

the country, and it is for you to be at the head of it ; it is for you to see that justice is done, but at the same time that mercy is given by the Government ; we must lead public opinion ; we must not allow the Liberals to take the lead ; we must not allow them to gain the confidence of the electors, to arouse a national feeling in the country."

Such was the state of things in Montreal in October. One party was looking for political aggrandisement and triumph. The other party was looking truly, sincerely, earnestly for something which they thought was due to the national services that have been rendered by the Conservatives and the French-Canadian nationality. One party was looking for power ; the other party was looking for mercy. The hon. member for Quebec-East (Mr. Laurier), said : " No, we have been careful to abstain from any political declaration on that subject." Yes, Sir, and that is true in words ; that is true like that loyalty on the lips, of which my hon. friend for Quebec-East spoke, and to which I will allude in the course of this debate. My hon. friends were saying : " No, let us cast aside all political differences, let us all be united as one man to ask the Government to do justice." But, Mr. Speaker, I who knew what was going on, I who was made the confident of many indiscreet confidences, knew one thing. After petitions had been sent, after all influence had been exercised to try to obtain the result of what was then asked by, I might say, the whole population of the Province of Quebec, I heard this, and I shall quote the words from a letter which was sent to me—after it was announced in Montreal that the Government had taken a decision—from one of the hotels in Montreal where a little conclave of Liberals had been held waiting for the news from Ottawa ; and, learning that the Government had decided that the law should be carried out, one of them said :

" Eh bien ! tant mieux.

" Nous avions bien peur que le vieux Sir John n'eût arrangé cela pendant qu'il était en Angleterre pour en laisser la responsabilité au gouvernement Impérial, comme dans l'affaire Letellier. Mais cela nous vaut vingt comtés dans le Bas-Canada."

This declaration, Mr. Speaker, cannot be denied. It has been sent to me quite warm from the lips of the man who said it, and it is a secret to nobody in Montreal that all the Liberals openly said : " We have got them now ; we have taken the Conservatives with us, and now that the Government is obliged to see that the law is carried out, twenty counties will come to us in the Province of Quebec. We thought that the great schemer, Sir John, would have arranged it in England." I received a letter to that effect whilst I was in Paris, in which one of my friends, not belonging to my own political party, said : " I know very well how it will be done. You will be a partner in that scheme, and you will arrange it so that the Imperial Government will take the responsibility, and then you will go flying along, sails to the wind, and again you will carry your elections."

Sir, that has not been done, and the right hon. gentleman at the head of the Government had no such design when he was in England. But that was said, and it is an indication that the movement had not that character which the hon. member for Quebec-East gave it, that is non-political and non-national, but having only for its object the fair