

we had had the pledge of the Crown that no election would take place until the lists had been revised according to law. Sir, if there is one thing which ought to be sacred, and is sacred to-day, it is the pledge of the Crown to the people of the country. The hon. gentleman knows better than I do that if there was one thing more than another which alienated from King James II the heart of his subjects, it was the duplicity with which, again and again, he broke his word to the people; and since the flight of James, the word of the Sovereign of Great Britain has always been held to be as immovable as the rocks upon which the Island of Great Britain rests. That is true in England to-day, but it is no longer true in Canada: it is not true in Canada so long as the word of the Crown is in the keeping of the present Ministers of the Crown. Sir, we have a Franchise Act and it is not a jewel; on the contrary, it is a monster. That Act was framed and revised for the benefit and advantage of the Conservative party, but although it was framed for the benefit of the Conservative party, it is so cumbrous, it is so expensive, that it has been a nightmare to every member of the Conservative party. Everyone wants to get rid of the annual revision of the list, because it is so cumbrous and so expensive; and last year the hon. gentleman anticipated the wish of his followers, and he proposed a measure to dispense with the annual revision of the list. The measure was in the hands of the Secretary of State, and I will remind the House of the language he used on that occasion:

"Nobody will deny that a revision devolves a great deal of anxiety, trouble and expense, both to the members already representing constituencies and to the would-be candidates for those constituencies. If we had a revision this year it must be admitted that it would take place in very unfavourable circumstances. But is there no other reason why that revision should not take place? We have not yet reached the end of this Parliament: according to law this Parliament will cease in the beginning of 1892."

Then the hon. gentleman goes on to speak about the census, which is taking place now:

"If in July, 1891, the census shows that the representation must be changed it will become necessary to have new elections soon after the census; and those elections should take place at the beginning of 1892, by the natural death of this Parliament according to the constitution. The question which presented itself to me was this: By the experience of the past, could a revision beginning in June, 1891, be satisfactorily made, and would it be ready for the eventuality of elections in 1892. There is no reason to doubt it."

Here is, therefore, the pledge of the Crown that there would be no election till the list had been revised in the present year, according to the terms of the law. Of course we know very well that it is always open to the Crown to advise a dissolution, and I do not suppose that at that time the hon. gentleman contemplated a dissolution; therefore, I saw that it was his duty at that time to say: "Gentlemen, remember that there may be a dissolution at any time, therefore you must be ready to take the consequences." If the hon. gentleman had used that language of course every man would have said: "There must be a revision of the list at once, because we must have a perfect electorate." When the hon. gentleman introduced that Bill and carried it with the sanction of the Crown, it was a pledge to the people that there would be no election until the list had been perfected. But six months afterwards the Government decided to have an election, and they did

not scruple to trample upon the dignity of the Crown in order to gain party advantage over their opponents. But the elections have taken place. And now I ask, what is the policy of the Government with respect to the main issue of the double issue which was submitted to the people of the country? If the elections meant anything, they meant this: that a delegation, an official delegation, was to go to Washington immediately after the elections. Yet nothing of the kind has been done, because I count for nothing the officious, not the official delegation, which visited Washington, comprising two important members of the Administration, chaperoned by Sir Charles Tupper. Like Caesar they went, they saw; but, unlike Caesar, they did not conquer. They came back without having achieved anything. It has been asserted in some quarters that those gentlemen were treated with discourtesy by the American authorities. I do not believe it, and hon. gentlemen opposite have taken care to say that the delegation were received with every courtesy; but I do not hesitate to say that, even if they had met rebuffs, those gentlemen would only have received the treatment for which they seemed to be yearning, because nothing could be so offensive to international courtesy as the language used by some hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House, and I am sorry to say that in this respect the right hon. gentleman, who is usually cautious and prudent in matters of international import, set his followers a very bad example. The language used by that hon. gentleman in a speech delivered at Halifax last fall was unpardonable. Speaking of our relations with the Republic to the south of us, the right hon. gentleman said:

"It is a great country, and will be greater, but like all young countries it will have its vicissitudes, its reverses and its revolutions. Do not we see already from the mass of foreign ignorance and foreign vice that has poured into the United States, how uneasily the working population move in the great labour centres? Do not you see communism, and socialism and atheism, and every other ism there? That the United States will rise superior, and out of these heterogeneous particles form one great people, I have no doubt."

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.

Mr. LAURIER. I commend the hon. gentleman for that charitable sentiment; but listen to what follows. The hon. gentleman continues:

"But depend upon it they are going to have their revolutions and upheavals, while we shall sit calmly under the protecting flag of Great Britain and enjoy the magnificent country that God has given us and look with philosophic eyes at the struggles of a fierce and discordant democracy."

Nothing could be more contrary to the amity which we owe to the neighbouring Republic. There was hostility in this, as there was hostility in the relations of the Canadian Government towards the American authorities during the Civil War. At that time also we looked with "philosophic eyes at the struggles of a fierce and discordant democracy" and the result was that we lost the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854, and we wish to Heaven that our similar action now will not cost us another treaty. But after all that has taken place we should have been told in the Speech from the Throne not only that the Government is about to send commissioners to Washington, but the basis on which they are going to treat with our neighbours. Will it be unrestricted reciprocity, will it be restricted reciprocity, or reciprocity at all; or will the negotiations be confined