

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. May we hope to get them back again?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. I will not venture to say whether we may hope to get back those whom the hon. gentleman has driven away, but I do say that we hope, and it is one of the chief aims and objects of this Government to put a stop to the tremendous drain of the best blood of Canada which was going on under the hon. gentleman's Administration for so many years. That, Sir, is one of the objects which Her Majesty's present advisers have set before them, as one which they desire most exceedingly to carry out; and I think, if we are permitted a sufficiently long time to develop our policy, that is one of the results which will assuredly follow from it.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. How long must we wait?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. If the hon. gentlemen will possess their souls in patience, say until the 2nd of February—I will not say the 2nd of January, because that might bring up painful memories. I think that then they will find that our policy is sufficiently distinct and clear cut even to satisfy the greed of the hon. member for York (Mr. Foster).

Sir, we have strayed perhaps a little from the subject which we originally had in hand, but that diversion was not entirely due to my fault, because when the hon. gentleman was good enough to give us this exposition of the reason of his three-fold flight from England, in 1887, in 1891 and in 1896, why, Sir, we were obliged to go back into ancient history, and I apologize to the House for it.

But on the other question I agree with my hon. friend that it is a matter of very great importance, indeed, to the people of the country, and of very great importance to good government in this country, that civil servants should understand exactly where they stand and what they may expect. So far as regards the statements made by hon. gentlemen near me, no man of common sense will pretend that if a Minister of the Crown is aware from personal knowledge that a certain civil servant has been transgressing the laws laid down, he is bound to issue a commission or institute a court of inquiry to satisfy himself as to what his own eyes and ears can bear witness to. Outside of this House such a proposition would not be entertained for one moment, nor would it be possible to consider it. But to come to the position of a civil servant; it is perfectly well known, because hon. gentlemen opposite are aware that the proposition now laid down has been stated over and over by hon. gentlemen on both sides of the House, that where a civil servant chooses, besides exercising his undoubted right to cast his vote as he pleases,

to interfere actively in elections, he must of necessity take the consequences of his own act. We have nothing whatever to do with what has been done by the various local legislatures. All I can say to hon. gentlemen opposite is this: they may turn out the legislatures in other provinces, and then they may do what they please with respect to any civil servant who has transgressed the rules laid down, and if I know anything of the Conservative party, they will not hesitate to carry into most rigorous effect the canons to which I have just given utterance. But it so happens there were other provinces over and above Ontario and New Brunswick in which the officers of a local government took part in elections. There was the local government of Quebec. How much aid and sustenance did the late Government receive from that local government in the elections? We did not hear any complaints. We know moreover what part the Government took on former occasions.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. Judging by the result, they must have been very differently on the last occasion.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. That is very likely. They did what they could, and no man could be expected to do more. No doubt the hon. gentleman is aware of that fact. In that way, as in other ways, the hon. gentleman opposite (Sir Charles Tupper) found the province of Quebec to be a great disappointment; but that result was not to be laid at the door of the government of Quebec. I remember some very curious cases quite closely analogous to those mentioned in the hon. gentleman's statement. I remember the case of Mr. Cowan, who was appointed postmaster of Galt. He resigned his office to become a candidate in the hon. gentleman's interest. He was defeated, and he was reinstated in his office forthwith. An hon. gentleman alluded to the case of Mr. Vanasse. But over and above the case of Mr. Vanasse—because he was not a very prominent official—there was the case of a distinguished senator in the province now represented by the hon. member for Queen's (Minister of Marine and Fisheries), who resigned his seat in the Senate and became a candidate. He was defeated, and was almost immediately reappointed. It was not the fault of the hon. gentleman opposite that other distinguished senators who resigned their seats for the purpose of taking part in the last general elections were not reappointed. Hon. gentlemen opposite have referred to these matters before, but I think they should not refer to them in the concrete, they should rather have confined themselves to abstract propositions, which the hon. member for York (Mr. Foster) can handle so well. I would not advise my friends to adopt the policy of hon. gentlemen opposite; but one thing is certain, that after 1878 they awarded positions to those who had been faithful to