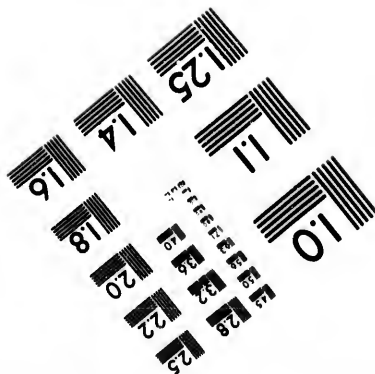
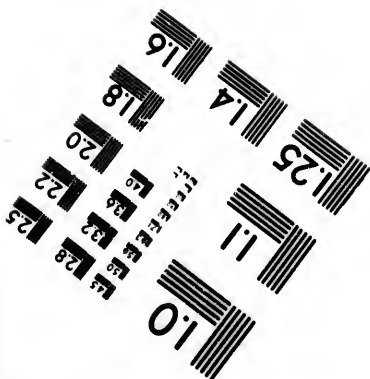
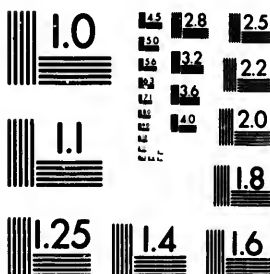


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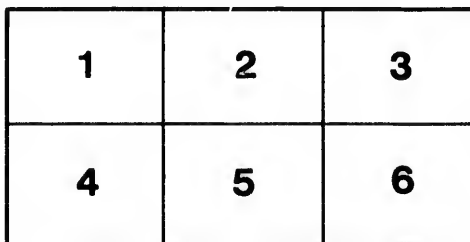
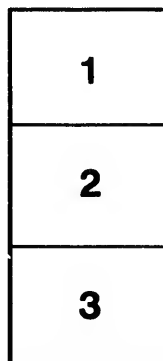
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THE
BROKEN PLEDGES
OF LIBERALS

SPEECH

— IN —

REPLY TO SIR WILFRID LAURIER

— BY —

HON. GEORGE E. FOSTER,

HOUSE OF COMMONS, OTTAWA,

MARCH 21ST, 1899.

1899



HON. GEORGE E. FOSTER.

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THE BROKEN PLEDGES.

Hon. George E. Foster's reply to Sir Wilfrid Laurier's abusive speech in the House of Commons on the 21st of March, 1899, will long be remembered by those who heard him. It showed clearly the inconsistency of the Liberal leaders, their lack of sincerity and breach of faith. The speech was as follows:

Mr. Foster. After the rather exciting interlude, Mr. Speaker, between the end of my hon. friend's speech and the moment of my rising, I shall endeavor as briefly as I can, and with a proper fear of the somewhat unnecessary criticism and fault-finding of the right hon. leader of the Opposition, to follow out some of the questions which have been raised in the present debate;



and if I should exceed the length of the time to which the right hon. Prime Minister thinks members of the Opposition should confine themselves in the presence of his high-mightiness I shall have to bear calmly his criticisms and scoldings, and trust myself to the larger and less excited and I think more generous sentiments of the electorate outside of this House, and of my own friends on this side.

AN ANGRY PREMIER CRITICIZED.

One thing is certainly apparent to the members of this House, and will no doubt be equally apparent to the country, when the speech that has just been delivered comes to be read, although I grant you, Mr. Speaker, that a great deal of the pique and anger and churlishness which showed itself in that speech from the very beginning cannot possibly appear in cold print. I think it will be apparent to this House and the country that my right hon. friend met the questions which were raised last night in this debate in a spirit quite different from that in which they were raised by the leader of the Opposition. I have had some experience in parliamentary life, and there are others on both sides of the House who have been here longer than myself, and I venture to state the opinion that I have never heard in this House, between leaders of opposing parties, on the great questions of policy which divide them, a speech made by the leader of the Opposition in which there was greater moderation and a more persistent effort evident to place the matters in controversy fairly before the House, and in which there was less personal pique or personal rancour than in the presentment made by my hon. friend the leader of the Opposition last night. And if a criticism

may be allowed to myself, a humble member of the Opposition, I venture to say that my right hon. friend would have consulted the dignity of his position and that of his party better if he had replied to that speech in the spirit in which it was made. I am sorry to say that, in my opinion, he did not. My right hon. friend seems to think that his first duty to the House and the country was to indulge in personal abuse. In that he was quite mistaken. The issue was not a personal one in this House, and neither was the personal issue raised last night. Quite the reverse. The issues raised were those between the parties, the issues on broad questions of policy and administration, and those issues were placed calmly and forcibly and at no greater length than they deserved by my hon. friend. As raised by him, they had their point and their force, and my right hon. friend felt their point and their force, and endeavored to parry them as well as he could by indulging in what may, without exaggeration, be denominated a tirade of personal abuse of my hon. friend who spoke last night. He may have succeeded in leading away the minds of the hon. gentlemen who sit behind him. They may consider that in this sort of personal encounter there is balm for broken pledges, for unwise policies and wretched administration; but my hon. friend mistakes the temper and the intelligence of the people if he thinks that fireworks of that kind will avail in the country against lapses and faults such as I have alluded to.

My hon. friend's defence is for the moment, but not one which will stand the test of time and reflection and fair thought, and it will receive time and reflection and fair thought by the electorate of this country, or I am much deceived in that electorate. He found fault with the leader of the Opposition for the length of time he took in presenting his views last night. Five hours is a considerable length of time, but not by any means sufficient to properly go over and expose to public view the follies of the hon. gentlemen who sit on

the Treasury benches, and who play with principles just as easily and thoughtlessly as they play on public credulity. Five hours is but a small portion of time to devote to the gross inconsistencies of hon. gentlemen opposite as public men, and from which they propose to escape by a torrent of personal abuse. Five hours is a very small proportion of time to be devoted to the broken pledges of hon. gentlemen opposite—pledges which they made, and made for their party profit, pledges by which they obtained party profit, pledges by means of which they reached the seats which they occupy in this House, pledges which today they cynically repudiate—no, not repudiate; they have passed beyond that stage. This has been a matter of stages, of phases of development with hon. gentlemen opposite. When they first came back from the country with their broken pledges trailing behind them, they were apologetic and somewhat shamefaced. They protested that, though they pledged in sincerity and meant to carry out their pledges, they found great obstacles, which were hard to be surmounted. But, give us time, they said to their followers behind them; give us time, they said to the country that was watching them, and you will find that every pledge will be redeemed. That was phase No. 1. Phase No. 2 left the ground of protest, and took the ground of apology. But last year they got beyond the ground of apology, and took the ground of open repudiation. They have advanced a stage further this year, if we are to judge by what has been said by the right hon. gentleman who has just spoken. Now they will neither protest nor apologize nor repudiate; they will simply ignore the whole thing, as though they had no past, and as though history were a thing unknown in this country. Well, Sir, we do not intend to let these hon. gentlemen ignore the past. We intend to put their past before them, and to keep it before them, and keep it before the country as well. The right hon. gentleman had a good deal of fault to find, a good deal of fun to make with my hon. friend, (Sir Charles Tupper) beside me. Amongst other things he

spoke of what he called that hon. gentleman's redundancy and prolixity. He said that human nature, in such cases could only endure. He declared that my hon. friend had nothing but words to offer, idle words, and that some day he would be brought to account for all these idle words which he had spoken. Mr. Speaker, there are some words which are worse than idle words, namely, false words. My hon. friends opposite may criticise idle words, or those which they call idle, but they had better do a little introspection and find out what penalties in the present and in the future are laid against men who speak false words, men who gain advantage by pledges they do not keep, by promises they repudiate. The right hon. gentleman said that adjectives were a large part of the vocabulary of the leader of the Opposition, that he had more adjectives than ideas. That is the fault of most of us—that we have fewer ideas than words; but Heaven help us if we have no ideas at all. My right hon. friend must not criticize too harshly the only stock in trade he has. He gives us to understand that he regards the five hours' speech last night as the vaporings of a disappointed man. Well, Sir, he is welcome to that opinion. But I would rather be in the position of one who talks and is disappointed—even granting that for the sake of argument—than to talk a little less long but to occupy the place of a man who, though not disappointed, had disappointed every elector who had trusted to his promises. He declared that my hon. friend took these whole five hours to seek out the weak spots in the armour of the Government. Oh, no; it requires no diligent search to find these weak spots in the armour of hon. gentlemen opposite. Their whole armour is a tissue of weaknesses; it is open at every joint, so that even the most inexperienced criticism can easily find openings and dull darts can very easily pierce them. He said that the leader of the Opposition went into Huron, that he had been found to be a man of idle words and weak deeds as shown by the results in that county. If the leader of the Government is satisfied with the

result in Huron, gentlemen on this side of the House certainly have no reason to complain. In a bye-election, with two Governments, the most partisan, the most shamelessly partisan that Canada has ever seen in Dominion and in provincial politics—with one exception in regard to provincial politics, which I may deal with later on—with the patronage of these two Governments used openly, shamelessly, persistently, notwithstanding the high pretensions, aye, even under cover of the vaunted innocence and purity of the leader of the Government, and the no less vaunted purity of the hon. gentleman (Mr. Tarte), who sits behind him—with all this, the result was that the majority which the Government enjoyed in that constituency was brought down from 317 in the general election to 117 in the bye-election. If the leader of the Government is satisfied with that as an indication of public opinion in the Dominion, I think we on this side may be satisfied as well. The hon. gentleman assumes too much. No man, however sudden his rise, however high he may be, is exempt from criticism in this country. Then my right hon. friend, belauded though he has been, bedizened—democrat though he is—until scarcely an inch of his democratic clothing can be discerned for the high and aristocratic ornaments he bears, must not think that all this singles him out in Canada as above criticism and beyond the exercise of the judgment and intelligence of this country. Particularly when he makes as many blunders as he has, he must expect to be criticised, and he might as well look pleasant about it instead of getting angry. He took the credit of the Opposition to task because, as he said—he did not prove it nor did he hope to prove it, he simply declared it—my hon. friend (Sir Charles Tupper) took credit for having created Canada. Now, while that is entirely without proof on the part of the right hon. gentleman, one thing can be proved, that at a certain time in a certain city many miles from this, my right hon. friend declared that he went to bed one

evening when Canada was only a blotch upon the map and when he woke up in the morning, behold Canada was a nation, and he was the man who had wrought that miracle. My right hon. friend is scarcely in a position to criticise what he calls egotism, after such an exhibition as that.

WHAT THE PREMIER CLAIMS.

Well, after including in this by play, he proceeds to the serious work of his speech. What was the serious work the hon. gentleman undertook? He undertook to answer the challenge of my hon. friend, as to what he had done for the country. And how long did he take to do it? He took in all, about fifteen minutes. What has my hon. friend, according to his own statement, done for the country?

THE MANITOBA SCHOOLS.

He says in the first place, that when he came into power he found this country rent and torn over a question which included in it elements of race and creed, with all the dangers that apply to questions of that kind, and that he remedied it—remedied it by relegating it to the province. He told us, in another place, that a political party was a party in which the men composing it believed alike in fundamental matters, and disagreed in others. And so, a cabinet in a government would have to be composed of men who agreed in all points of public policy, or else they could not keep together. Where is the agreement in this case? My hon. friend says that he has settled this question. The Solicitor-General (Mr. Fitzpatrick) declares, and has declared within very recent times, that the question is not settled; and the Solicitor-General and my hon. friend are members of the same Cabinet and Government, which is supposed to have solidarity! The less my hon. friend says about his shifty methods in trying to settle that question, whether it is ultimately settled or not, the better for his reputation in this country. I

do not propose to go into that: I will leave that question for hon. gentlemen who understand it better than I do, and who will take up that point at the proper time.

PREFERENTIAL TRADE FIASCO.

He declares that he has brought about preferential trade—a real preferential trade. Why, when my hon. friend came down to this House with his first resolutions upon the tariff—I have it from the mouth of the hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce, who, sits beside him—they had no intention, and it was not the policy of the Government to have preferential trade with Great Britain at all. Preferential trade, if it means anything for a country, is trade which gives to that country advantages which are given to no other country. Preferential trade does not mean most-favored-nation treatment. But what the Minister of Trade and Commerce said—and I have it, I think, in a paper before me—was, that it was not their intention at all to propose a policy of that kind. Here is what he said:

"I say, with respect to that offer we now make, that it is not a preferential offer at all in the true and legal sense of the word. That offer is open to all the world. The Americans may avail themselves of it, so may the Germans and the Belgians. The whole world are welcome to avail themselves of it on the same terms and conditions on which England may take advantage of it."

