

pledge given by the hon. gentleman, here, a short time ago, when he found that there was going to be a stampede of his followers who would not vote for the view of the hon. junior member for Halifax, when he declared in this House that there should be a prompt, a searching, a complete and a thorough investigation, with the position which he has taken to-day and with his refusal to conceive it to be his duty to bring in an Act to give these eminent judges power to control all these cases, it is evident that the Prime Minister misjudges the temper of the people if he thinks that any advantage can thus be secured for his party by thus postponing the evil day possibly until it may be too late to get the subject before the electorate. I regret more deeply than I can say, that the Prime Minister has turned a deaf ear to the moderate, reasonable suggestions that I made in order to implement the pledge which he himself gave to the House and without which that pledge is a mockery. I regret that my right hon. friend has taken such a course, and I say that it will fail, in my judgment, in securing any of the objects that he has in view. I said before, and I say now, that I have no objection to going back as far as by the commission is required. But here is a burning case, now alive, in which the whole country is interested, in regard to which a hundred witnesses have been examined, a case which has been practically established, and when you say that you will turn back several years in order that these facts upon which the country are feeling such a deep interest, I can tell my right hon. friend that he will entirely fail to secure the objects which he has in view. We hail with delight the appointment of this commission. If there is a man in the Liberal-Conservative party, I do not care what position he may occupy, against whom you can bring home such gigantic fraud and such scoundrelism as took place in the West Huron and Brockville elections, we want to see that man exposed and punished. I care not how far back you may go with your inquiry; you may go to the Greek Kalends if you like, but there never was a case where for the honour of the House of Commons of Canada, it is more necessary that the right hon. gentleman should, as he is in duty bound to do, have a prompt, thorough and complete investigation into these frauds that we know have taken place. We do not 'think' they have taken place, for we have the evidence before the House and the country that they have taken place, and I say that the perpetrators of these frauds—no matter how high the position they occupy, should be brought to condign punishment.

Mr. SPEAKER. Does the hon. gentleman conclude with a motion?

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. My right hon. friend can make a motion if he wishes.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER.

Mr. SPEAKER. I did not wish to interrupt the hon. gentleman (Sir Charles Tupper) while he was speaking, but I certainly would have done so if I thought he did not intend to conclude with a motion to adjourn the House.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS (Mr. Blair). Mr. Speaker, I will conclude with a motion if necessary. It is well, perhaps, that one or two observations should be made on what the leader of the opposition puts forward as defects in the composition of the commission, and in the powers which have been conferred upon it. If any evidence were wanting to satisfy the fair-minded members of this House that the hon. gentleman (Sir Charles Tupper) has simply been indulging in political manoeuvring in this whole transaction, he has furnished that evidence to-day.

Some hon. MEMBERS. No.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Yes.

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. Yes. The hon. gentleman says that the professed object of the leader of the government is to pretend to make inquiry into these matters, but that he has so formed the instructions given to the commission that the commission must fail. The whole country knows that is not so. It is quite patent that the object of the leader of the opposition (Sir Charles Tupper) has been to demand that some changes should be made in the language of the commission, so that in the event of these changes being accepted by the government, the hon. gentleman and his friends and his press could circulate broadcast throughout the country, that the government commission was defective in most important particulars and that it would have failed to make a proper inquiry were it not that the opposition forced the government to introduce the amending words.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. Am I to understand that that is the ground on which they are refused?

The MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND CANALS. That is, undoubtedly, the object of the leader of the opposition in making these proposals. It is not that he believes there is anything of material importance in his suggestions; not that he believes there is any defect in the phraseology of the commission, or that its scope will be strengthened by these words, but that he might be able to say that he had compelled the government against their will to alter the commission and make it more perfect. Failing to do that, the hon. gentleman gets up in his place to say that the government has taken such a course that this inquiry will utterly fail in eliciting the facts and establishing the wrong-doing which he alleges to exist. Sir, the government is open to no charge in that direction. I can show, by a brief reference to the commission itself, and to the