

any time after to-morrow you may call, and information will be given respecting the tenders.

Yours very truly,

(Sgd.) CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER.

John F. Stairs, Esq., M.P.,
The House of Commons.

Could there be any more scandalous conduct than that of the late ministers in permitting outsiders to inspect the tenders before they were accepted by the Governor in Council? I brand it as most disgraceful conduct. That is one of the evils with which we had to cope. When I entered the department what did I do?

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh, hear, hear.

Mr. BRODEUR. I changed entirely the system which had been in existence before. One man was no longer permitted the exclusive right to sell dry goods to the department, as had been done at St. John; we asked prices from a large number of people and lately I have gone further. I have abolished entirely the patronage list and now we are purchasing by calling for public tenders, open to everybody. The other day we had occasion to ask for tenders in Halifax, and I understand that a contract has been given to a person who is not friendly to the government. But I do not care; I want to reform the system that has been in existence since 1867, I do not wish to have any more of that patronage system. The Liberal party, unlike the Conservative party, believe in doing without that patronage system. The system does not work to the interest of the Liberal party, for we are not like the Conservative party; the Conservative party wants to make millionaires or to give favour; we want to distribute the wealth and to give to every person the advantage of an opportunity of tendering and of carrying out contracts and we wish in making purchases to obtain substantial goods at reasonable prices. These reforms I understand have not been very well received by my hon. friends opposite; they would like to see continued the same system that existed before. I am not in favour of that policy; I have decided that in my department things shall be done in an upright and honourable way. I do not wish to follow the course of my hon. friends opposite; I want to do better than they have done; I want to institute reforms and those reforms are now being carried out in the best way possible. How are these reforms being carried out? I have told you that we have made investigations, we ordered the civil service investigation, and following that the investigation by Mr. Justice Cassels. That shows that we are not afraid of making investigations.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Mr. BRODEUR. I am glad to see the hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) laughing at that. How did the former government proceed? How did he proceed himself? In 1891 and 1892, when officers were charged with being derelict in their duty, what did he do? Of course he was not Minister of Marine, but he was minister of another department in which some officers were also charged. Did he appoint a judge to investigate the conduct of those officers and of the ministers who might be reproached as to their conduct? No, my hon. friend was too cautious for that, he did not do what I did, he simply appointed himself a commission in order to investigate the conduct of those officers.

Mr. FOSTER. It would be well done.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Hear, hear.

Mr. BRODEUR. My hon. friend (Mr. Foster) who could be charged with being responsible for the conduct of these officers who were under his control, instead of appointing an independent judge to make the investigation said: I shall appoint myself—that will be better and less dangerous. He appointed himself and afterwards dismissed some of those officers and retained others in the public service. The course we have followed is much more courageous; we were not afraid to have an outsider go into the accounts of the Department of Marine, we were not afraid of investigation and we appointed a judge to conduct the investigation and lawyers to assist him. We have had examined everything connected with the administration of the Department of Marine and Fisheries, and all of the evidence taken during the investigation can be found in the reports which have been laid before parliament. Did my hon. friend bring down to parliament the evidence which he took when he appointed himself a commissioner? No, he kept it for himself, he kept everything for himself, and now because a minister tries to do the right thing he is branded as a stupid and foolish man. I followed the course which I took because I was not afraid; my hon. friend perhaps would not have followed the same course, it might have been stupid on his part. I made it my duty to have an investigation by an independent judge and the result is as satisfactory as can be expected in the circumstances. For my part I am satisfied with the result of the investigation. I come out clear from that investigation and in spite of the insinuations of my hon. friend, in spite of his calling me stupid, I say that I stand justified before the country, having done my duty fearlessly, having done my duty to my friends, my duty to my party and my duty to the country which I have the honour to serve.

Mr. GEO. H. BARNARD (Victoria, B.C.). Mr. Speaker, I take it that if the result of the recent elections in British Columbia re-