And he said later:—

"If the Americans were willing to give us full and fair reciprocal advantages, I would recommend trading with them for the benefit of Canada and the Empire, too; and I think Mr. Foster will find out before he is many years older that very probably, although I admit it is a little roundabout way, this is not a bad way to get at it. We have today offered better terms to those countries who will trade with us fairly, but that offer has been made to the United States just as it is to any other country, even to Great Britain, herself."

Now, Sir, that was the intention with which the hon. gentlemen framed

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their policy and brought it to this House. Why have we preferential trade with Great Britain today, and for Great Britain and some of her colonies alone? Because hon. gentlemen blundered into it, and for no other reason whatever. When they sat down together, we will suppose, with their wits about them, and laid out their line of policy, their line of policy was not for preferential trade to Great Britain alone was not preferential trade to Great Britain at all. Their line of policy was in the line of what my hon. friend indicated, I think, in Toronto, when he said that now the policy of this Government was to be, not Canada for the Canadians, but all the world for the Canadians, to trade with all the world and to all those countries that would give to us favouring tariffs, we would give favouring tariffs and favoured treatment. That was the policy, which they laid down in their cool moments, knowing what they desired to accomplish. My hon. friend has said something, too, with reference to their getting the treaties denounced. He said, I think, to-day, that a preferential treatment to Great Britain, as everybody knew, would have to be given to Belgium and to Germany also. Everybody knows it now, but everybody did not know it when that policy was first propounded. I put the question to my hon. friend myself, as to whether, under that resolution on that item; Belgium and Germany would have a right to that treatment as well as Great Britain. My hon. friend got up, in the plenitude of his power and his knowledge, and declared:—

I have no hesitation in answering my hon. friend. I say emphatically that neither Belgium nor Germany can have any right to that preferential treatment.

Now he says everybody knew that when Great Britain received that treatment, it must be accorded equally to Belgium and to Germany, because these had the favored-nation treatment. My hon. friend simply blundered into what he calls preferential trade with Great

Britain. His policy, as laid down and as explained by himself, as explained by the Minister of Trade and Commerce, and by the Minister of Finance, was a policy of favorable treatment to every country which would favorably treat us, and so to make our trade bounds as wide as possible. My hon. friend next took credit for having abrogated the treaties with Belgium and with Germany. I think he arrogates too much to himself. As I read the history of those negotiations, and the history which preceded those negotiations which resulted in the denunciation of the treaties, the working up to that result had been a matter of many years. It is always the case that abuses which are and have been long established, require time in order to disestablish or to abrogate them. There always must be a period, longer or shorter, of agitation, of preparation of public sentiment, and of conveying that public sentiment to the authorities that may be, and of the dispositions which must take place between the contracting parties in order that changes may be made. That process had been going on with reference to these treaties for twenty years, started long ago and persistently held to by the Government of Canada, whilst my hon. friend was in opposition, and adhered to by the Government of every British colony, who, by their representatives, with Sir Charles Tupper, when he was High Commissioner in London, pressed again and again upon the British Government the idea that these treaties stood in the way of desirable legislation, and that they ought to be abrogated. These led up to their final result, and that final result was brought about by the co-operation of all the colonies, as is distinctly shown in the records—aided very largely by the feelings which were aroused on the occasion of the Jubilee of Her Gracious Majesty. These all in their years of work led up to the final abrogation; but, Sir, it is quite too much for my hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) to take for himself or for the Canadian Government the sole credit of having abrogated these treaties.

The treaties were abrogated by a process which is common in removing abuses, or in making amendments, or in getting changes which are for the public benefit, whether they be in the higher range of international politics or in the somewhat lower plane of local or provincial politics.

The right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) cites an instance as to why the results of preferential trade must be beneficial to this country. Let me remind him that it is only partial preferential trade; that is, we have given a preference to Great Britain, but Great Britain has given no preference to us. My right hon. friend well knows that before the elections of 1896, in various places in this Dominion, he declared for a mutual preference as between Canada and Great Britain. Taking up the cue Sir Charles Tupper had taken years before and labored assiduously upon, namely, that of a mutual preferential arrangement between this country and Great Britain, taking up the cue which had been laid down at the Intercolonial Conference which met here in 1894, where a resolution was passed favoring that project, and the report of which was sympathetically placed before the British Government, and had its due force, my hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier), in the heat of the election, was anxious to put himself before the electorate as being in favor of a preference which should be mutual between Canada and Great Britain, and he so declared himself upon platform after platform throughout the Dominion. After having made that pledge and promise, to the country, why was my right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) led to repudiate that promise when he went over to Great Britain, and why at Liverpool and in London and everywhere, did he go back upon the pledge which he made to the people of this country in favor of a mutual preferential trade? His preferential trade has not been successful in two things. It has not been

successful in diverting the current of trade between Canada and the United States—for which those gentlemen opposite found fault with the late Government. It has not been successful in developing beyond natural causes to an appreciable extent the trade between Great Britain and this country. As far as our export trade is concerned, it has had no appreciable effect. My hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) would lead this House and the country to suppose that the door was shut against the exports of Canada to Great Britain until he became the leader of this Government, and then it was suddenly opened. He knows that for the last eight or ten years before he came into office that current of trade had been widening, and deepening and broadening in this country towards Great Britain, and that it was growing in satisfactory and increasing volume every year. And, Sir, if you take away the impetus of heightened prices, and take away the impetus of natural increase of production, which is continually going on in this country, then the increase which has taken place since he came into power, owing to the preferential advantage which he has given Great Britain, I beg leave to say is inappreciable in any degree. More than that, everything which draws attention to a country, which makes knowledge more common between the people of different countries helps in matters of trade if there be the natural basis for trade, and the Jubilee year, with all its accompanying conditions of good-will and of intelligent appreciation by one part of the Empire of every other part of the Empire, had its influence in promoting trade between Great Britain and Canada. But, Sir, the preferential part of it has so far, to say the least, not been brilliantly successful. The right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) says it must be successful, because Sir Howard Vincent, on the very eve of the abrogation of the Belgian and German treaties, and be-

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fore there could be the least indication of what would be the results of the arrangement, wired him a congratulatory telegram, an Imperial telegram, so to speak. If my right hon. friend will read that telegram closely, he will find that the note which was chiefly struck by Sir Howard Vincent was a note of joy upon the abrogation of the Belgian and German treaties, and Sir Howard Vincent could have nothing of knowledge, and consequently nothing of importance to state with reference to the actual results in improvement of trade between that country and this.

THE PENNY POSTAGE BUSINESS.

Ah, well, the right hon. gentleman says: We have established a penny postage throughout the Empire. I am quite will-



ing to let the presentation of that case by my hon. friend (Sir Charles Tupper) stand before the country along with the presentation which was made by the right hon. gentleman this afternoon. By reading his own letter, he effectually disproved the position he had taken in the city of Montreal, for what he said today was that the two things done were: the removing of the inertia which had long blocked the way of penny postage, and the admirable and long-continued efforts of Mr. Henneker Heaton in that respect. My hon. friend the Postmaster General (Mr. Mulock) is entitled to all the credit that fairly belongs to him. I would not take away one iota of it, but what my hon. friend (Sir Charles Tupper) was speaking against, and what

we have the right to speak against, is that the Prime Minister should take the whole credit of this for the Postmaster-General alone, when it is really due to long and persistent efforts, culminating at this time, and aided by the Postmaster-General. I am quite willing to give him all the credit that is due him, but to say that "we," or "he," has brought about the boon of penny postage in the Empire is not, I think, true in fact, and is not a position which the right hon. gentleman is warranted in taking. The Prime Minister declares that he was not in favor and would not move a resolution for penny postage at a certain time, because he was not aware of the condition of things financial and otherwise in the Post Office Department; but that when the Postmaster-General showed him \$781,000 of a deficit had been reduced to a deficit of only \$50,000 in a single year, then the right hon. gentleman became a convert to the penny postage, and he was quite in favor of it. Now, Sir, I beg leave to say this: That by no system of proper accounting can the Postmaster-General or any other man show that a legitimate deficit for any one year of \$781,000 was turned into a deficit of only \$50,000. To do it you have to juggle with accounts, and the accounts have been juggled with in order to bring that about, which will be properly shown in due course of time. But my hon. friend had nothing to say with regard to another most notable decrease in the postal burdens of this country, made by the Government which preceded his own, and by my hon. friend who sits near me, when by an enactment in Parliament, and without blowing his own trumpet to any large extent that I know of, he actually gave to the people of this country the right to send one ounce at the same rate at which they had formerly sent half an ounce, and thereby cut into half, for the benefit of the whole people of the country, the postal rate they had formerly to pay. That was a notable achievement, but it was done by a gentleman in pursuance of his duty and without getting up in a metropolitan city and declaring: "I have

cut off half the postage impost on the people of Canada." The penny postage, so far as the Postmaster-General is concerned, is also the result of a blunder. Just as they blundered into preferential trade, so my hon. friend blundered into Imperial penny postage; because the first idea of my hon. friend was to have a three-cent rate. That was the basis on which he started and on which his colleagues, if he consulted them, proceeded. Blunder succeeded to blunder, and at last my hon. friend blundered into the two-cent instead of the three-cent rate. As regards the great advantages of this penny postage, there may be differences of opinion. For my own part, I have no doubt at all that it is a grateful thing to a good many people in this country, but it is not a boon to the great mass of the people in any sense of the term.

Mr. Davin. It is no boon to the farmer.

Mr. Foster. It is a boon to certain classes; and to relieve these of a burden, which their business might very well have carried, the poorer classes of this country have to face the deficit that results, and pay it out of their taxes. I acknowledge that there is something of sentiment in it, but the sentiment in this case does not put anything into the pockets of the mass of the people who have to pay the deficit in order that certain classes may benefit. So far as it contributes to an Imperial sentiment between the colonies and Great Britain, it is an advantage.

THE TARIFF REFORM FRAUD.

The next thing my hon. friend says they did was to reform the tariff, and to reform it to the great satisfaction of the people of this country, to a great majority of them at least. But is my hon. friend explicit enough in contending that the only duty he had, consistent with his promises, was to reform the tariff in the way in which he has done it? Of late it has been customary for some of the Ministers and some of the party press to take the

bold ground that the Government have carried out in its entirety their whole pledge to the people with reference to the tariff and fiscal policy. The Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton) and the Postmaster-General (Mr. Mulock) have taken that ground in speeches which they have made very lately. They have declared openly to the people that the Government have performed everything which they led the electors of this country before 1896 to believe they would perform. Sir, this is a question which cannot be left just in that condition. It is a matter which involves the good faith of public men; it is a matter which involves truth and honesty in high places; it is a matter which involves the demoralization or the ennobling of the public life of Canada; and I lay it to the charge of my right hon. friend and the gentlemen who sit with him that they have been guilty in this respect of setting into operation in this country a malign influence in the highest circles of public life which is eating out and destroying honest and straightforward principle in all its ranks. With what holy horror my hon. friend would draw his skirts away from a man who would be so base and dishonest as to take a couple of dollars for his vote. My hon. friend, to believe him, even though he associated with the Merciers and the Pacauds, would draw away in holy horror from a man who would be so abandoned politically as to take a two dollar bill out of his pocket and offer it to a poor man for his vote. But my hon. friend sits in his high position, holds his head aloft, and looks as innocent as a cherub, notwithstanding the fact that as the leader of his party, he formerly went from one end of this country to the other saying: "Gentlemen, the Government of the present day bases its tariff policy upon the principle of protection, which is a robbery and a fraud; put them out and put us in, and we will base our tariff upon a policy which has every vestige of protection taken out of it." And when the honest electorate of this country took him at his word and

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elected him and his fellow-members and they became a Government, they utterly repudiated that policy and snapped their fingers in the faces of the honest electors who believed them then, but who will not believe them again. Sir, the crime of corruption by the dollar bill is a venial, a trivial thing, in comparison with the baleful corruption of public men who will make such pledges as that, and will utterly flout and scorn them after getting into office. My hon. friend poses as a man who would not—what did he say? Why, he said he would to God that he might never get power by means such as he charged against hon. gentlemen on this side of the House. My hon. friend has posed in that halo of purity for a great many years. To what lower depth of degradation can a public man sink than to make his solemn and honourable promises to the people at large, win their confidence and get their votes, and then snap his fingers in their faces and refuse to carry out those pledges? Would to God that he might never have power if he had to get it by dishonourable means? My hon. friend sits there to-day, and his followers sit with him, because they got votes, got money, got influence, in the most dishonourable way, and used these to their own profit and their own advantage. They have fulfilled all their promises, said the Minister of the Interior. They have not fulfilled their promises at all on the tariff question, and they will not deceive the people by rising with brazen faces and declaring, against the full light of the people's knowledge, that they have kept promises which they have not kept.

