; I have had occasion to differ from him, to argue with him. Sometimes I thought I had the better of the argument, but it required always great care and considerable skill and diplomatic capacity to overturn his views. But, at the same time, I will say this, asking no favour at his hands, now or hereafter—that I believe that of all the public men who have come within my observation, that hon. gentleman (Mr. Blake), is the man whose character, whose ability, and whose knowledge of public affairs adapt him to fill the position of

LEADER OF THE GREAT REFORM PARTY

of Canada. (Loud and prolonged applause.) Let me say to my old Conservative friends—for at one time I found in the Conservative party a considerable number of active, intelligent, influential men who were kind enough to say that I was entitled as a public man to their confidence, and with whom on certain occasions, and with reference to certain measures I co-operated—let me say to you, that from my point of view, in addition to the matters that have been referred to to-night, the charge which I have to make against Sir John Macdonald is this:—Sir John was one of the framers of Confederation, one of the ablest men concerned in producing that constitution—and I give him credit for that. I know it because I was associated with him very closely, and I know that he gave his mind and intelligence and knowledge towards framing the Act of Confederation and producing a constitution which, if thoroughly and honestly carried out would promote the happiness of the people of the great Dominion. But

I CHARGE HIM HERE

before this audience with having, within the last three or four years, done all that a man in his position could do to destroy the very foundation of that constitution. (Applause.) As one of his colleagues, as one of the public men of Canada responsible for the initiation and the construction of that constitution and the putting of it into force into Canada, I say that I have a right to charge him before the people of Canada with having neglected his duty, and with having permitted the

work of his own hand to be rendered almost valueless, at all events put into such a condition that if a change is not made a revolution, or a great constitutional change of another kind will be necessary in order to govern the people of this country. (Applause.) Let me mention one case. I speak of the two branches of Parliament, the Lower House, as it is called, the House of the representatives of the people, and

THE SENATE.

My hon. friend, Mr. Mowat—(applause)—knows very well that in the Quebec Conference, when the question of the Constitution of the Senate was under discussion—when it was being determined what form it should take, whether it should be a nominated, or a representative body—there was great contention upon it in that conference. He will remember that I moved, on that occasion, and I believe he seconded the resolution, that the selection of the Senate should be by election. He will remember that motion was not carried, and that the principle of nomination by the Crown was adopted. And it was understood and agreed that when the nominations were to be made, the selection could be made from the two great political parties of the country; that is, should be no

ATTEMPT TO PACK THE SENATE.

with the members of either political party, but each party would be given to both political parties. And the consequence was—Mr. Brown having left the Government—when we went to London to obtain the Imperial Act, the nominations were made by Sir John Macdonald, representing the Conservative party, and by Mr. Howland and myself representing the Liberal party; and we made a Senate so far as that operation was concerned, which would not be a stumbling block to any political party. At all events, that principle was laid down. But what has been the result? Sir John has filled the vacancies in the Senate from his own political party exclusively, until now there are only fourteen Liberals in that body. Think for a moment how such a constitution as that would work if Mr. Blake should come into power with a majority in the Lower House. How would his measures be received in the Senate with an overwhelming majority opposed to him? The Senate would block, thwart and mortify his measures. It is a body having no authority in this country. It has ceased to be a place where any one interested in the debates of Parliament goes to hear a question discussed. Its proceedings are printed at great expense, but no one reads them. Why? Because it has no authority in the minds of the people. (Applause.)

NO ONE LOOKS TO THE SENATE

for the initiation of measures of interest to the people, for any honest amendments or improvements of the measures passed by the other House. And, therefore, from my point of view, as one responsible for the framing of this constitution—though my voice on this matter was on the other side—from that point of view Sir John and those of his colleagues who have brought about this state of things are no longer entitled to the confidence of the people of this country, who desire that the union of these Provinces from sea to sea—this half of a continent which is our inheritance—shall endure. I mention these circumstances for examination. Of course, there are many others, if time would permit me, which I could give as sufficient reasons why the people of this country should withdraw their confidence from the present Government at Ottawa, and follow the political party now led by the Hon. Mr. Blake. (Loud and prolonged cheering.)

