

LIBERALS DANCE TO MANY TUNES

Their Several Changes of Front

POINTED OUT BY THE HON. GEO. E. FOSTER

In the Course of his Excellent Speech in the Rink.

Hon. Geo. F. Foster followed Sir Charles Tupper at the big meeting in the Rink on Tuesday evening, and was given a great ovation on rising. He said:

Ladies and Gentlemen,—I wish first to pay a well-merited tribute of praise to the committee of Liberal-Conservatives who prepared and arranged the notices which adorn the walls of this building. (Cheers). These notices afford much instruction to those who study them, as they epitomize the work of the Liberal-Conservative party and the results of that work. Comparing 1896 with 1900, how things have changed. In 1896 the Liberal-Conservatives were the accused and the Liberals were the accusers; in 1900 the Liberals are the accused and the Liberal-Conservatives are the accusers. To-night the men who were formerly the accusers are the accused. We are here to-night to teach them to respect themselves. I will not call them a Liberal Administration—I will call them the "Laurier-Tarte combination." I have too much respect for the old Liberals present here to-night to give the new combination any other name than the name I have given. Do they represent the good old Liberalism of your fathers? By no means. Let me illustrate. By what means did the so-called Liberal Government of P. E. Island retain power during their last session? By the vote of a single man paid to desert his party to sustain the Government in office and to enable it to rule the destinies of the people of this Island. It would be better to hide away, to be a dog and bay the moon, than run a Government by so contemptible a trick as that. Are you proud of a Government who have attempted to keep themselves in power by a contemptible trick—by the purchase of a man pledged by the people to oppose the Liberal Government; but who proved a traitor to his policy and to his electors, accepting a bribe to support his enemies? Was that the Liberalism your father fought for, and lived and died for? Was that government for the people and by the people? Was it the people in Pineau's constituency who were represented, or Pineau himself? Was it the people by whom Farquharson's Administration was upheld? (Cries of no, no, and roars of laughter).

Now, good old Liberals here, you are honest men yourselves: what did you say on this platform in 1896? Didn't you say: "Pull the Tories down, they are increasing the national debt until the people can stand it no longer: put us in power and the national debt will be diminished." Did you not elect your men to lessen the debt? Certainly you did. Well, they have been in power four years. Has the public debt been diminished? It is now exactly eight millions more than it was four years ago. Were you honest in 1896 when you scoured the streets and lanes of Charlottetown to secure the return to Parliament of Sir Louis Davies on the ground that the Tory government was so extravagant that the young life of the Dominion was in process of being ground out of it by those so-called Tories? You know you said all this, and that Sir Louis gave his unqualified promise that he would bring down the public expenditure to its proper place. Now in 1896 the expenditure of the Dominion was \$41,700,000. For that you passed the sentence of death upon the Conservatives, and put in power Sir Louis and the rest of them. (True, true.) Well, what did the Liberals expend during the year of grace ending on the 30th June last? You don't catch a Liberal answer that question. They will willingly spend a lot of printer's ink on other matters, but they will not tell you what their public expenditure has been. (Laughter.) But we know what it was—forty-one millions! Oh no (Hon. Mr. Foster here held up a paper). Did you ever see this production headed: "Protections, the sum of all villainies," "Free trade, the Englishman's birthright," "Primer about sugar," "Primer about cotton," "Primer on the rice question," "Primer on kerosene oil." This is Davies' political primer. (Roars of laughter.) On that primer he stood at the Dominion election in 1896. What did Sir Louis say about the public expenditure? He said that about four millions of dollars must be dropped from the annual Tory expenditure. That would have it about \$7,700,000. But what was the Liberal expenditure for the past fiscal year? I hardly dare tell you! Prepare yourselves for the shock! They expended no less than \$53,000,000 last year, instead of forty-one millions, or

