

took credit entirely for the acts of the Canadian Government, whether wise or otherwise, which were wholly independent of the co-operation and support of the country to the south of us; and towards the end of his remarks, the hon. gentleman gave us the secret of his line of conduct, when in Opposition, by telling us the kind of Opposition which practically he had promoted. Desperate indeed it was, and while the hon. gentleman feels now that he is in a position no doubt to instruct, there is one feature in that lesson which I, for one in this House, do not feel at all tempted to imitate, and that is his determination to suspect something wrong in everything the Government did. Much, however, as I may suspect the Government in general, I do not intend to discuss any phase of policy which they may lay on the Table of this House in any such spirit during this or any other session when I may occupy a seat in this House. I followed the hon. gentleman's remarks with great attention, and I do not think that it is necessary for me, with all respect to the hon. gentleman and the ability he possesses, to make further reference to what he said.

But this is a debate of great interest. It is a debate which will be carried on, I think, for some time with great interest and benefit to the country, because it concerns subjects of moment, and which are becoming all the graver and more important for the scant attention they are receiving from hon. gentlemen on the Treasury benches, after the very exhaustive treatment of them by those who have already spoken from this side of the House. Hon. gentlemen opposite must remember that, however strong they may feel their position to be, these subjects are being canvassed, and are exciting the people from one end of the country to the other. Charges are being preferred of a most serious character concerning the promises they have made and the pledges they have violated. To the very thorough discussion of broken pledges concerning the tariff and preferential trade, and retrenchment, and the independence of Parliament, the only answer of the First Minister practically was this: We have, notwithstanding all that, carried the elections, and the Queen's Jubilee was one of the most glorious experiences of my life. That, however, will not satisfy the country. All the excitement attending that happy year and all the loyalty for which this country is famous will not relieve hon. gentlemen opposite from the necessity of meeting the charges made against them. There must be, before this debate is over, a more reasonable attempt made to meet those charges, if these hon. gentlemen are to continue in the lucky career that so far has been theirs—capturing seats here and there throughout the country.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER.

I want to press home an unpleasant charge, because I believe it my duty to do so, and I call the First Minister's attention to it, because it has been made, not altogether by one as much opposed to him as I am in public life, and because it comes from a great legal authority. It comes from a gentleman who has co-operated with him in this House. It is the opinion of the hon. member for North Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy), delivered in the presence of my hon. friend when he was in Opposition, it is true, and given on a subject to which I have frequently called the attention of the Government. In 1891 great excitement took place over a Federal election, and the leader of the Government, the then leader of the Opposition was charged with having accepted the terms of a most important conference known as the Quebec conference of 1887—a conference that decided to reorganize or readjust the whole financial arrangements between the Federal Government and the different provinces. That was perhaps the most important subject decided by the conference, and that involved a very large expenditure of money.

The leader of the government in Quebec, the ally of the right hon. gentleman who leads the Government here, stated that the leader of the Opposition of that day promised to give effect to this, if he came into power, and he had bound himself by a solemn engagement to give at least a majority of 15 votes to Mr. Laurier. One of my colleagues in the late Government, the hon. member for Haldimand (Mr. Montague) in this House resurrected a question and answer between the hon. gentleman and Mr. Desjardins, who was in the House at that time, whether the leader of the present Government admitted that the statement which Mr. Desjardins had made was correct, and he admitted that he had accepted the terms of the Quebec conference. And then the hon. member for North Simcoe (Mr. McCarthy), sitting in this House, used expressions—and I only repeat them to show how strong his opinion was—that not merely had a bargain been made in 1887, but part of the bargain had been carried out, with the promise of the present Prime Minister to redeem these pledges and to carry out the terms of the Quebec conference of 1887 when he came into power, the leader of the party in the province of Quebec had been able to obtain the votes, not only had his own government succeeded, but he had been able to obtain a majority in the province of Quebec in the election of 1891 for the present leader of the Government. And the hon. member for North Simcoe said, that if there ever was a bargain and sale, then the present Prime Minister was bought and sold by the premier of the province of Quebec, and that the Prime Minister had