

It is on the faith of this promise that thousands of electors have been induced to mark their ballots in favour of the Liberal cause.

We shall await Mr. Laurier's action on this head of his programme, and if he makes sincere efforts to put a stop to the persecution from which our friends have been suffering for the last six years, we shall give him in that not only our sympathies, but also our most cordial support.

So much for the fact that the hon. gentleman, having changed his attitude altogether on this great question in the presence of the electors of the province of Quebec, announced that he was ready to go further than the Government had done.

"L'Union des Cantons de L'Est," Mr. Laurier's own organ, published at Arthabaska-ville, concludes its editorial comment as follows :—

Patriots of the province of Quebec, thanks ! You have done your duty and have shown the country that you have heart and intelligence. Mercier must have shuddered in the eternal peace of the grave at seeing his executioners of 1892 crushed by public wrath in his own dear province. Papineau, Dorion and the old leaders must be proud to-day at the uprising of their race in Parliament and in the councils of the nation.

"La Gazette de Berthier" says "that it was Mr. Laurier's name which acted like a torrent that carried the day." This tribute to the hon. gentleman's personal popularity is one in which I entirely concur. I have no doubt at all that it was to a very large extent the question of race which decided the issue in the late election, and not, as I have said, the adoption by the electors of this country of the policy which the hon. gentleman had propounded in regard to either of the two great issues that were submitted to the people. But notwithstanding the result, the fact remains that upwards of 19,000 of the electors of Canada polled their votes for the Liberal-Conservative party over and above all that voted in support of the Liberal party. So the hon. gentleman will find that while he has a majority in Parliament, obtained by the very extraordinary means to which I have referred, the fact remains that the great party which I had the honour to lead during the late contest polled over 19,000 votes more than was polled by the party whose members now have the pleasure of sitting on the Treasury benches. I will not detain the House, unless the point is questioned, by giving the details, which I am prepared to submit to the House. Outside of the province of Quebec, an alteration of five votes would give the Liberal-Conservative party a majority in every province of the Dominion ; and as it stands, outside of the province of Quebec, a decided majority of the members was returned to support the party which I had the honour to lead. I may be asked what about Quebec ? All I can say is that Quebec was a great disappointment to me. I frankly admit that I was entirely unprepared for the course

Sir CHARLES TUPPER.

pursued by the electors of that province. It was stated in the discussions on the hustings during the late campaign by hon. members of this House that I had made a compact, a bargain with the bishops of the province of Quebec to give me their support in return for the course which I had pursued in this House in respect to the question of remedial legislation. I am here to say in the presence of this House that a more unfounded statement never emanated from the mouth of any hon. gentleman. I am here to say that from the moment I came from England last winter down to this hour, I have never had the pleasure of meeting a single bishop of the province of Quebec or of having any communication with them, either directly or indirectly. Therefore, Sir, I am not in a position to reproach the hierarchy, or any person else in the province of Quebec, for the course they pursued. But, Sir, I may say this : I think it unfortunate—and I am now speaking apart altogether from the question of the effect upon the position of political parties—I think it a very unfortunate thing that a Government, that a party who from a sense of duty, a sense of what they owed to the constitution of the country, a sense of what they owed to the peace and happiness and prosperity, as they believed, of the country ; I think it unfortunate that they should take their lives in their hands to carry out a policy which was stated to be one to which the province of Quebec attached the most vital importance, and that under these circumstances a course should have been pursued that is calculated to lead to the impression, that whatever sacrifices a great party may make in carrying out a policy which is specially dear to any section of the Dominion, these sacrifices should be disregarded and entirely overlooked. As I said before, I have no ground of complaint, because I had no pledge, no assurance, nor anything of the kind. The course that I pursued on this question, the course that the Government of which I was a member pursued, the course that the late Government of which I had the honour to be the head pursued, was a course dictated by the sincerest convictions of duty and of what they owed to the country. And, Sir, I am free to confess that I entirely over-rated the importance of this question. I say, Sir, that in the light of what has occurred, I am in a position to frankly admit that I greatly over-rated the importance of this question of remedial legislation. I entered upon it, as I say, under the conviction that the Government of Canada were bound by every principle of right and justice, and of statesmanship, to carry out a policy which they believed to be for the maintenance of the law and the constitution of the country as expounded by the highest judicial tribunal of the Empire. It was in that spirit that the late Government entered upon the discharge of their duty. It was in that spirit that