

Office; Mr. E. W. Hamilton, the Treasury; and that Mr. Jenkyns, parliamentary draughtsman, should be asked to serve on that committee.

What did that committee do? They met and discussed this question—the Imperial government represented, the Bank of England represented, the Treasury Board represented, the colonies represented, the Lord Chancellor represented, the colonial department represented. That committee, Sir, made a report, and that report was in the form of a Bill to legalize the investments of trusts funds in these colonial securities, the Bill being drawn up by Mr. Jenkyns, parliamentary draughtsman who was asked to serve upon the committee for the specific purpose of draughting their conclusions into a Bill which would be introduced into the Imperial parliament. That Bill I now hold in my hand. It had all been agreed to by the Imperial authorities, but unfortunately at the moment came the crash in Australia, which, as hon. gentlemen know, was a most severe one, and for the moment the matter had to be dropped. Let us inquire, to whom is the credit for this due? The credit is due to the present leader of the opposition, who took hold of this matter, who had sufficient influence and standing with the Imperial authorities to press successfully upon them the high standard at which Canada's credit had reached. And let me ask the hon. gentleman whether we could ever have influenced the Imperial authorities with regard to this question if the credit of Canada had remained where it was when hon. gentlemen opposite went out of office, with our 4 per cents considerably below par, selling only at 90 or thereabouts, whereas, when the ex-Minister of Finance went out of office, in 1896, our 3 per cents were selling at a premium of 7 or 8 per cent. That is, Sir, briefly to say that when hon. gentleman left office in 1878, the bonds of Canada paying 4 per cent were only worth 90 cents upon the dollar, while in 1896, when the Conservative party left office, the bonds of Canada paying not 4 per cent but 3 per cent interest were worth 107 to 108 cents upon the dollar. I should like to ask the hon. Finance Minister whether he claims any credit for establishing the credit of Canada in the Imperial money market. The credit of Canada reached its high water mark during the career of the Conservative government of this country.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. No.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. Yes.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. I claim no credit for it, but as a matter of fact the 2½ per cent loan placed by the present government was the best loan ever placed by the Dominion of Canada. I have not attempted to make any political capital on that ground, but my hon. friend should not make the statement he does.

Mr. MONTAGUE. As I understand, the hon. gentleman borrowed money at about 2½ per cent.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. When did any other government borrow for less?

Mr. MONTAGUE. We borrowed for 28-10ths per cent, which is pretty near the same figure, just a little less. The hon. gentleman cannot claim credit for raising the credit of Canada to that pitch, for our 3 per cents are four or five points lower to-day than they were in 1896.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. If the hon. gentleman makes a comparison with the English consols, he will find that Canadian credit stands relatively higher to-day than ever before.

Mr. MONTAGUE. My hon. friend is trying to get out of it.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. No, but my hon. friend is making a statement of fact, which I think he will find on inquiry to be wrong. He says that the credit of Canada reached its high water mark under the late government. In that he is mistaken, though in saying so I am not throwing any discredit on the late government.

Mr. MONTAGUE. The hon. gentleman admits that it was under the Conservative regime that the credit of Canada in the money market of Great Britain went up to such a pitch that our 3 per cents were selling at 107 or 108.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. I do not remember the quotations.

Mr. MONTAGUE. The hon. gentleman had better look them up, and he will find that that is the case.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. That does not touch the statement which the hon. gentleman made, namely, that the credit of Canada reached its high water mark under the late government. That is the only point I am discussing, and on that the hon. gentleman is mistaken. The figure at which our 3 per cents were selling at the time does not affect the question.

Mr. MONTAGUE. It affects the question to this extent, that had it not been for the fact that the credit of Canada had reached that high water mark, the hon. gentleman would not have been able to borrow money afterwards at so low a rate as he did.

The MINISTER OF FINANCE. That is about as appropriate as it would be for my hon. friend to say that if Christopher Columbus had not discovered America—

Mr. MONTAGUE. Well, if Christopher Columbus came back now, he would never recognize the Liberal party. The bare facts which I have mentioned tell that under Conservative government Canada's credit climbed to a most enviable place in the