THE PLEDGES MADE.

What were the pledges made by my hon. friends—the pledges of their conventions, the pledges of their leaders? I am going to give you some of them. But first let me have a word with my hon. friend the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton), who is nothing if not subtle and darkly ingenious. My hon. friend cogitated, in the course of the interim between last session and this, on this question of getting out of pledges, and in the end he hit upon a very in-

ingenious method. He said to himself, in the silent watches of the night: Laurier is not my leader. He and these men who sit around him—their pledges count for nothing. Blake is my leader, and I go back to 1887 and 1891, and I find what Blake was going to do, and I find that we have done just exactly what Blake was going to do. Therefore we have fulfilled all party pledges. That is ingenious but it is hardly frank, and I do not think it will hold before the intelligence of the people. Why, Mr. Blake—my hon. friend knows it—broke with his party on that very question. If the party had stood by Mr. Blake and fulfilled those promises, if they had obtained power with Mr. Blake as leader, they would have been right with the people, for Mr. Blake, before he went to the people, said: I take back certain things which I held before; free trade may be all right in theory, but it is utterly impracticable now in this country, and all I can do—and I speak after having consulted with the members of my party, between whom and myself there is a virtual agreement—under present circumstances is to promise that the duty on flour, corn, coal, and one or two other commodities may be lowered, but that other duties will have to be kept at the same range as now. That was an honest announcement, made by an honest man, before the election, when he had to go to the people, and he took the consequences of it. And one of these consequences was that my hon. friends repudiated him, and another consequence that grew out of that was that Mr. Blake, at a certain time in February, 1891, had to jump off from the ship that was being so badly navigated and swim for the shore and make his own salvation sure, whatever might happen to the others. Since that time, the ship has been going over the seas without any standard chart, a real derelict on the political seas, simply waiting the favoring gale. My hon. friend cannot go back then to Mr. Blake as leader. His leader sits there in that seat. His leader's pledge is what he is bound by, and it is as to what was the pledge of his leader that I beg now to have a few words to say. It must not be forgot-

ten that there were other leaders besides my hon. friend, and I shall take the opportunity of reading the opinions of a few of them from the report of the Dominion Liberal Convention, an authoritative party publication. What was the opinion of Sir Oliver Mowat. He was brought in as the good man with my hon. friend from Lotbiniere (Sir Henri Joly de Lotbiniere), to season the other more wicked members of the Government, and make an average reputable Administration. Sir Oliver Mowat hoped that:—

After the next general election it may be truly said by the whole country that it was at the Liberal Convention held at Ottawa in June, 1893, that protection and bad government, and consequent political unrest amongst our people, received their death blow.

In the very heart of that great convention of Liberals, when the opinion of that convention was known and canvassed, when its pronouncements were decided upon, Sir Oliver Mowat declared that this convention, when it resulted in ultimate success at the polls, was to do what? Strike a death blow at the principle and practice of protection. Well, what did the present Prime Minister say at that convention. He declared this:

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I submit to your judgment that the servile copy of the American system which has been brought amongst us by the leaders of the Conservatives, is, like its prototype, a fraud and a robbery, and I call upon you, one and all, to pronounce at once, and give your emphatic support to the proposition that we shall never rest until we have wiped away from our system that fraud and robbery under which Canadians suffer.

On another page of this publication, my hon. friend followed that out. He said that he objected to the Government, and their policy.

They want to reform the tariff, and still retain the principle of protection. I submit to you that the ideal of fiscal systems is the British system of free trade. I submit to you that not a cent should be extracted from the pock-

ets of the people, except every cent goes into the treasury of the people, and not into the pockets of anybody else. I submit to you that no duties should be levied for protection's sake, but levied altogether, and only for the purpose of filling the treasury to the limits required. I submit to you that every cent that is levied should be levied first and foremost upon the luxuries of the people. I submit to you, therefore, that the system of protection which is maintained by the Government, that is to say, of levying tribute upon the people, not for the legitimate expenses of the Government, but for a private and privileged class, should be condemned without qualification. Let it be well understood that from this moment we have a distinct issue with the party in power. Their ideal is protection, our ideal is free trade. Their immediate object is protection, ours a tariff for revenue only. Upon this issue we engage the battle from this moment forward, and I ask you once more never do desist until we have achieved a victory, until we have freed this country from the incubus which has been weighing it down for fifteen long years.

I do not want to multiply instances of that kind of assertion. Stronger, infinitely stronger, than that were the statements made by my hon. friend the leader of the Government on the different platforms of this country from one end to the other. No one who has heard the hon. gentleman speak, no one who has read the proceedings of that convention; no one who followed the discussions before 1896 had any other than the strongest and most fixed idea that what the hon. gentleman pledged himself to do in the way of tariff reform was to eliminate the principle of protection and base his tariff upon the exact opposite, the revenue principle, and put in practice the free trade system of Great Britain, his ideal system, as rapidly and to the very largest extent possible.

THE PLEDGES BROKEN.

Now there is no use elaborating this further. That was the pledge given, that was the contract made with the electors of this country. Has he carried it out? Has he today a tariff that is based upon free trade according to

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the English ideal? My hon. friend knows that he has not. Has he a tariff based upon principles of bringing in revenue, with no vestige of protection for protection's sake, a tariff that levies no tax except that which goes directly into the Treasury? Can he say that not a fraction of a cent goes into the pockets of what these gentlemen formerly used to call the monopolists and robbers, and men who were despoiling the country? He knows that this tariff is based upon the principle and involves the practice of protection, and that the so-called reform that he has made has simply been the increase of duties in some cases and the lowering of them in some others, and on the whole, with the very slightest reduction in the taxation of the country. Now, will my right hon. friend listen to the facts of the case, as gleaned from the public records of the trade of the country? In 1893, the percentage of duties upon imports for home consumption was 30.28 per cent.; in 1894, it was 30.87 per cent.; in 1895, it was 30.87 per cent.; in 1896, it was 30.07 per cent. Now, in 1897, the first year of the present administration, but before their tariff had come into operation, it was 30.04 per cent. That is to say, in 1897 there was an alleviation in the duties upon imports for home consumption of exactly 3-100ths of 1 per cent. The year 1898 came, and the rate was 29.43 per cent. Seven months of the year 1899 have passed and in those seven months the dutiable rate has been 28.89 per cent. Now, Sir, what are the gains? The year 1897 shows a reduction over 1896 of 3-100ths of 1 per cent.; 1898 shows a reduction over 1896 of 64-100ths of 1 per cent.; the seven months of 1899 show a gain over 1896 of 1 and 18-100ths per cent. But what is happening now? January, 1899, has passed, and the reduction shown over 1896 drops back again to 31-100ths of 1 per cent. February also has passed, and it drops back to 47-100ths of 1 per cent. So if you take the latest developments of trade in this country, you have still

LESS THAN $\frac{1}{3}$ OF 1 PER CENT. REDUCTION

in the imposts on dutiable goods. But my hon. friend the Minister of Customs will say: You have not taken into account the free goods that have been brought in. Very well; let us include the free goods and ascertain the state of things. In 1893 the duty on free and dutiable goods together imported for consumption was 17.38 per cent.; in 1894 it was 17.13 per cent.; in 1895, 16.99 per cent.; in 1896, 18.28 per cent.; in 1897, 17.87 per cent., and in 1898, 16.95 per cent. Thus there is a gain in 1897 over 1896 of 41-100ths of 1 per cent.; a gain in 1898 over 1896 of 1 and 33-100ths of 1 per cent. But what about the gain in January, 1899, and in February of the same year, Mr. Speaker? Why,

IT IS A GAIN ON THE WRONG SIDE.

In January, 1899, the rate on dutiable and free goods entered for home consumption was 18.07 per cent.; and in February, 1899, it was 18.70; that is to say, in the latest month the imposts on dutiable and free goods together were

HIGHER BY ALMOST $\frac{1}{3}$ OF 1 PER CENT.
THAN IN 1896.

And yet hon. gentlemen opposite will go before the people and declare that they have reformed the tariff, that they have done away with protection, that they have fulfilled their pledges, and that the people of the country are satisfied.

DISSATISFIED LIBERALS.

But it seems quite clear that all the people in the country are not quite satisfied. Even some of the gentlemen who sit on that side are not satisfied with the reduction that has taken place. For instance, there is the Winnipeg "Tribune," and there is also the Edmonton "Bulletin," which, I believe are edited by staunch friends of hon. gentlemen opposite. I cannot see that these are quite satisfied that the Government has redeemed its promises. In a late issue of the Winnipeg "Tribune," Mr. George H. Bertram, the hon. member for Centre Toronto is held up to the western consumers at least in no very

enviable light, as being a protectionist in disguise—no, not in disguise, but as being an undisguised protectionist in the Liberal ranks—and the Government is warned against being guided by the opinions of Mr. Bertram. Says the "Tribune":—

Mr. Bertram spoke as a Conservative and protectionist, while professing to be a Liberal and a free trader. It was north by south, and that was why, every now and then, some Liberal in the audience, with a remembrance of George Brown in his head, would nervously and suddenly run his fingers through his thinning locks to try and ascertain where he was at.

The hon. member for Lisgar (Mr. Richardson), who is the editor of the "Tribune," has been trying to find out where they are at on this tariff question for the last three or four months. At a meeting of the Liberals, held in Regina, not long ago, there was a resolution passed, and that resolution reads as follows:—

Be it further resolved, that the people of the West, and especially the farmers, are looking anxiously, expectantly and confidently, for such a revision of the tariff as will conform with the pledges of the Liberal party as contained in the Ottawa platform, and as recently foreshadowed in the Budget speech of Mr. Fielding.

But, Sir, Regina is not the only town in which the Liberals are on the move. There was a meeting, the other night, of a Liberal club in the city of Winnipeg. The city of Winnipeg is roused, so far as the Liberals are concerned, with reference to a statement lately made by the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton) at Perth, in which he had declared:—

The tariff was a question that was settled, and was now a dead issue, because the Liberals had succeeded in solving this great question, and the tariff was one their opponents, if they got a chance, would not change much.

And so the following resolution was introduced into the association, and, I believe, is to be voted upon. It lays down the resolution which was adopted by the Liberal party in 1893:—

We denounce the principle of protection as radically unsound and unjust to the mass of the people, and we declare our conviction that any tariff changes based on that principle must fail to afford any substantial relief from the burden under which the country labors. This issue we unhesitatingly accept, and upon it we await with fullest confidence the verdict of the electors.

And goes on as follows:—

And whereas, the now Premier of the Dominion, the Hon. Mr. Laurier, when speaking in support of the said resolution at said convention, declared:

"I submit to you that the ideal fiscal system is the British system of free trade. Let it be well understood then, that we have a distinct issue with the party in power. Their idea was protection: our idea is free trade; their immediate object is protection; ours a tariff for revenue and for revenue only. Upon this issue we engage in battle."

And whereas, the Hon. Mr. Fielding, Minister of Finance, in his speech, delivered on the 5th of April, 1898, as the same is reported in "Hansard," stated:

"We wish to guard against frequent changes in the tariff, against tariff tinkering; but let us be careful how we convey the impression to the public, because we do not mean it that we regard the tariff as final. Let it not be supposed that the tariff is settled for ten years, or even for five years. So long as there are high duties there must be demand for tariff changes. Nothing is settled until it is settled in accordance with right, and so long as there are high duties we may expect agitation for reduction. I am afraid there is no rest for the protected manufacturer.

