

matter. These are but a few illustrations of how the gentlemen who are now in office can, from the Opposition benches, lay down doctrines such as those embodied in the resolution I have read to you, and then when in office can, in violation of these doctrines, prostitute ministerial influence and the patronage of the Crown to their own party interests, as was never done in Canada under any former administration.

And now, sir, let me say that I had some doubts whether in an address such as that which I am now delivering I should refer in any way to the celebrated Pacific scandal, the immediate cause of the downfall of the Liberal-Conservative government. But it occurred to me that, now that the elections are over—now that men's minds have cooled down, now that there are no votes to be got by discussing the question and denouncing the public men of the country in connection with it, now when the sober second thought must be beginning to assert itself, that now might be a good time to look at the question fairly and dispassionately and deal with it as it really deserves to be dealt with, to see what it really amounts to, and whether it was the heinous, unpardonable American connection in the matter of the Pacific Railway.

The gravamen of the charge is not that Sir Hugh Allan subscribed a large sum of money to the elections. He, as a wealthy member of the party, had a right to do this if he chose to do it. Even the pure-minded gentlemen who now sit on the ministerial benches, and who are so horrified at the idea of money being spent at elections, could, if they were for a moment seized with that rare commodity—candor—tell us of some pretty large expenditures during the last elections, and could perhaps tell us that the source of that reservoir, from which an almost never-ceasing supply ran into the different counties, is to be found in the remarkable

change recently announced in their views on the subject of American connection in the matter of the Pacific Railway.

I have no doubt that Mr. R. W. Scott, who from his seat at Ottawa, sent forth his missionaries into the different counties, could tell us something. I have no doubt that throughout the country, as, for instance, in one of the divisions of Montreal, we could find evidences of expenditures which aggregated over the whole Dominion would make the contribution of Sir Hugh Allan, great as it was, appear small. The truth is, and I admit it with regret, that money does get spent at elections, and my own experience is that those who bawl most loudly for purity generally manage to spend the most.

The gravamen of this charge, I repeat, is not the mere fact of subscription by a wealthy member of the party to the election funds of the party. The gravamen of the charge is, and if that could be established it would be a damning one, that Sir John A. Macdonald, being the first minister of the crown, entered into such an agreement with Sir Hugh Allan, who was at the time both a contractor and an expectant contractor, and accepted money from him for party purposes on such terms as prevented him doing his duty to the country in regard to any contract in which Sir Hugh Allan was interested. Is there anything in the records of Parliament since the elections of 1872, or in the evidence taken before the commission, or in the well-known facts connected with the Pacific Railway charter, to justify this charge?

Take the first. It is true that Sir Hugh Allan, or rather the firm of which he is the head, was a contractor, a contractor for carrying the ocean mails. Well, what happened? The very first session after these transactions took place that contract had to be renewed, and it was renewed at half the

price of the old one! Did that look like being bound by any agreement against the interests of the country?

And as to the second, we know from the testimony of a gentleman who certainly showed during the November session no disposition to befriend the late government, that Sir Hugh Allan was compelled to abandon, one after another, all the special features of the Pacific Railway charter upon which he had set his heart, and was not even consulted, but, on the contrary, his advice was actually rejected in the matter of the gentlemen who were to compose that company. I know of my own knowledge that in relation to one gentleman especially, with whom he had been acting in railroad matters, he felt deeply chagrined at not having been able to secure his presence on the board of directors. Did that look as if there had been an agreement which bound ministers to Sir Hugh Allan against their own independent conception of their duty to the country? . . .

Sir John Macdonald, gentlemen, committed a great mistake in being personally connected with any question of money for the elections and he has most grievously suffered for it. It was a mistake resulting from the absence in Canada of those political organizations which in England assume the management of these things, and it was a mistake which he committed in common with other public men of both political parties, and, if I am not greatly mistaken, in common even with members of the pure government which we have presiding over the destinies of Canada to-day.

But no man in Canada, from Prince Edward Island to Vancouver, would venture the assertion that a single sixpence had stuck to his own fingers or tended to enrich himself. The money he obtained he spent in aiding his friends throughout Ontario in their elections, and the whole amount

obtained by him did not exceed what I venture to say has been spent in three elections that I would name during the late contest in this country on the Clear Grit side alone.

I venture, sir, to think that the maturer judgment, the sober second thought of the people of this country will yet vindicate the character of the great statesman who has so long presided over the destinies of this country and whose name is so eminently associated with the twenty years of Liberal-Conservative administration in Canada from the bitter aspersions which a mad jealousy and disappointed ambition have heaped upon it.

