

tation to the hour when the Finance Minister of Canada should terminate all this uncertainty, which was producing such a paralysis of the trade and industry of the country—paralysis of trade, because the importer was afraid to import until he learned whether the articles that he was going to import would be subject to a higher or a lower duty. He was afraid to import, with the prospect before him that every vestige of protection being swept away, a lower duty would be imposed on the goods that he would place on the market, and that he would be undersold by those who competed with him under a lessened tariff. Those engaged in carrying on the great manufacturing industries of this country were afraid to carry on those industries with their wonted vigour, for fear of this threat to tear up, root and branch, the fiscal policy of this country under which their moneys were invested and their works carried on. But, as I say, those who have suffered long and patiently for the last twelve months, believed that when the Finance Minister rose in his place in this House and delivered the Budget speech, then, at all events, all uncertainty would be at an end. They would know the worst, they would know what the fiscal policy of Canada was, and they would be in a position to govern themselves accordingly. Sir, that hope has been disappointed. We have had the Budget speech, and I do not believe there are any two Ministers on the Treasury benches, to say nothing about the rest of the House—I do not believe that there are any two gentlemen who have been engaged in concocting this extraordinary Budget who, taken separately, would give you the same statement as to what this tariff really is to-day. I have had some little experience myself. I have had the honour of holding the high position of Minister of Finance in this country, and, as I say, after having had forty-two years' experience in public life, since I have been connected with the examination of these questions, I confess that when the hon. Minister of Finance sat down, I had no idea as to what the fiscal policy of Canada was to be. My hon. friend beside me (Mr. Foster), whose career as Minister of Finance is well known as that of one of the most able and successful Finance Ministers who have ever held office in this country—my hon. friend, looking at this tariff, reading it as I read it, naturally supposed, when he found a proposal utterly at variance with the law, diametrically opposed to the constitution of the country, and impossible of execution, that the hon. Minister of Finance and his colleagues had concluded to get over the difficulty of their free trade promises by holding out this delusive expectation that, under these extraordinary clauses, the former tariff would not be changed materially and a free trade policy introduced. While speaking from that standpoint, my hon. friend

Sir CHARLES. TUPPER.

was perfectly right, and he addressed himself to the discussion—as I would have done—in the light of the declaration that the tariff was to remain practically the same as it was before. To use the words of the Finance Minister, there was to be no material change in the tariff. My hon. friend was warranted in accepting that statement and in treating these absurd and unconstitutional clauses, as clauses placed there for a purpose, and to be abandoned and relinquished by the Government because they knew they were impossible of execution. Judging from that standpoint, my hon. friend dealt with this question in the light of the adoption by the Government of practically, to a large extent, the policy that had been previously pursued.

Had my hon. friend no other ground for coming to that conclusion? I think, Sir, you will agree with me that he had. He saw opposite to him the First Minister of the Crown who had pledged himself as solemnly as ever man did to the people of this country that there should be no material injury inflicted upon the manufacturing interests of Canada; and unless that statement was to be falsified, my hon. friend was perfectly right in assuming that there was to be no material change in the tariff, and that the statement of the hon. First Minister to that effect was to be accepted as correct. Now, I find that we are not alone in arriving at that conclusion. Those who will take the trouble to look at the "Globe" newspaper which, I need not tell the House is one of the ablest journals in this country, than which there is no paper better informed on these questions and in a better position to judge of the character of statements of this kind, will find that in its issue of April 23rd, it said as follows:—

The tariff resolution is everywhere discussed. While here and there one may find a Liberal member who thinks the duty on some article in which he is interested has been kept too high or kept too low, the great bulk of the supporters of the Government are enthusiastic in favour of the new tariff.

Just as they would be in favour of anything that comes from hon. gentlemen on the front benches. But the "Globe" went on to say:

Last night the full significance of the new scheme had not been grasped by those even intimately acquainted with the workings of the tariff.

There is the declaration of the leading organ of hon. gentlemen opposite, given to the public of Canada, that when the hon. Minister of Finance resumed his seat after his long Budget speech, no one in this House or out of it was able to say what the tariff of this country was really to be. That demon of incertitude which has pursued the policy of hon. gentlemen opposite throughout the electoral campaign still holds them in its grasp, and even these supporters of the Government most intimately acquainted with