"I am inclined to think, Sir, that he will find eternal vigilance to be the price of his protection. He must be on guard all the time against the attack that he knows must always come. We will say, therefore, to the manufacturer that if he desires permanency in the tariff, he must never expect permanency until the tariff gets down to a moderate point; and today there are duties in the tariff so high that I am sure the Government are not prepared to treat them as part of a permanent tariff."

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that this association desire to place on record a declaration of its continued support of the platform of the Liberal party as laid down at the above-mentioned convention, and its approval of the statements made by the Honorable

Premier (Mr. Laurier), in support thereof, and the position of the Hon. Mr. Fielding in regard thereto, as above indicated, that the tariff is not a question that is settled, and is not a dead issue.

That stands before the Liberal Club in Winnipeg, because some gentleman asked that it should be postponed until it was found whether the Minister of the Interior had made the statement. But, whether he has made it or not, that is an expression of opinion by Liberals belonging to that club, an important section of them at least, that the pledges made by the Prime Minister and other Ministers previous to the election have not been carried out, and they call upon them to carry them out.

MORE PLEDGES.

I have said that the Liberal clubs of Regina and of Winnipeg have called for the carrying out of the pledges which they alleged had not been done, and which, it is also alleged, are now being thwarted. Some of those pledges I have read, the pledges made by the right hon. gentleman who leads the Government. It may not be out of place to read the pledges made by one or two others, I find one made by the present Minister of Trade and Commerce, in this wise:

I say our protective system was a huge mistake, in so far as it was honest at all, and in so far as it was not honest, it was a huge scheme of robbery.

Again:

I stand by the declaration I have made, that protection is nothing more nor less than a deliberate, legalized and organized robbery; and, more than that, if you do not stamp it out it is the very high road to political slavery first, and industrial slavery afterwards.

I find still later the same voice raised in this wise:

Our policy from first to last has been to destroy the villainous system of protection by free trade, a revenue tariff, or continental free trade.

I find that the leader of the Government himself declared at Newmarket, in 1893:

I will not be satisfied until the last vestige of protection has been removed from the soil of Canada. Our great reform is to put away from the soil of Canada the last vestige of protection.

A voice from the Maritime Provinces, to wit, that of the present Minister of Marine and Fisheries, declared:

We have been attacking this policy year by year. This is an accursed system, a system accursed of God and man.

In the city of Toronto, I find the leader of the Government declared:

Call it protection, call it feudalism, call it slavery, I care not, it is the same thing. It differs only in degree, it is bondage.

Now, Sir, I think that with declarations of that kind, the innocent and deceived members of the Liberal party



in Regina and in Winnipeg, and in every other portion of the Dominion of Canada may well stand aghast, and may well make their voices heard, in asking that the men who presume to be their leaders and who make these pledges, should not now call a halt, but should conform to those pledges or tell the reason why.

A DIVIDED CABINET.

But we find that at this stage of the game the Ministers themselves disagree with each other, and that is indeed the reason for the present resolutions which I have had the duty of reading here tonight. For instance, we find that the Minister of Railways and Canals—who has ta-

ken, by the way, no very strong interest in questions outside of his own peculiar sphere—did, in the province of New Brunswick, and in the city of Woodstock, in that province, according to the editor of the "Transcript," declare for continued change:

In a remarkably able defence of the Liberal Government's general policy, he especially dwelt upon the evils of the protective tariff system, and pointing out that the Government had made important reductions in the tariff, plainly intimated there would be in the near future important changes in the tariff along the line of freer trade and the elimination of the protective idea system.

With Mr. Blair's views in this matter, which are thoroughly representative of the dominant sentiment of the Liberal party, and in accord with the best interests of the people of Canada generally, and the permanent prosperity of its industries, every true Liberal will be in hearty accord. It is one of the strongest and most effective statements made by any Cabinet Minister since the change of Government. * * * "It is seldom that any speech by any political leader so thoroughly voices the views of his political party as did the speech by Mr. Blair at Woodstock a few days ago, to which our contemporary takes demagogic exception."

About the same time that Mr. Blair was holding forth at Woodstock to the delight of the editor of the "Transcript" and all true Liberals; an industrious opponent—I beg pardon, an industrious colleague of his—the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Tarte), was holding forth in the historic village of Valleyfield. He had gone there to chant the praises and to participate in the glories of the opening of a cotton mill; a new one I think which was being opened in that village. And Mr. Tarte—as the newspaper speaks of him—in his speech at Valleyfield, after making many other allusions, referred to the cotton industry, in which Valleyfield is so intimately concerned, and is reported as follows:—

At the time when the Government had the question of the tariff under advisement, and were holding investigations throughout the country, Mr. Gault had come to him at Ottawa, and urged that the cotton duties be not lowered. He (Mr. Tarte) had taken Mr. Gault by the hand and said to him, "Fear not, you

can count on me; all I ask is that you should increase the capacity of your mills, especially those at Valleyfield."

Taking up the general question of the tariff at large, Mr. Tarte said that while the present Government had found itself obliged to make many changes for the sake of a removal of anomalies, and for other reasons, they had taken care that the tariff wall should remain sufficiently high to afford ample protection to Canadian industries. Looking now about him, he was satisfied that this policy had been a policy of prudence and of success. The iron, pulp, cotton, in fact all the larger industries of the country were in a better condition at the present time than they had ever been under Conservative rule.

"We do not," said Mr. Tarte, "claim that at our first attempt we have made a perfect tariff instrument, but we do claim that we have done much, and that many industries which were languishing are now prosperous. And I say that the grand principle of the tariff as it exists to-day will remain unchanged. We shall make slight alterations as it may seem to us that they are needed, but the tariff as a whole will stay as it is at present."

What was the grand principle of the tariff that shall remain, according to Mr. Tarte; he mentioned it above:

The Government had taken care that the tariff walls should remain sufficiently high to afford ample protection to Canadian industries.

There, Mr. Speaker, you have them—Mr. Blair at Woodstock, Mr. Tarte at Valleyfield, almost on the same night, poles asunder, upon the subject of the tariff. But, Sir, later on comes the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton), who, in Perth, according to the Perth "Courier," a Liberal newspaper of sixty years standing, which heads it: "Hon. Mr. Sifton on the Tariff." "He tells the people of the East that it is settled and now a dead issue." "The tariff," he says, "is such that their opponents would not likely change it much." He is declared to have said:

The tariff was a question that was settled and was now a dead issue, because the Liberals had succeeded in solving this great question, and the tariff was one that their opponents, if they got the chance, would not change much.

And, last but not least, today in this House, the leader of the Government, who had gone from one end of this country to the other and on almost every platform had denounced the principle and practice of protection in all its moods and tenses, who had declared that free trade was the ideal; free trade such as they have it in Great Britain; had declared that they would sweep away every vestige of protection out of the tariff, make it a revenue tariff at once with the idea of modelling it as nearly as possible upon the British free trade tariff—today the right hon. gentleman stood up in this House and declared that they had settled the tariff to the satisfaction of the people of this country.

Now, Sir, can you wonder, that under all these provocative circumstances, the member for Lisgar (Mr. Richardson) should raise his voice, and address these words to his chief:—

You probably know, Sir Wilfrid, that the agriculturists of Canada, and particularly of Manitoba and the Northwest were not fully satisfied with the measure of tariff reform granted them in your 1897 revision of the tariff.

You doubtless know that they were justified in expecting great things in this direction from the speeches which you and your lieutenants made throughout the country on the subject during the time you were in opposition. * * * But, all the same, public expectation has not been satisfied, and the settlers of the West especially, would like to see some further reductions, in fact they would rejoice to see the duty swept away altogether from many of the prime necessities. * * *

Do you wish to utterly efface and obliterate every vestige of disappointment that may linger because of the non-gratification of certain expectations?

Then, Sir Wilfrid, you must hitch your chariot to a star; you must efface all recollections of the past two years of official life; you must think that you are plain Mr. Laurier, leader of the old Liberal party in opposition, with your soul fired with righteousness, and your heart touched with the burdens of the agriculturist, and forgetting all consideration but that of a determination to strike the shackles from off your countrymen, go in for reciprocity and such reciprocity as will bring joy to the people of this land.

Remember, Sir Wilfrid, your promises; remember the past, and strike blows for your country that will put old Tubal Cain to the blush.

Remember, Sir Wilfrid, that for every monopolist and manufacturer you may offend, you will win a thousand friends among the agriculturists of the Dominion.

What do the manufacturers care for you or your Government, beyond the length they can go in using you?

Remember that the manufacturer and the monopolist was for years, and is yet, your natural enemy.

Don't overlook the fact that the agriculturist is your friend, and has always been, and if you are to continue in office it will be by his grace.

Then, don't forget him.

You now have it in your power to serve him as he never has been served before.

Then, Sir Wilfrid, pay no attention to the pigmies who would turn you aside from the good work; take no stock in the monopolist and the manufacturers, but strike for the masses of your country.

Strike for the settlers.

Strike for the agriculturists.

Strike down protection.

Give us free implements, free lumber, and every other necessity free.

Hitch your chariot to a star.

Strike.

Strike.

My hon. friend opposite surely cannot withstand the cogency of argument and the infinite plaintiveness of appeal which is couched in the article which I have just read, and which is the heartfelt utterance of the present member for Lisgar, who is fighting the battle of the agriculturists against the monopolists and the manufacturers, and the fiscal traitors in the Liberal camp.

WHAT WE ACTUALLY HAVE.

Sir, what have we? Three years and a half have passed. The Government which came in on these pledges have had full time to perfect their plans and to put them into operation. They have perfected their plans so far as the tariff is concerned. They have put them into operation; they declare the tariff is settled. Have we free trade as it is in Great Britain? Every one knows we have not.

PROTECTION NOT ANNIHILATED.

Is protection annihilated? To the extent of one-half of one per cent. This robbery, this delusion, this fraud, this incubus upon the country, this worse

than slavery and bondage, has been annihilated to the extent of from 3-100ths of 1 per cent. to a shade over 1 per cent. That is the extent to which it is done. For the whole tariff of my hon. friend, as the gentleman sitting directly behind him says, is modelled upon the principle that there shall be ample protection to the industries of this country.

NOT A REVENUE TARIFF.

Have we a revenue tariff? My hon. friend knows we have not. The revenue tariff which my hon. friend advocated, and the only true revenue tariff is a tariff which puts on duties and taxation for the sole purpose of getting the revenue and putting it into the treasury, and which places the taxes where the most revenue can be got out of them. The true revenue tariff takes tea and coffee and all such articles of general use as are not raised in the country, and it taxes them all they will bear, and gives no protection of any kind. Protection and a purely revenue tariff are the opposites of each other. A revenue tariff, then, takes the luxuries of the country, which the richer people are supposed to buy, and it taxes them all they will bear; and then, on the general line of imports such as may be produced in the country, it puts what is sufficient to raise the largest amount of revenue, carefully grading it down to the line where it does not allow the productions and manufactures of the country to stop the supply of revenue, which comes from the impost of customs taxes on what is imported into the country. And the true tariff for revenue only will offset this import duty by an internal revenue tax sufficient to prevent any incidental protection. What my hon. friend always denounced in the protective tariff was that, although you got money out of it for the treasury, you put more money by it into the pockets of the protected interests. Now, scan your tariff; look over its various items, and from the first item to the last of the dutiable list there is scarcely one item which is not modelled and based on the principle of protection in-

stead of on the principle of either free trade or a revenue tariff only.

SPECIFIC DUTIES KEPT.

Has the abomination of specific duties been taken away from the tariff? How eloquent they grew upon that monstrosity, which consisted in part of a specific duty, in part of a specific duty joined to an ad valorem duty, and was so a mixed tax. They have reformed their tariff. They have had their time of denunciation. They have now taken their period of action; they have settled the tariff, and to-day how does it stand? The items in the old tariff were 486 in number. Great simplification was to be carried out in the new tariff. The number of items is reduced to 452, a reduction of 34 items. That is simply mechanical. The items of specific duties in the old tariff were 175 in number, taking the sub-headings as items; in the new tariff they are 147, a reduction of 28. The items of ad valorem duties were 311 in the old tariff; they are 305 to-day, a reduction of six. The percentage of specific items in the old tariff was 36 per cent.; in the new tariff it is now 33 per cent., a beggarly reduction of 3 per cent. The ad valorem items were 64 per cent. of the whole; they are now 67 per cent., an increase of 3 per cent. So that even that abomination of specific duties which in the country was more dwelt upon than almost anything else, has scarcely been touched by these hon. gentlemen in this reform of their tariff.

