

that, not so very long ago, he and his followers were shouting throughout the country, from one end to the other, that the United States was our natural market. My hon. friend has forgotten that great nation with its eighty millions of people, lying to the north and south of British Columbia, and apparently believes that the future of that province depends entirely upon her trade with Japan. I should be sorry for British Columbia, if she were limited to that trade. While I believe that there is a profitable trade to be developed between British Columbia and Canada in general and the great empire of Japan, I am still of the opinion that the possibilities for trade are infinitely greater with the 300,000,000 Chinese who lie equally near to us, whose resources are so great, whose wants are so many and who, when stirred by the life breath of a patriotic and reviving nationality and unity will develop an area for trade and commerce unequalled in any part of this world. The Japanese propose to manage as they have a perfect right to do their own industries; they propose to carry their own trade. They propose, if their government has to mortgage its last dollar, to do both these things with government aid. And taking the conditions of labour and wages, the outlook is not of the best for great expansion of trade between British Columbia and Japan. A good trade, I hope will be done; but I look for a better and more remunerative trade with the great population of China.

Now we come to the British Columbia subsidies. My right hon. friend forgot a passage in his past life. He forgot his compact with the late Mr. Mercier. He forgot the hard and fast bargain which he made with Mr. Mercier before a general election, when he said to him: If you will give me a majority in the province of Quebec, I will grant you the better terms you want for your province. That episode is a matter of history. It is writ in history, and it is not writ small. It is writ large. My hon. friend can read it if he pleases. Yet he comes to my hon. friend beside me (Mr. R. L. Borden) and says that when my hon. friend made a promise in 1904 that he would see that justice was done British Columbia, if injustice were established—that he would right the matter in so far as he could, if he came into power—my hon. friend says that such a promise was bribery and corruption. Yet a wholesale contract to deliver up a province for an express subsidy—that has faded completely out of the mind of my right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier). That has gone where the planks of his 1893 platform have gone. It has gone into the oblivion of the past. The last provincial conference, the right hon. gentleman says, has been held, and the last settlement has been made. My right hon. friend is powerful and mighty

Mr. FOSTER.

in some matters but he cannot do what the Almighty alone can do. When he declares that the last conference has been held between the provinces and the Dominion and the last rearrangement of provincial subsidies made, he is making a declaration which it is absolutely out of his power to make effective. Neither he nor any parliament can do that. No parliament can bind its successors in these matters. That arrangement, which the right hon. gentleman says is the last, is one which was dissented from by one of the provinces represented at the conference. Consequently you cannot make it of binding force on that province. British Columbia could never have been brought into confederation if it had persisted in refusing to join. Neither can you make, by a vote of a majority of the premiers, a hard and fast settlement from which one of the provinces dissents and by which it will not consent to be bound.

I shall not weary the House much longer, but wish to refer just for a moment to the first part of my right hon. friend's speech. It is infinitely interesting to watch the growth of a legend. If I had the time to-night, I would like to analyse that growth. I would like to show where the first seed dropped, who watered it, how long it took to sprout, the length of time it took to throw up tender shoots and grow stronger, until it at last developed into a wide spreading tree covered with foliage. I shall not however describe the whole process to-night but simply analyse briefly the three legends which my hon. friend has built around himself, or which have been built up around him by his adoring followers. If the hon. member for Peterborough (Mr. Hall) were here, I would be strongly tempted to give him a warning. Did he not know that only last year, the hon. member for Centre York (Mr. Campbell) fairly exhausted his imagination and rhetoric in his effort to heap flattery on the right hon. the First Minister. He lauded the right hon. gentleman to the very skies, he lifted him up into the loftiest ether. But where is the hon. member for Centre York (Mr. Campbell) to-day? He is to-day in what my right hon. friend and his supporters, a few years ago, were wont to describe as the old women's retreat. His flattery of the First Minister did not bring him the place he coveted. Let the hon. member for Peterborough (Mr. Hall) beware lest he should receive the same treatment.

The right hon. gentleman was questioned regarding his cabinet changes. My hon. friend (Mr. R. L. Borden) asked why he had passed over his followers who had served him so faithfully during the past fifteen or eighteen years. Strong men they were. Well did they fight his battles. They went out into every campaign and fought for him under whatever flag he unfurled. They stood by him in this House even when