about \$11,300,000 more than the Conservatives! What did you say in Charlottetown, Summerside and Keppoch about the terrible expenditure of the Tories in 1896? You declared that we took millions of dollars more out of the pockets of the people than were necessary for the public requirements. In 1896 the revenue from duties, etc., was about \$27,700,000. What is it now? According to Tarte the Government are spending lots of money, but they are also making lots of money. Where did they get it? What amount did they take out of the pockets of the people, last year? No less than 38 millions of dollars. Or \$10,300,000 more taken out of the pockets of the people than the Tories took out in 1896. Sir Richard Cartwright once declared that Protectionists were scoundrels great and scoundrels small, etc., and that the National Policy was worse than war, pestilence and famine put together. But there is not a good Liberal in Charlottetown who has not bowed down to the great image. You sent Sir Louis to wipe it off the statute book of the Dominion of Canada. Let me read you some figures, showing the amounts raised in taxes by the so-called Liberals. When we went out of power the tariff on dutiable and free goods was 17.47 per cent; it is now 17.33 per cent, which is exactly 14 1/100ths of one per cent. less than ours. They tell us of a hunter who, in passing through the forest met an Indian wandering about in a dazed sort of way, and said to him: "Well, brother, Indian lost?" The Indian looked up at him and said: "Indian not lost; wigwam lost." I would ask the good old Liberals, "Is your wigwam lost, or are you lost?" Which? (Great applause).

I come to you as a Good Samaritan to lead you to our good Liberal-Conservative wigwam, which is in the very same place as it was in 1896. It has not moved in the least. In the new wigwam of the Liberals we hear sounds. We lift up a flap and behold Sir Richard Cartwright singing "I cannot sing the old songs." And you say, "That cannot be our wigwam." But you open up another flap and see Sir Louis Davies. You say, "This must be the Liberal wigwam, for Sir Louis would not be anywhere else than in it." Now, don't you think you have been shamefully treated by those Liberals, in deserting you and your wigwam? Out in the far west, the cowboys invite the tenderfoot to dance to the tune they select for him, with revolvers in their hands. We will apply this to the Liberals who have followed their leaders music. First we saw them dance to the tune of Continental Free Trade, and we heard the leaders cry, "Dance, boys, dance"; and they did dance with all their might. They were then ordered to dance to the tune of Commercial Union, and they danced equally well. Then came the dance to Unrestricted Reciprocity with the United States, and discrimination against England. Next came the dance to Free Trade as they have it in England. During the whole of the time the cry was "Dance you rascals, dance," and they responded. "Dance an Irish jig now dance a hornpipe," and they danced. Then came the dance of jag-headed Preferential Trade with England, and we now see a lot of intelligent men dancing to that tune. Is it not silly? Why do people not use their common sense? Why dance at the crack of the party whip and the cry of the party leader? So your Liberal party has been holding these devil's dances, and you have followed them year after year; when they have piped, you have danced. (Roars of laughter.) If you find your leaders have betrayed you, why elect them again to repeat the operation? They told you that Free Trade was the proper fiscal policy for this country. Did they secure it for you? They told you that we must have Commercial Union with the United States. Did they believe what they said? They long ago utterly discarded it. Every one of their leaders declared that Unrestricted Reciprocity with the United States must be secured, and that the United States manufactures and goods of all kinds must come into this country, duty free. They stated this as their policy. I have in my hands, Sir Louis' declaration on this question, just before the last general election. "We cannot live without it and must have it" were his words. Have we got it? Are you today prospering without it? The Government expended no less than \$34,000 on negotiations respecting that matter. What have you got for the money? Sir Wil-