Well, Sir, what about the rate of the customs tax? Has that been diminished or has it not? I have read the figures to the House this afternoon.

CUSTOMS TAX HEAVILY INCREASED.

What about the amount of the customs tax? for after all, you must take into account the amount of money taken out of the people by a tax as well as the rate. I have shown the House that the rate is not appreciably less; I will now show that the amount is very appreciably greater. The customs taxation raised in 1896, the last year of the

Liberal-Conservative Government, was \$19,800,000. In 1897 it was a little less. In 1893, however, when the new tariff had got into operation, it came up to \$22,000,000. And, an increase of \$2,300,000 over the amount raised in 1896. But, Sir, the Minister of Public Works on a certain occasion said before his admiring auditors, "Wait till you see us next year." Next year has come and is rapidly passing; eight months of it have passed, and in the eight months of 1899 \$2,500,000 more have been raised in customs taxation than was raised in the corresponding eight months of 1898. So that, comparing the eight months of 1899 with the corresponding eight months of the year 1896, there has been so far \$4,800,000 more of customs taxation raised than was raised in those months of 1896. Provided, the same rate holds through the four months to come that has held during the eight months just past there will be considerably over \$6,000,000 of taxation increase in 1899 over 1896. The customs rate has inappreciably decreased; the customs tax has increased at a tremendous rate.

FAVORS THE UNITED STATES.

Well, Sir, has the trade with Great Britain relatively to our trade with the United States increased? The House will recollect that it was a great item in the indictment of the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright) and of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Sir Louis Davies), that in the tariff of the Liberal-Conservative Government the duties were so arranged that we not only threw the trade into United States channels rather than into British channels, but that in the imposition of taxation we imposed a larger percentage of duty upon what came from Great Britain than upon what came from the United States. I will deal with only one point of that question tonight. That was a strong indictment against the preceding Government. It was to be the glory of the incoming Government that they should change all that sort of thing. Have they changed it in either one particu-

lar or the other? Let us ask the figures.

In 1897-98, comparing that year with 1895-96, what is shown? As stated yesterday, it was shown that we have imported \$500,000 less in value of goods from Great Britain in the former year than in the year 1895-96. On the other hand, it is shown that we imported \$20,000,000 more from the United States in 1897-98 than in 1895-96. Never was there so great a disparity. Take next the free goods, for these are free and dutiable imports. In free goods we imported \$1,300,000 more from Great Britain and \$11,000,000 more from the United States. Putting the two together, the figures show that these hon. gentlemen, who attacked the preceding Government for discriminating against British trade, and who promised that they would remedy that sort of thing, have done what, Sir, by the provisions of their tariff? They have effected this, that in comparing the two years, 1897-98 and 1895-96, the total British trade with Canada has decreased by one-half a million, while the total increase in the United States trade has been \$20,000,000. That is the result which these hon. gentlemen have attained in that part of their programme which was to change the trend of trade from the United States to Great Britain by changing the discriminating tariffs which were the cause of that wrong trend of trade, as they declared it to be.

CLOSED OTHER CHANNELS OF TRADE.

But what else have they accomplished? The export trade of Canada to other countries has been hampered by their tariff. We have practically shut ourselves out from the trade with Germany which was a growing and most promising trade. I have not the figures at hand, but any gentleman who will choose to look up the figures of the exports of the United States will find that one of the best markets, as regards the export trade in American staples, after Great Britain, is the empire of Germany,

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and these are all staples of the very same kind that Canada raises for export. Under the operations of this tariff, whatever you gain, you have lost the promising opening which was being made for trade in these staples from Canada to Germany, because Germany now levies what are practically prohibitory duties against Canada. You have given our cousins in the West India Islands advantages by our tariff, and in return they have raised their tariff against you, so that you have gained nothing in that quarter. There is not a country in the wide world to which you can point to-day where you have gained one single opening for the exports of this country by any tariff or fiscal favors that they have given you or any alleviation that you have prevailed upon them to make. My hon. friend, the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright) who modelled the policy, who determined with his colleagues that the policy of the Government was to be such that they would be able to give favored terms to any nations that would reciprocate finds that at last he has stumbled into a place where he is obliged to shut the door on every other country because of the preference he has given to Great Britain. Consequently that wideness and freedom of trade that good Liberals always stood for, and especially our hon. friends on the other side, has been completely blocked by the operations of their tariff and fiscal policy.

DONE NOTHING AT HOME.

They have taken greater powers than any other Government have ever asked Parliament to give them—powers to impose by order-in-council export duties upon logs, spruce, pulp-wood and nickel ores. But the hon. gentlemen, after taking this power, under the plea of urgency and haste, trembled on the brink, and have done nothing.

They took great powers and got legislation with reference to alien labor laws. They made a temporary show of energy by appointing some prosecutors, but latterly called them off, and their alien labor laws have been simply a dead letter on the statute, void of spirit and life.

They took tremendous powers to smash combines, yet under their very noses the octopus from the United States, the tremendous Standard Oil Company, has fastened upon the very vitals of this country, and is rapidly absorbing and assimilating to itself the whole coal oil industry in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec.

Yet these hon. gentlemen who are such business men, exigent men who wanted such powers given to them, and who got their credulous followers to give them the powers they asked for, sit there and do nothing while all these things are going on.

Today there is a cry from one end of this country to the other, that if the United States will not give fair entry to our lumber into their country we shall prevent them—no, Sir, I shall put it differently because that probably offends the sensitive ear of my hon. friend the Premier—that we should look to the conservation of our own forest resources and our own industries dependent upon them and impose export duties on foreign lumber to protect our own people in their resources and industries. But nothing of this is done. These hon. gentlemen blunder in what they undertake and make fatal errors in what they do not undertake, and in every case have failed to give the country the advantage which might be gained by their exercising the powers they asked for and obtained.

Under the operations of their tariff, some industries have been annihilated and some crippled, but not a single one has been created. The industries that were annihilated and those that are somewhat crippled cannot force their voices on the attention of the public, while times are good and the flow is prosperous and onward, but all the same the weakening effects are being felt, and by and by, in the stress and storm, when the real testing time of a tariff and fiscal policy comes, the country will wake up to find out what are the deficiencies and the real weaknesses of the tariff these hon. gentlemen have given us. Sir, there was no stronger test of the power and efficiency of a tariff

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policy than that test, which, from 1892 to 1895, was applied to this Dominion under its National Policy, when, as was described here yesterday, while industries were being closed down and great factories shut up and banks closed and destitution and want of labor and lack of earnings were shown in the great Republic to the south of us, to a tremendous extent, here in the Dominion was felt the protective balancing power of our tariff, which kept our industries for our own people, which enabled our artisans to earn their wages, and kept their families from destitution and retained prosperity within the bounds of our country. When a testing time like that comes to the tariff of hon. gentlemen opposite, if they tinker much more with it, its deficiencies will be found out and its weaknesses shown.

THE COLD STORAGE FICTION.

But, in his enumeration of the great things this Government had done for the country, the hon. gentleman declared that they had inaugurated cold storage. He should cultivate a little modesty; but if he cannot do that, he should, at least, manifest some tendency to make his statements square with the facts. If he has any knowledge of the history of administration in this country—and if he has not, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Fisher), will have that knowledge—he knows perfectly well, or he ought to know, that the system of cold storage found its initiation in the ably and well-conducted branch of the Department of Agriculture which is devoted to farming and the dairy industry, that the gentlemen whom the late Government appointed, and whom this Government have retained in that department, have been untiring, in co-operation with the Committee on Agriculture of this House, in devising ways and means for increasing, saving and marketing the raw products of this country. It was with these gentlemen that the idea of cold storage originated; it was from them that the recommendations came; it was to our then Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Montague, they came, and

it was by myself that the votes to carry them out were brought to the Council and carried through this House. And if their recommendations, and the recommendations of the Government, and the votes recommended to the House as a basis for these operations, had been carried through, as they were not, in the session of 1896, owing to the obstinate obstruction of the then Opposition, a greater impetus would have been given to the marketing of the raw products of this country than was given. In the absence of Dr. Montague, the Minister of Agriculture, I myself, as the temporary head of the department, signed the first contracts that were made for



cold storage with the steamship companies, and all preparations were made by Professor Robertson previous to the late Government going out of office. Under these circumstances, is it fair that hon. gentlemen opposite should pose before the country as originators of this scheme, and even if they thus pose before the country, is it seemly that they should pose before this House, which knows the circumstances and is fully seized of what has taken place? All that hon. gentlemen opposite have done with reference to cold storage is to carry out, and, I hope, to expand, the idea with which we commenced, to expand it by giving more money, the motive power in such cases, the idea being there in its fullness and entirety.

THE DRUMMOND DEAL.

But the hon. gentleman says that the Government had the Intercolonial Railway extended to Montreal. Well, it was not the question in this House whether the Intercolonial Railway should go to Montreal or should stop at Levis. There were differences of opinion on that question; but the discussion which arose did not take place upon the question whether the Intercolonial Railway should seek Montreal as a terminus, or should remain at Levis, but upon the outrageously extravagant and partisan bargain that was made by the Minister of Railways and Canals (Mr. Blair), aided by the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Tarte). One would think that this would be the last thing that hon. gentlemen opposite would refer to. What does he think of the intelligence of this House, at what does he rate the intelligence of the country? Does he not know that it was only because the Senate held its strong hand upon that scheme that an interval was allowed during which his own Minister of Railways and Canals revised the bargain that he had made, and saved the country the sum of \$550,000 in the case of the Drummond Road alone, and hundreds of thousands in addition in the case of the contract with the Grand Trunk Railway? And yet my hon. friend seeks to make it a reproach upon the Senate and upon the Liberal-Conservative party, that time was given to his extravagant, inefficient Ministers to revise the bargain, a revision by which more than three-quarters of a million dollars was left in the public Treasury, which otherwise would have been taken out.

C. P. R. RATES.

My hon. friend says also that the Government have reduced the Canadian Pacific Railway freights. Yes, and before they gave an extra \$2,000,000 to the Canadian Pacific Railway Crow's Nest Pass Road, the Canadian Pacific Railway had reduced freights, and in the course of trade would have done it again—must necessarily have done it,

and as a matter of fact, did in this case reduce them before the contract terms called upon them to do so. The hon. gentleman had full power to say that the Governor in Council should fix the rates on the Crow's Nest Pass Road. But, more than that, what he did that we find fault with was that he gave the Canadian Pacific Railway two million more than the Canadian Pacific Railway Company were willing to construct the road for. And what some of his own friends behind him find fault with him for, and notably the hon. member from Nanaimo (Mr. McInnes), is that, in doing this, in carrying out the bargain, they allowed a present to be made of very many millions of tons of fine coal in great coal areas, at present valued at millions of dollars, to a company composed mainly of strong friends and political backers of the leader of the Government. That is very well known, and if any one does not know it, I invite him to apply at once to the eloquent and formerly enthusiastic member from Nanaimo. Whether he will remain equally enthusiastic in his denunciation of that deal I do not know.

THE BOTTLE-NECKED STEAMERS.

The leader of the Government said that they were at work upon the fast line. They are in motion, but whether they are making any progress or not is another thing. The travelling Minister is pretty diligently on his route, going and coming on the surface of the vasty deep, searching now for a new bottle-necked steamer and anon manifesting an intense desire to secure a water-proof and water-tight and unsinkable vessel. When he finds either one or the other, and gets it at a sufficiently low rate, I suppose we shall have progress then as well as motion. Some of the hon. gentleman's friends and colleagues have been a little previous in this matter. I am not sure but my hon. friend himself was. I am not sure, but that he was led astray by the Hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright), who declared in this House that there

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was no doubt at all but that the Petersens were perfectly able to carry through their contract, and would do it, though they were nothing but ship brokers, and by an enthusiastic telegram from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding), who, bubbling over with jubilee zeal, at a very opportune time sent a telegram to the Prime Minister which, I believe, inured to the benefit of the member for Centre Toronto (Mr. Bertram). Being read in the course of the contest, it nerved the sturdy electors of Centre Toronto, in view of the successful accomplishment of a fast Atlantic service, to vote for a support-er of a government that claimed to have brought it about.