I venture, sir, to think that that judgment will shape itself after this fashion: Here is a man who, at the cost of professional prospects which might have made him one of the wealthy men of the land, entered at an early age the service of his country, and for thirty years has uninterruptedly given to that service the eminent abilities with which God has endowed him; who for twenty years has been in official life, and has during that time solved all the great questions which separated and agitated the country, and has given to it measures which have brought peace and prosperity to the people; who, finding a number of isolated Provinces with hostile tariffs and local agitations, has welded them into one great Dominion in the enjoyment of free constitutional government under the crown of Great Britain; under whose administration the people have both socially and politically and materially enjoyed a prosperity certainly not excelled by that enjoyed by any other people on the face of the earth; who has made the name of Canada known and respected the world over, and has made for himself an honored name on both sides of the Atlantic; who has received at the hands of his sovereign honors such as have never been bestowed upon any

other colonial statesman; but who at a time of great political crisis, when the interests alike of his party and his country seemed at stake, was tempted to aid his friends in a contest against sectional prejudice backed by the substantial aid of large money support, by accepting from a wealthy member of his party a large subscription toward party funds; who suffered defeat from it; but who throughout all the period of these discussions remained uncharged even of personal corruption for his own advantage; who even when accepting this subscription to party funds was careful not to allow it to embarrass him in his public duty; and when the time came to deal with the wealthy donor kept himself in a position to treat with him on terms of perfect independence and with a single eye to the public interests.

And, sir, when hereafter, when the discussions of to-day have been forgotten, and the influences which prompt those discussions have passed away, the correspondence of Sir Hugh Allan with his American associates comes to be read, and from it is ascertained what Sir Hugh aimed at, and that is contrasted with what he got in the charter, it will require neither skill nor courage to vindicate the great Liberal-Conservative leader from the aspersion of having entered into an agreement to sell a valuable public franchise for gold, with which to corrupt the electors of the country. Perhaps, gentlemen, the time has not come for that sober second thought to assert itself; but that it will come I feel as certain as that I am addressing my good friends in the county of Prescott to-day.

And now, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, why is it that we are to-day forming this association? I have shown you that the policy of the past has been sufficient to solve all the great questions which have agitated the country during the

last quarter of a century. I have shown you that the party which has just attained to office after years of agitation has not one single reform which it can call its own upon which to appeal for public sympathy and support. If, then, the great questions which have agitated parties in the past have been settled, why should we have a party organization such as is now proposed?

We must not forget that under the constitutional system which we happily possess in Canada, based as it is on the model of that of the mother-land, government by party is essential to the well-being and the proper government of the State. An opposition in Parliament is as essential as a government and performs almost as important a function in the administration of the affairs of the country. Not an opposition influenced simply by a factious desire to upset the administration or embarrass it in its work. That is not the ordinary work which a party out of office has to perform. The gentlemen now in power and their friends did their best when in opposition to bring our entire constitutional system into disrepute by forgetting this sound rule. Every measure of the old government was opposed with all the bitterness they could bring to bear upon it, and that from their peculiar temperament was not a little. And yet to-day we have the statement from ministerial lips, that the policy of the new government will be in the main the same as that of the old.

The duty which is before us as Liberal-Conservatives is to illustrate by our conduct what a constitutional opposition is, as the party when in office presented the spectacle of a constitutional government. The duty of an opposition is not to obstruct, but to assist the government in carrying on the affairs of the country. That does not imply that the government should be supported, but it does imply that all meas-

ures submitted by them and all acts of administration committed by them shall be subjected to such fair and candid criticism as will tend to produce as nearly a perfect government as it is possible to have. And it is because of the necessity for this opposition in the interests of good government that the Liberal-Conservatives should organize in every part of the Dominion as you are proposing to do here to-day. Such an organization will prove to the government that it is certain to be subject to a careful vigilance; and it will give to the minority elected to fight the battle of the Opposition in Parliament the encouragement of knowing that although the representation of the party in Parliament has been greatly reduced, there is a stalwart body of men in all the constituencies upon whose intelligence and political firmness and integrity they can rely for support.

The difficulty which may present itself in the formation of these associations is a definition of distinct principles. But there is one principle, and I name it not as distinguishing us from our opponents, for that would imply a charge I should be very sorry to make, viz.: the principle of British connection, which should constitute a first plank in any platform the party may adopt.

You know, gentlemen, at this moment efforts are being made in different parts of the country to start new parties. We have in the city of Toronto one party taking as its motto "Canada First," and another taking as its motto "Empire First." From my point of view both titles are admirable as mere mottoes, but neither by itself meets the requirements of the country. "Canada First"—let that be our motto in everything affecting the interests and prosperity and well-being of this country; let it be our motto in making the name of Canada an honored name, whether in legislation or com-

merce, the world over; let it be our motto in the dissemination of such information relating to our institutions and resources as will make the Dominion an attraction for the emigrating millions of the Old World. "Canada First!"

Let that be our motto so far as the interests of the Dominion, separate and distinct from those of the mother country, so far as they can be so, are concerned. "Empire First!" Let that be our motto so far as the interests of the glorious empire with which we are connected are concerned. "Empire First!" Let that be our motto in our reverence for the dear old flag and in our prayer that it may be borne as loftily in the future as it has been in the past. And if at any time danger should threaten it, and we should be called upon to vindicate in other form than by words our loyalty to the throne, then let "Empire First" be the guiding star under which we shall illustrate that the Queen has in this new Dominion as loyal, stalwart sons and as devoted and fair daughters as in any other part of her vast realms.

But let us take neither to the exclusion of the other. Both are mottoes worthy of our respect and worthy of being accepted by us. Our great object should be as a party to so conduct our public discussions, to so maintain our principles and views, that when the time of electoral struggle comes as come it must before long, we shall be able to show such a front as to save us from the defeats of the past and secure for us the triumphs of the future.