frid Laurier said the other day that "after all he did not think there was much of a feeling in this country in favor of reciprocity, and thank God we can get along without it." Well, what are you going to do with men who make you such promises and never carry them out? Is it not true that nine-tenths of the business transactions of this country rest upon the confidence which men have in their fellow men? Supposing that promises are made by business men merely to be broken, what are those promises worth? If your municipal officers were to make you certain promises which they never attempted to perform, what would you do when they came to you a second time for your vote? Would you not refuse to support them any longer? Yes, you would leave them at home and put other men in their places. (Applause). Let us suppose this is the 22nd June, 1896, and that your Leader, Sir Wilfrid, stands here before you asking your suffrages. He says, "To-morrow is the 23rd June, when the general election comes off, and you ask me what I will do for you if elected." "Well, I understand," says he, "that a great many of you are going about like bears with sore heads because you are over-taxed. Place me in power and I will add eight millions of dollars to the public debt of this country." "What else will you do?" say you. "I will add," says he, "\$10,800,000 to the burden of taxation." You ask him what else he will do. He replies: "I understand you are finding great fault with Protection. Put me in power and I will raise the duties on cotton and sugar. I will teach you on cotton protection." If Sir Wilfrid had told you all these things at that time would you have voted for him? (No, no.) Well, he is there, where you have helped to place him. (Laughter.) When I ask him in the House of Commons why he does these things he says, "You are there and I am here; what do you propose to do about it?" He simply told us he was on top and the Conservatives were underneath. What was my answer to him. My answer to him was I think the answer of the electorate of this country. I said, "It is true, sir, that you are there and we are here; and you are there because you violated the promises that you gave to the people, (hear hear) and although I have not very much to say about it now when the elections of this country come around the electorate will have something to say and something to do about that?" (hear, and applause.) "What are you going to do about it?" Let us look into that argument. You go home to bed, and three or four o'clock in the morning you are aroused by a noise in your room. You jump up, strike a light and there is one of your neighbors that you thought a good citizen, an honest man, rifling your pockets and taking away your valuables. You clinch him and say "My good man, what are you doing here. You are violating the rights of citizenship, you ought to be an honest man, you have sworn to keep the peace and be honest. These are my things, leave them, go away to your home, and try to be an honest man." But the burglar holds on to his loot, and he does more than that. He pulls out a suspicious-looking instrument and he holds the red end of that to the forehead of the man just awakened, and he says, "Well, what do you propose to do about it. I am at this end and you are at that." (Laughter and applause.) Now, is there any difference in the two principles. Not the least. The very same flippant answer which was made to clear a government charged with violating all its promises, and getting into power because of promises made that were never fulfilled, and never intended to be fulfilled, is no better answer to an electorate than is the answer of the burglar who has the superior position by virtue of his strength and the instrument that he holds in his hand. Not a bit more. Now, some of you people are clergymen and you have churches and you preach in those churches. Am I saying too harsh a thing when I say to you clergy men, that you might just as well shut your churches, close them up, and take a long holiday—a long long holiday—as to teach honest truthful dealing and straightforwardness to the people of your congregations, and then allow public men and public parties to teach the wide broad object lesson of deception and security in deception. You are Sunday-school teachers. What do you do in your Sunday school? Teach lots of things. What for? One thing and one only; to make an honest, truthful, good-living citizen out of a boy and out of a girl. You tell them "never tell a lie," "always speak the truth, do what you say you will do," "grow up to be honest, and you will have the approval of your conscience and a character that cannot be impugned, whether you make money, become rich and successful, or not." Now, don't you think, honestly, you might just as well shut up your Sunday schools, turn in the young ones and let them go free, if you don't see to it that the broader, wider object lesson taught by men who live in the light of public day and criticism, and who repudiate their pledges and hold on to power and expect the support of the people in that—you might, I say, just as well turn loose your Sunday school scholars and let them go, as to teach them money's there and support dishonesty and public life.—(Applause.)

Now, sir, I stood on the platform in Winnipeg when Hugh John Macdonald was reading his platform of principles to a vast audience in that city. He was denouncing the Greenway government for having gone against what they had promised the people to do, and he asked the

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people to turn them out for that; and then he said, "here are my principles, this is the platform that I and my friends laid down. Put us into power and we will carry that out." In speaking afterwards I said to the people, "You have heard what the Leader of the Opposition has said here. I counsel you to do it." "But," said some one, "What is the use of turning out Greenway because he repudiated and not fulfilled his promises and putting others in who will not carry out what they will promise; we will have all the scurrilous, and be no better off in the end." Well, my answer was this, (Continued on page 5.)

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