I believe that the Minister of Marine and Fisheries took occasion to tell an audience—or was it the general public in an interview in London—that all arrangements were made and that in two years' time these vessels would be carrying freights and passengers over the waves of the Atlantic. Well, nothing has been done, but this: The hon. gentleman tore up a certainty, and he embarked on a quest for an uncertainty. He went on a quest of getting something for nothing, and if he keeps on that same line, there will be no fast service for many a year for the Dominion of Canada. He has, however, been successful in giving a contract to a firm which were unable to accomplish their object after having hawked it about for nearly two years—successful in more than that, in bringing the period up to a time when the dock-yards are so full in Great Britain, when Government and other orders are so far ahead, and when the laboring power is so thoroughly occupied that it will be with very much greater cost, at this moment and for two years to come, that these vessels can be provided, if indeed it is possible to provide them at all. The golden opportunity was lost. We might today have had these first-class vessels crossing the Atlantic. We are now about entering a period of time when their cost will be enhanced, and the time when they will be running is indefinitely postponed

That is what my hon. friends have done on the fast line, nothing and worse than nothing.

THE WASHINGTON NEGOTIATIONS.

But that is not all. They have been down to Washington, and have been engaged on certain negotiations. I listened with—I was going to say surprise, and I think I may use that word—I listened with utter surprise to the declaration made by the First Minister, made in cold blood, in this House, that he had made a discovery; that discovery was that there was not any desire in the country now for reciprocity. How long since? Three years ago every one of those hon. gentlemen was mounted on his hobby horse of reciprocity, career-ing through this country for all he was worth.

WHAT THEY DECLARED THEN.

The Minister of Marine and Fisheries said the old reciprocity was the making of the Maritime Provinces, and Prince Edward Island particularly longed for the flesh pots of Egypt, on which, from 1854 to 1864, she had fattened and battered. The hon. gentleman, in the plenitude of his knowledge, and experience, as no callow politician, but as a public man of years of standing, and of ripe experience, as a man of gray hairs, which is supposed to indicate wisdom—he declared up to within six or eight months ago that reciprocity was not only possible, but it was the one boon which, for his own province, for the Maritime Provinces, and for the whole country, was necessary, and was very intensely desired. But there were others. The Minister of Trade and Commerce is no youth either. He has been studying the political conditions of this country for nigh on fifty years. He inherited traits of political sagacity and the training that comes from study; and for this half century he has been going to and fro in this country, meeting with its people, cultivating all sides of human nature, and becoming a perfect adept in reading the feelings and wishes of the body politic. And here

translated, translated in all that tender gush which for a period was so characteristic of my hon. friend, he has given the results of his ripe experience:—

But what is even of more immediate consequence, we propose to obtain for you the power to trade freely with the rest of this continent; to have leave to make the best use you can of your great natural advantages, which can only be done by full, free and unrestricted reciprocity with our kinsmen in the United States. The fact is plain, and clear, and simple, the best market for the articles you produce—not by the decree of men, but by the decree of the Almighty—

I wonder if my hon. friend has read that German-English skit which appeared in one of our papers this morning—Meinself und Gott—where the Emperor William connects the Almighty with himself and his different enterprises. I would advise my hon. friend to read it. Next to the serial of the Bytown Coons, which is now passing through the press, that will impress him with a great home truth, and with a certain amount of humor.

—not by the decree of men, but by the decree of the Almighty—lies in the country which extends to the south of you, separated generally by a merely imaginary line along the 3,000 miles of our southern border, reaching from that line almost to the equator. There is your market, there is the only market you can hope to hold, there is the market you have the natural advantages to enable you to compete for. I deliberately tell you—

From the wealth of my experience and of my wisdom—this is interpolated.

—I deliberately tell you that the market of the United States is absolutely

Mark the definiteness.

—is absolutely and exactly worth all—the rest of the world to us, situated as we now are.

In 1895, he said to the Liberal convention at Sarnia, after the Conservative Government had been trying to exploit, and had successfully tried to exploit the British market, and had been trying to open up markets in Australia and in other countries:

We must find you a better market, and we do not propose to look for that by preference at the antipodes. We do propose free trade with all the world as our ultimate goal.

Now they are taking a rest.

But we will be very glad to secure for you free trade with the rest of this continent as an exceedingly comfortable instalment on the highway thither.

A sort of half-way house, something like those imaginary shelters which the Minister of the Interior was to have along the route of the Teslin Railway last winter. But he was not satisfied to preach merely to unbelievers in Canada. He wanted a larger audience and a higher pulpit, so he installed himself in Great Britain, and delivered himself in this wise:

Free trade with the United States is vastly more valuable to Canada than free trade with all the rest of the world would be with the United States left out.

So much for the present Minister of Trade and Commerce; not when he was a boy, not half a century ago, not twenty-five years ago, but in 1895 and since. He was willing for that even with the penalty of discrimination added, for when asked does the Liberal party favor discrimination against Great Britain by admitting American manufactures free and taxing the manufactures of Great Britain? His answer was: Certainly, we do.

The Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Sir Louis Davies) declared in this House:

One gentleman opposite says that this will discriminate against Great Britain.

What will discriminate? This free trade with the United States?

Necessarily, it must to some extent, but we cannot help that; in fact, we have the right to discriminate.

That, from my ultra-loyal friend from Prince Edward Island. Again, he says:

I acknowledge that the proposition has on one face of it an element of discrimination.

And the leader of the Government declared:

This involves that we should offer to the American nation what is denied to the rest of the world. So it does, and it is a cause of bitter reproach to us by the Conservative party, who charge us with disloyalty to England.

And the present Speaker of the House (Sir J. D. Edgar)—now happily delivered from my utterance by your relieving him in the chair, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I trust that you will carry my words to him—the present Speaker of this House was so sure that unrestricted reciprocity was within grasp that in 1893, he wrote a letter to his constituents in West Ontario in which he said:

Events are moving rapidly, and I wish to say to the farmers of West Ontario that there is no longer any doubt that we can obtain unrestricted reciprocity by a treaty with the United States of America.

That was the belief of hon. gentlemen opposite as late as 1895; that belief was carried by them into their Government, that belief was preached by them in this House. Since they have been members of the Government, that belief actuated them and impelled them to the commission which has been sitting for the last six months in Quebec and Washington. My right hon. friend now comes back after having declared over and over again in this House that the only obstacle to an unrestricted reciprocity treaty with the United States was that Canada did not have a Liberal Government to go and ask for it.

A SUDDEN CHANGE.

The right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier), who said that they would go for it and that they would get it—now comes back with the astonishing discovery he has made, that after all the people of this country do not want a reciprocity treaty with the United States, and that he himself has changed his

mind. Why has he changed his mind? What was the awful and impelling cause which rooted out from him this last half century of firm convictions which underlay his belief that reciprocity with the United States was necessary and essential to this country. What was the dire force that in a few short weeks rooted out that old and settled opinion and substituted an entirely new one in its stead? Cold storage did it—cold storage. That is the right hon. gentleman's explanation of it. Cold storage operated so powerfully on his mental constitution that it froze out the settled opinion of twenty-five years in the space of six months. Cold storage and British markets—and the right hon. gentleman sits there and stands there, and faces intelligent men and asks them to take that down as a reason why he has changed his opinion, his reason being that British markets have opened up within six months and cold storage is just now getting in its work. Why, Sir, British markets have been opening up for the last 12 or 15 years; gradually at first, by leaps and bounds afterwards. Let me tell my right hon. friend that the door of the British market went wide open, when, after the refusals of 1891 to make a treaty upon fair grounds with the Dominion of Canada, and after the McKinley high tariff, the people of this country set their faces towards Great Britain and Great Britain took their goods and our people sent their goods there in larger proportion. And, Sir, the late Government bent its energies, and successfully, to the introduction of our goods into that market, and our goods have gone there in increasing quantities ever since. If cold storage changed him, cold storage and the opening of the British market ought to have had some effect on my right hon. friend many years ago, but it seems to have got in its deadly work only within the last few weeks.

What does my right hon. friend now do? He turns round, and with the most vigorous denunciation, he points to Sir Charles Tupper as being the only Canadian who was willing to barter the in-

terests of Canadians for unrestricted reciprocity with the United States. My right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) who staked his own fortunes and that of his party on unrestricted reciprocity and discrimination against Great Britain, who went to Boston and New York, and coddled the people there with his theories, who sowed the seeds the plants of which met him at Washington when he was there recently—the theories of what Canada should do, and what the Liberal party would do when they came into power—my right hon. friend turns around and with that species of reasoning, which does more credit to his ingenuity than it does to his spirit of fairness or his reasoning powers he tries to thrust all the lapses and errors of himself and his party during the last ten years onto Sir Charles Tupper as being the man who wanted to barter all the interests of this country to the United States for an unrestricted offer of reciprocity. The right hon. gentleman read an article or an excerpt from the Montreal Gazette, which stated, as far as I could gather it, that Mr. Blaine was anxious that some gentlemen from Canada should meet him in Washington in order that they might talk over the basis of negotiation for a treaty of reciprocity. Well, if the right hon. gentleman will listen he will find how that question was solved; he will find the answer that was given, and the answer that was conveyed to Parliament. The delegates at that time did go to Washington and they met Mr. Blaine, and my right hon. friend has before him the results of that conference. The representatives of the Liberal-Conservative Government talked over the basis of a reciprocity treaty with Mr. Blaine, and they and Mr. Blaine fell apart from each other when Mr. Blaine made a demand for two things; one, for a uniformity of tariff between Canada and the United States, and the other that their manufactured goods should come into this country, and that we should discriminate against Great Britain. The answer was very soon given by the representatives of the Liberal-

Conservative Government, and it was a decided negative.

THE COMMISSIONERS' QUALIFICATIONS.

These gentlemen of the Liberal Government went down to Washington with their record of years pledging them to unrestricted reciprocity with discrimination against Great Britain. Thus they prepared themselves to conduct the negotiation with the people of the United States, in the interest of the United States, but they did not find themselves so free as a Government as when they occupied an irresponsible position, and consequently their previous training rather told against them than in their favor. I could quite understand the United States commissioners, when these gentlemen were introduced one by one. "Sir Wilfrid Laurier! Oh, yes, we would like to negotiate with him. We have seen him in Boston; we have heard him speak; we have read his utterances; we know that he was pro-American through and through; we know that he is on record over and over again as declaring that our market is absolutely necessary for Canada. We would like to have him as one of the commissioners; invite him in."

Mr. Davin—He preferred the Yankee dollar to the British shilling.

Mr. Foster—"And Sir Richard Cartwright. Certainly, he is not unknown to fame. We have read his utterances in which he declared that the market of the United States was worth more to Canada than those of the rest of the world put together; we would be glad to negotiate with him. Sir Louis Davies! Under another and more democratic name we have known him, and he has been an ardent advocate of unrestricted reciprocity with the United States. And plain John Charlton—we know him. Oh, yes, bring your commissioners here, and we will squeeze them." What position were the hon. gentlemen in, with that record, to meet with astute, well-read, keen business men, and negotiate with them for a treaty that would be fair to this country? They knew the men,

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they had their history before them, and they would hold them to their previous utterances, and they did hold them. But we see another statement from the Napoleon of the Northwest, who, bye-the-bye, seems to have been laying down the law very dogmatically lately. He has declared, in the very face and eyes of the hon. member for Lisgar (Mr. Richardson) that the tariff is settled satisfactorily. In speaking at Stratford he declared that there was no chance for a reciprocity treaty with the people of the United States. What did he say?

We knew that at present it was useless to work for any large measure of reciprocity with the United States, whatever might happen in the future.



When was that spoken? Some time about the 10th of March. These were the gentlemen who went to Washington with the training that they had had.

ANOTHER HANDICAP.

