

the joint high commission in regard to Alaska as a dishonourable proposition, as a proposition that no independent man of any party could recognize as other than an invasion of those principles of international law and justice that every country has a right to expect from another. The hon. gentleman placed before the House in clear and distinct terms his belief that when the representatives of the United States took the ground that they would not agree to arbitration unless the representatives of Her Majesty's Government and of Canada would agree that, whatever the finding was, the United States should remain in possession of that which the arbitration might find belonged to the Dominion of Canada, they took an attitude which no British subject, whether on this side of the Atlantic or on the other, with a single spark of independence would submit to. In that, I trust, the hon. gentleman has with him the hearty and unanimous assent of the members of this House. The hon. gentleman said that, in the arbitration proposed by the representatives in the United States, by which three members should be selected on each side, and there should be no umpire, it was only too clear that this was only a postponement of the consideration of the question—it was not the adoption of any measure or means by which a satisfactory solution of the difficulty could be arrived at. In that, I am satisfied, the hon. gentleman has expressed the sentiment of every gentleman within the sound of my voice.

But I shall be compelled to differ with the hon. gentleman as to the cause of the prosperity Canada now enjoys. We shall not differ in our hearty congratulations to the country upon the great prosperity with which Canada is blessed at the present moment. It is a cardinal principle with the Liberal-Conservative party that, whoever may be in power, they are bound, not only in justice in the interests of their own party, but in justice to that which is higher and above party, to recognize that prosperity and to give credit for it to whom credit is due. But I believe I shall be able to show the hon. gentleman—for, with the great intelligence he has exhibited here to-day, I feel satisfied that he is open to conviction—that the great party to which I have the honour to belong, may justly claim the credit for the great prosperity which Canada enjoys to-day.

I listened, though not with the same satisfaction to myself, owing to my inability to follow him as closely as I would like, yet with great pleasure, to the hon. member for Montmagny (Mr. Martineau). I should have been glad to follow more closely the beautiful language in which he addressed the House, but I was able to gather enough from what he said to know that the right hon. leader of the House may congratulate himself of having secured in the hon. gentleman a very devoted and a very credulous fol-

Sir CHARLES TUPPER.

lower in this House. When the hon. gentleman ventured to say that the leader of the Government and the Government had redeemed all their promises, I fear that, while he shows a disposition to give unbounded credit to his leader, he also shows that he has not given that careful attention to the subject which alone would enable him to speak with authority. Instead of such an extravagant claim being well founded, the hon. gentleman will find that, when challenged to put his finger upon a single promise made to the electorate that has been fulfilled by the Government and its leader, he will be unable to do so. While speaking of the pleasure with which I have listened to these hon. gentlemen, I must not forget the very kind and complimentary references that were made to myself by the seconder of this Address. I should be glad to think that I was entitled to even half the commendation which he was good enough to bestow upon me. I will, however, endeavour, as we become better acquainted, to convince the hon. gentleman that, whether right or wrong, in discharging the high and important duties that devolve upon me, I seek, at all times, to take such a course as will convince him that, though we may not see eye to eye, I am moved only by what I believe I owe to the House and to the country.

My satisfaction in listening to the hon. gentlemen is all the greater because of the fact that I believe that, had they framed their speeches with a single eye to give credit to the great party that I have the honour to lead, they could not have made their remarks more conclusive or more pertinent to the subject. In view of the attempt by these gentlemen to convince their hearers that the advantages that Canada now enjoys have been due to the course taken by the Government of the day, the House will permit me, I am sure, a slight retrospective view of our affairs. From 1867 down to 1873 this country enjoyed a very gratifying degree of prosperity, so great as to enable the Government of the day to complete the great work of confederation by bringing in every portion of this great continent lying north of the boundary line and belonging to Great Britain, except only the Island of Newfoundland. When we retired from office in 1873, we handed over to our successors the government of a country in a highly prosperous and satisfactory condition.

What was the result of the five years' administration of hon. gentlemen opposite? Why, Sir, no person requires to be told that that five years of Liberal administration in Canada was marked by a period of the most intense depression, a period of the greatest commercial and financial difficulty with which any country was ever called upon to struggle. I do not charge hon. gentlemen opposite, or their policy, as necessarily involving that result. The fact is that during the first five years of confederation Canada