

cause he had no lowest tenderer. But that is not all. The hon. gentleman wants to know why the Government should have sent for Mr. Burland. I will tell him why. Instead of such a course being a scandal, as he has described it, let me tell him that the records of his own department, the records of every department in the public service, under all governments, will prove that again and again the various departments of the Government have done precisely what the hon. gentleman would have done if he had sent for Mr. Burland and discussed this matter with him. Why did he not do so? The hon. gentleman had no other tender. Burland's was the only legitimate one, the only one in conformity with the specifications. Why, then, did he not send for Mr. Burland and say, we cannot accept your tender unless you make a large reduction. That has been done scores of times by the Government of the day, by the Liberal Government when it was in power just as well as by Conservative Governments. Again and again, when tenders were higher and there were objections to lower tenderers, the highest tenderer has been sent for, and the question put to him: Will you undertake to do this work for such a sum? And again and again it has been complied with, and the contracts have been entered into on conditions of that kind. Where, Sir, would be the scandal? He asks why he should send for Mr. Burland. I will tell him—not only because Mr. Burland was the lowest tenderer (for he was the only tenderer) but because he was a man of the highest character and standing and because he had for thirty-five years performed this service for the Government, first of old Canada and then of the Dominion in a manner which the hon. gentleman himself admits here to-night was in every way admirable, and gave the utmost satisfaction to the department. Was that not a reason, particularly when Mr. Burland was a representative of the British American Bank Note Company which had invested about half a million dollars in this enterprise, which capital would be swept away by the action of the hon. gentleman. These are reasons why he should have given Mr. Burland an opportunity of saving the capital which the hon. gentleman, by a stroke of the pen, by an unfair and unjust stroke of the pen, was willing to sweep away. Such an act strikes at the very foundation of the system of tender and contract. He says it was too late when Mr. Burland made the offer which he did make, that he would perform this work on the terms that the Government was prepared to give to the American Bank Note Company. Does the hon. gentleman deny what Mr. Burland alleges—that again and again Mr. Burland sought an interview with the hon. gentleman and was refused?

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. The hon. gentleman asks me a question, and I

desire to answer it. I have no recollection of Mr. Burland having been refused an interview with me.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I can only say that my information is that he again and again begged an interview, and that he begged the hon. gentleman to go and see his establishment. But, not only that, but I think he went from colleague to colleague of the hon. gentleman and met with a great deal of sympathy and many expressions of regret for the position in which he was.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. Will the hon. gentleman allow me? Mr. Burland came to me; I had an interview with him. He saw nearly all my colleagues. What I deny is that Mr. Burland was refused an interview with me.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. What I have stated is on the authority of Mr. Burland, and everything goes to prove the accuracy of his statement. And, having a capital of half a million dollars which was going to be sunk and destroyed by the injustice the hon. gentleman was attempting to perpetrate, why did he not give Mr. Burland an opportunity—

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. I am sure the hon. gentleman must have misunderstood Mr. Burland. I did see Mr. Burland and discussed the matter with him. I did not refuse to have interviews with him.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I can only say—

Mr. SPEAKER. Of course the hon. gentleman (Sir Charles Tupper) will accept—

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. Of course I accept the hon. gentleman's statement at once, and have no doubt that that is the impression that rests upon his mind. But I think he will find that Mr. Burland was not afforded the opportunities he desired. We have his own declaration of his inability to obtain the consideration of this question at the hands of the hon. Minister of Finance. Now, why was that? Why is it that a Canadian, a man of such high standing and a man who for so long had been a public contractor, and had given complete satisfaction, was not deemed worthy of the consideration of the hon. Minister of Finance? When that hon. gentleman found himself in a position where he might not only correctly and properly but where it was made his duty to give consideration to this man, why should he turn his back upon him and refuse consideration, while he could hide himself away to New York and put himself in personal communication with these American capitalists for whom he appears to have entertained such affection. Sir, nobody denies that people from the United States, coming into our country are allowed to compete for public work. But, if ever there was a time in the history of Canada when we should not treat that country with undue favour