But that was not enough to handicap them. They thought they must handicap themselves a little more. Their pledge before 1896 was to go down and negotiate with the United States. They knew that they had made this pledge. They went down to the United States, but before they went they brought in a ta-

riff measure in which they gave the United States free binding twine and free corn, and lowered the duties on coal oil and on coal, and in many other items of their tariff they gave to the United States what was worth millions to them in trade, and what they are taking great advantage of at the present time. They gave them these advantages in that spirit of generosity which so characterizes my hon. friend when he deals with other people's goods, when he deals with the country's resources, and the country's money, as he did with the \$250,000 for the sham plebiscite. He generously gave over to the United States the make-weights in the treaty before he went, and so doubly handicapped himself. He then went down to Washington, and as a result of six months' hard labor he comes back and says: "My mouth is closed: there is not any chance today for reciprocity, and the country does not want it anyway, and all that is left is a question that the commissioners cannot settle but that must be settled by the two Governments or it cannot be settled at all." Then he throws himself upon the mercy of the people and asks them to call him the successful and great negotiator. Why, Sir, these gentlemen went through the length and breadth of the country to make the simple-minded, honest farmers believe, as in the late election in Bagot they made the farmers think that they were going to get their hay and other products sent over to the United States free of duty, and consequently that these products would be worth just so much more to them, and that all that kind of produce close to the border which finds an easy transit to the other side of the line would be heightened in value to the farmers of the country. Up to the very latest hour they not only advocated that as a principle, but they advocated it practically to the people of the country, and now they come back and declare: "We have made a discovery: there is no use in the American market for us, and the people of this country do not want reciprocity anyway." I am afraid my hon.

friend the Minister of Marine and Fisheries happened on an unlucky fate. If it had only happened that he could have gone down there whilst Mr. Blaine was in the flesh, he would no doubt have been much more successful, if any reliance can be placed in what I find going the rounds of the papers:

Mr. Davies, the Liberal leader in the East, tells the following story:—"When in the States last year, I called on Mr. Blaine, and was received most cordially. In the course of a long and friendly conversation on continental affairs, he slapped me familiarly on the shoulder and remarked: 'Davies, you Canadians, at least those of you I've met, are mighty clever fellows—how on earth is it that you have in your Government such a confounded lot of asses while such splendid material is at hand?'"

It is a thousand pities that an unkind Providence should have called Mr. Blaine away to his everlasting rest before this mighty clever fellow from the Maritime Provinces had a chance to grasp the hand of the great statesman, and in turn slap him familiarly on the shoulder and say: "You, too, are a very clever fellow."

The Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Sir Louis Davies). When did you write that?

THE PREMIER'S PLEDGE OF ECONOMY.

Mr. Foster. My hon. friend the First Minister, although he declares that his memory is good, found it convenient to utterly forget one thing. What was that? It was the hon. gentleman's pledge of economy—a reduction of the expenditures of the country. Do I need to read his pledge again, made in Toronto, made in different other places in Ontario, given to the faithful broadcast, in which he said that extravagance had marked the expenditures for many years under the late Government, but that if they came into power they would reduce the annual expenditure one, two, three, and Mr. Mills said, five million dollars per year? The hon. gentleman owes to that more than anything else his place in this House today. There is a feeling outside

of contractors, and outside of the men who hang on to contractors, and outside of the politicians who bleed contractors for election purposes, and outside of that set of men who hang on to every party maybe, but to none more thickly than to the present party, who are wishing to make something out of the Government. All that class of people want extravagant expenditures, and that is the class of people who swear by the Minister of Public Works, and by whom the Minister of Public Works swears. He is seized with the idea that the people of this country want lavish expenditure, and he is the man who is going to give them lavish expenditure. Wait until you see us next year, he says. Four million dollars will then have been added, but at the end of the next year he will arise again in his might and say: Wait again until the next year, and another \$4,000,000 will be added, and the man he leads, and who sits ahead of him (Sir Wilfrid Laurier), forgets his pledge to the country and the people whose confidence and faith he has outraged, and allows the expenditure to be increased by millions, though he pledged himself that it would be reduced by millions. How does that matter stand? It stands in this way. The Consolidated Fund expenditure in 1896 was \$36,900,000, in round numbers. In 1897 it was \$38,349,000. In 1898 it was \$38,832,000.

Now we have come to that famous year which the Minister of Public Works wished us to wait for and look at him. Eight months of it have passed, and, comparing the eight months of 1899 with the eight months of 1898, the expenditure is just two millions and a little greater in the first than in the second period. That is, there has been an increase in the eight months of this year over the same period of last year of over \$2,000,000 in our Consolidated Fund expenditure. In capital expenditure he has done still better. In the eight months of 1898 it was \$3,455,627, but in the eight months of 1899 it was increased to \$6,634,729, or a net increase of \$3,179,102. The total expenditures out of Consoli-

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dated Fund and capital account in 1896 were \$40,700,000; in 1897, \$41,800,000; in 1898, \$42,900,000, and in the eight months of this year, as compared with the eight months of last year, there is an increase of \$5,000,000 and a little more, which will make, at the same rate, the capital and Consolidated Fund expenditures for the current year well up to \$49,000,000, as against \$40,000,000 in 1895. But to parry that to some extent, the Minister of Railways and Canals says this: Do you not see that we have a great work put upon us? We found the canals totally inadequate, not sufficient depth of water on their sills, the Government sleeping, and nothing done, and we had to do all this tremendous work on the canals. But the facts show, I am safe in saying, that pretty nearly three-quarters of the work on the canals was finished when these hon. gentlemen took the helm. The Sault Ste. Marie canal, which cost over \$3,000,000, was finished at 20 feet depth. The Welland Canal, which has the regulation depth, was finished entirely, and the other canals which had to be constructed or deepened, were more than three-quarters finished, and the balance under contract; yet these hon. gentlemen go through the country and say: Yes, we are increasing the expenditure, but we must have canals, and we have been putting them through. It was "we" who enlarged the canals, just as it was "we" who gave the Imperial penny postage, and "we" found a blotch on the map to represent Canada, and made it a nation.

THE PLEBISCITE SHAM.

My hon. friend touched the plebiscite, and I use the word "touched" advisedly; but, characteristically again, just as he accused Sir Charles Tupper of being that heartless and abandoned wretch that was in Canada the sole representative who would barter his country's interest for unrestricted reciprocity with the United States, he attempted to obscure his own dealings on the plebiscite question by throwing the blame on Sir Charles Tupper, because he only dropped a tear into the bosom

of the prohibitionists, and did not say he would do anything more. My hon. friend, if he had dropped any tear of repentance for his devious course of action on this and other matters, would be nearer making his peace with the power above than he is at present. But, says my hon. friend, we have broken no pledge. Casuistry of the first water, and simply that. What more does he say?

THE PROHIBITIONISTS DID NOT WANT IT.

The prohibitionists, he says, made no demand. That will be news to some of the gentlemen behind him, because his friends behind him, who conducted the elections in 1896, and the campaign before that, went to the prohibitionists everywhere and said: Do you not see what Laurier has promised you? Do you not see what he is going to give you? The Tories never promised you anything like that. Vote for Laurier and the Liberals. They are the men that will give you what you want. My right hon. friend knows that he profited by such statements, the gentlemen sitting behind him know that they profited by them; yet the hon. gentleman has the assurance to say here, that he made no pledge. It is a mere casuist's plea, and nothing else. The prohibitionists, he says, made no demand. Then, let those hon. gentlemen now retrace their steps and take back their words and say, as does the Prime Minister, that the prohibitionists made no demand, that they did not want the plebiscite, and, therefore, were not beholden to the Liberal party for the promise of a plebiscite.

A PLEDGE TO THE PARTY ONLY.

But, says my hon. friend, yes, we made a pledge, but we only made it to the party. Now, I consider that very ingenious. If there ever was any medal higher than that blessed Cobden medal, I would have it struck and put on the other breast of my right hon. friend, to commemorate that most in-

genious of all ideas, that in convention when the party made a public pledge, and put it in their platform, they did not make it to the people, but the party just got together among themselves, and made a sort of mutual pledge to one another, subject to a private agreement and mutual understanding.

Was that plank in the platform, the reform of the tariff by taking the principle of protection out of it, a pledge simply made to the party, with an implied condition? I believe it now. The implied condition was well understood by the hon. member for Centre Toronto (Mr. Bertram). It was well understood by the manufacturers who were approached by the hon. gentleman's heelers and friends, saying: Let us shout against protection, they said; but hush! do you be quiet; it will not hurt you men at all; we will do what the Minister of Public Works afterwards comes up and says he has done—see that ample protection is kept for the manufacturers of this country. Do not interfere with our little plan. It is a very fine one. We will shout to the free-trader that we are in favor of a revenue tariff, that we are against these bloated monopolists, but we give you the tip in your ear to be quiet now; let us get in, and we will keep up the wall of protection around you. Then we have had the manufacturer coming to the Minister saying: We want to increase our manufactories; do not make the duty off. Then we have had the members of the Government grasping them with the warm right hand and saying: Fear ye not, we are with you, and we will keep in this tariff an ample limit of protection; go on and build more factories. And the pledge of economy moved by Mr. Gibbons and enthusiastically acclaimed by the thousand and one representatives on that hot June day in the city of Ottawa was not a pledge to the country, it was a pledge to the party with an implied condition. That implied condition I suppose was: We must say something to catch votes, and we will

talk economy, but you promoters, you hangers-on, you that want to fatten at the public crib, keep quiet that we may have a chance to get in, and "wait until you see us next year." Was the plan which declared for purity of administration and politics a pledge to the people or simply a pledge to the party with an implied condition? The implied condition has been well understood by some of your Ministers, and it has been acted upon to the utter debauchery and corruption of sections of this country. All these things were not pledges to the people, they were pledges to the party with an implied condition and the condition will be carried out whether the pledges are or not.

THE SECRET AGREEMENT.

What was the implied condition in this case? Where is the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Fisher) and was he aware of this implied condition? The leader of the Government has now told us what the implied condition was, but from 1893 until today he did not open his mouth about it in public, and except to those to whom he may have told it in private nobody was aware that the dice were loaded in that way. Talk about loaded dice! Imagine a man who pretends to be the leader of a great party making an agreement with interested members of his own party about a great matter of public policy, but keeping it silent and secret from the public who were asked to vote upon it. Think of him taking \$250,000 of the people's money, and \$750,000 more from the earnest men and women who were most interested in this election campaign, and putting all this machinery in operation and doing it without telling these people the conditions under which the contest was to be decided, knowing well that these conditions were utterly impossible of fulfilment. Why, if a man were to put up two contestants in the prize ring without giving the conditions of the contest he would be tabooed by decent pugilists for ever afterwards. And the man,

moters, you to fatten at that we may and "wait" Was the purity of a pledge to edge to the tion? The well under- nisters, and to the ution of sec- these things people, they with an im- ndition will pledges are

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condition in nister of nd was he tion? The as now told on was, but d not open ic, and ex- may have was aware a that way. gine a man r of a great at with in- own party ublic policy, et from the vote upon 0,000 of the more from a who were tion cam- machinery outhout tel- litions under be decided, conditions fulfillment. up two con- outhout giv- contest he t pugilists the man,

Sir, I do not care how many decorations he may have on his breast, who goes to the churches and to unions of earnest men and women of his country and forces them into a contest of this kind simply to delude them, allows them to go into such a contest without giving them the conditions under which it is to be decided—what opinion can we have of him? And now he thinks he is absolved when he can read a statement from three or four gentlemen that a 23 per cent. vote of the electorate is not quite enough and there ought to be more. The hon. gentleman, with that odd obliquity which characterizes him in matters of principle has missed the point of the question entirely.

WAS IT DELIBERATE DECEPTION.

The question today is not as to the majority, but as to the honor of a man or a body of men who would make a secret agreement with an implied condition to deceive the electorate and put this country to the trouble and turmoil of a great national contest without making public the conditions upon which that contest was to be decided. I must disagree with my hon. friend, I must disagree with his ethics and his peculiar political morality. If the prohibition plank of the platform was not a pledge to the people of the country then, Sir, there was no pledge given in that whole series of resolutions passed at that convention. What need had he to give a pledge to his party? His party was with him. He was looking for votes from the country, and when a party meets together what immense silliness for a man to say that they can make public declarations and pledges themselves, and that it is only for the party and not for the country. And what sublime disdain for the intelligence of common humanity is shown by the man who will rise and declare to an intelligent people that such a course would be honorable in a party or in a man. Who put that plank in the platform?

An Hon. Member. Landarkin.

Mr. Foster—Perhaps my hon. friend had some method in his madness and may have meant that plebiscite arrangement for some of his own followers. Who introduced that resolution in the convention? It was introduced by S. A. Fisher, ex-M.P. for Brome. I have read the report of the convention from end to end, and I cannot find any intimation that there was any implied condition in regard to any of these resolutions. If it is to be found there, let the hon. gentleman show it. Nor can I find that in the discussions in that convention mention was ever made that they gave this plebiscite plank simply on an implied condition, as the hon. gentleman says, that there should be at least half the votes on the list in favor of it, or it should not be enacted into law. It is the hon. gentleman's own statement, but it is not, so far as I know, backed up by anything in the records or by anything that transpired at the convention, nor do I find any mention made of an engagement on the part of the party prohibitionists that in case the vote should not be half of the total list, they should agree to drop prohibition for ever after.

WAS MR. SPENCE A PARTY TO IT?

I believe that Mr. F. S. Spence, the secretary of the Dominion Alliance, was a member of that convention, that he spoke in the convention, that he was there not only as a Liberal, but as the guardian of the interests of the temperance people in the Dominion. If he was not there in that capacity he had no business to be there at all, holding the position that he did as secretary of the Alliance. May I ask my hon. friend if the implied condition and the solemn engagement were acceded to by Mr. Spence, who was a member of the convention? My hon. friend does not answer. If it was known to Mr. Spence, then Mr. Spence has put himself in the position of betraying the temperance people in this country. He went through that campaign from beginning to end telling the people to vote for the plebiscite, and if they voted for it in the majority they would get the enactment. Or if it

was not made known to Mr. Spence, does the hon. gentleman think he treated his own followers rightly if he had implied conditions with his party and did not tell that implied condition to that member of his party as well as to the others? There was an implied pledge, and an engagement?

WAS HON. MR. FISHER A PARTY TO IT?

Did the hon. gentleman inform the present Minister of Agriculture of that engagement and condition? If he did, he put the present Minister of Agriculture in the position of standing before his first audience in the city of Ottawa on the same platform as myself, when we spoke earnest and, I hope, true words to the people, urging them under all the difficulties to come out and vote, for their future depended on the vote that they would give. I took it for granted that the old constitutional law, which keeps up our administration, which puts governments here, was good enough, if it was good for anything, to govern in this case also. The Minister of Agriculture, on that platform, in my presence, in the course of his address, and of his exhortation, declared to the earnest people before him: Now, if you want prohibition, vote for this plebiscite. He put in no 50 per cent. condition. Did my hon. friend impart that knowledge to the Minister of Agriculture, or did he allow him to go into the fight without the knowledge of that implied condition? If he did the former, I have no hesitation at all in saying that the Minister of Agriculture did not deal fairly by me or any other friend of temperance, in urging us to go into that contest and spend our money and our time on an utter impossibility. After this assertion made by the Prime Minister today, the Minister of Agriculture must explain either his betrayal of the temperance people, or the refusal of his leader to entrust a colleague with such vital information. And the hon. gentleman sits there today, in his position of strength and mightiness, sits there today upon a 28 per cent. vote of the electoral list of this country, gained

in 1896. He makes laws, and he negotiates treaties, and he would lay down the flat to both Houses of Parliament, if he could.

An hon. member—He did not negotiate a treaty.

Mr. Foster.—Well, he tried to do it. If he did not negotiate a treaty, he negotiated himself, because he found out enough at Washington in six weeks to upset every idea and belief that he and the youthful Minister of Marine and Fisheries, and the even more youthful (in appearance) Minister of Trade and Commerce, had for the last twenty-five and thirty years had pounded into them by their experience and by their political study. He went down there imbued with the idea that it was absolutely necessary we should have the market of the United States; he came back unsuccessful and now says that the people of this country do not want it at all. He made a discovery, changed a long-held opinion on this matter, an opinion which he and his conferees ran their election upon, and on which they got a great many votes.

THE PREMIER KEPT SILENCE.

Then my hon. friend will not tell me whether that 50 per cent. condition was known to the Minister of Agriculture, who headed the temperance forces. The right hon. gentleman sitting there was on the platform of the Methodist Church in this city when the women of Canada presented him with that world's petition, and the Minister of Agriculture was with him. The Minister of Agriculture, in his speech, declared that that day had marked an epoch in the onward progress of prohibition and temperance in this country, as he, a member of a Government, had that day introduced a bill for a plebiscite upon which the people could vote for prohibition in this country. But what irony, what cruelty, what immaculate meanness, if there could be such an aggregation of terms, in the knightly and courtly leader of this Government, to sit there in the presence of those earnest women and allow them to be misled with the idea

that they were going into a fair contest where the people's will should rule, when all the time he had made a 50 per cent. condition.

THE PLEDGES THEY MADE.

Sir, what did Mr. Fisher say at the convention in 1893? He said:

I propose to read the resolution which will bring about this result,—

What result? A prohibitory law, that is what he was speaking about.

—and which pledges the Liberal party, if returned to power, to give the people of Canada an opportunity to express their views upon this question, and the Government in power must necessarily carry out the expressed will of the people. There is no doubt that that is what the Liberal party would do. We know their pledges can be trusted.

He goes on to say:

I am glad, therefore, that the great party to which I belong, and with which I have worked, is prepared to take a stand upon the temperance question, and to declare in its platform in favour of a step in the right direction upon this subject.

These are the pledges of Mr. Fisher, now Minister of Agriculture. But more than the Minister of Agriculture have spoken on this question. In October, 1895, the Prime Minister, then plain Mr. Laurier, then in opposition, in reply to the Rev. Mr. Huxtable, whom I know very well, and who is a most earnest and, I believe, sincere Methodist minister, said in reply to a question put to him by the Rev. gentleman:—

The Liberal party has pledged itself in convention at Ottawa that whenever in power they would take a plebiscite on the liquor question, as to whether the people want a prohibitory liquor law or not. The answer is not in my hands, it is in the hands of the people, and, according to their answer, such legislation they will have at the hands of the Government.

Does not the Prime Minister think that, as an honest man, he should have told Mr. Huxtable, in addition to what he

did tell him, have told him frankly: Mr. Huxtable, I must tell you and your temperance friends that you must get a 50 per cent. vote, for there is an implied condition set by the party that unless you get that, nothing can be done. At Stratford, before an audience of 4,000, on the 9th of June, plain Mr. Laurier that was, is thus reported to have spoken:

Mr. Laurier's attention was given to prohibition. He said: Up to this moment the question of prohibition has never been approached by electors free from other considerations. We deem it wiser to separate it from all other con-



siderations, and to test the public feeling on the matter, we shall do so when we come into office, as I believe we shall. Then I am asked what is to be done? The answer is plain. I am by nature a democrat. I believe in democratic government, and above all in a constitutional government, and the only way to act under a democratic and constitutional government is that the people must govern, and their command must be obeyed. As the people shall speak so shall be the duty of the Government, if that government be in the hands of the Liberal party. This explanation of the Liberal policy on the prohibition question was apparently satisfactory from the applause with which it was received.

And the editor adds:

Laurier is now where his noble democratic spirit can reveal its true greatness.

At Listowel, the question of prohibition was under discussion, and in reply to an interrogation, he said:

We deem it wiser to separate it from all other considerations, and to test the public feeling on the matter we shall do so when we come into office, as I believe we shall. Then I am asked what is to be done. The answer is plain. I am by nature a democrat, I believe in democratic government, and above all in constitutional government, and the only way to act under a democratic and constitutional government is that the people must govern, and their command must be obeyed. As the people shall speak, so shall be the duty of the Government, if that Government be in the hands of the Liberal party.

That shows that it was well thought out and stereotyped, for it was the same answer he had given at other places. In Winnipeg he made a vigorous speech to the people against taxation, against increased expenditure, in favor of free implements, and against the bloated monopolists and manufacturers. Then they asked him what about prohibition, and he declared that:

He would pledge his honor that as soon as the Liberals came into power in Ottawa they would take a plebiscite of the Dominion by which the party would stand, and the will of the people would be carried out, even were it to cost power for ever to the Liberal party.

Mr. J. G. H. BERGERON (Beauhar-
nois).—Did he really say that?

Mr. FOSTER.—Yes, he said that. But, Sir, we had the right hon. gentleman, in this House, when the Plebiscite Bill passed, when he was pressed by myself and Sir Charles Tupper to give some definite information to the people of the country, both prohibitionists and the liquor men, both largely interested—both would spend money, both would

spend time, both would go into a contest of some weeks duration, heated and expensive, and a hard campaign—the right hon. gentleman was asked to say honestly and frankly if he would enact any new condition, or if the old-fashioned British rule of government by majority should hold. The right hon. gentleman, when asked if an affirmative vote would be followed by a bill and what would be considered a sufficient vote said:

I have often said, and I can only repeat here, that when the will of the people has been affirmed, as it will be affirmed, one way or the other, then the Government must be prepared to abide by the consequences.

When asked, further, what this explicitly meant, he said:

It means that the Government, when they have the will of the people before them, will have to take such steps as will give effect to the will of the people.

That was the latest utterance of my right hon. friend in Parliament.

THE PREMIER NAILED.

But, Sir, there is another utterance which acts as a gloss to all these—the utterance that he gave to that Liberal Convention of 1893, on a steaming summer day in Ottawa, and which was heralded from the faithful there to the faithful all over the country as the dictum of this great coming leader of the Government of the country. What did he say, written down in the book:

We must be governed by the majority. I do not say that the majority is always right, but until we have something better we must be governed by the rule that the majority must govern.

Now, Sir, if anything could be clearer than that reasoning and that conclusion, I do not know what logic and

sound reasoning mean. The right hon. gentleman, whatever were his implied and secret conditions, led the people of this country to believe everywhere, that he was honest and frank with them, and that when the will of the people—such a will of the people as put him where he is, 28 per cent. of the total electorate, the will of the people that has put men behind him with 20 per cent. of the vote of the electorate—to make criminal and civil laws which shall be binding on every section of this country, to sustain an administration which shall administer millions of dollars and untold millions of the resources of this country, to give the power that belongs to all legislation and all administration as well—the right hon. gentleman led the people of this country to believe—whatever he may have whispered to his interested friends—that if they voted and obtained a majority vote, it would be followed by their will being carried out, and his Government would carry out their will. Sir, it is not necessary for me to read the vote; it is not necessary for me to take the voters' list of every member who sits behind my right hon. friend, with the percentage of the vote which he got, and to show him that it sums up to about 28 per cent. of the total votes on the list. This plebiscite vote is 23 per cent.; but oh! the cruelty of it, and the unmanliness of it, and the lack of anything like public frankness of it, to bring the two sections of the people of this country together in a heated contest over a great principle, and to keep secret from one section the conditions which he knew would dash down irreparably every hope they had of carrying that which they believed to be good for this country. You, Sir, may be an anti-prohibi-

tionist, and I may be a prohibitionist, and we both may be honest in our beliefs. Neither of us would impugn the honesty of the other; and neither of us, if he had a spark of manliness within him, would think it was proper or manly to gain an advantage by entering upon the decisive struggle under secret and implied conditions which utterly handicapped one of us and gave the victory without a shadow of doubt to the other before one blow of the battle was struck. Such, Sir, is unfair in the rules of the ring; such is equally unfair and unmanly in public politics; but it is characteristic of my right hon. friend. It is characteristic of his Government; they seem to have lost any feeling of honorable men that they are bound by their pledges, and bound to be frank and manly with the people, bound to do what they said they would do, when they were seeking for power, and for place, and for position.

The churches and the unions, and the earnest men and women of this country demanded that this manly and frank treatment should have been given to them; they have not had it. My own opinion is, that they will think about this matter, and think about it very seriously, and, above all, will hold this in view; that the question at this present moment is not as to what should constitute a requisite majority, but the question is, as to the peculiar conduct of a Government which led earnest men and women on for years with heightened hopes and then plunged them into the final contest where, as I have said, they were hopelessly handicapped by a secret engagement and a condition which effectually barred all possibility of success to them and just as effectually delivered them over to certain defeat.

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