

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am sorry I have detained the House so long, but I have a few words to say in conclusion. Let me point out that the work of the Government in connection with the Klondike district commenced in 1897. Practically our work commenced there when our officials got in. The first of them got in about February, 1898. Major Walsh was the only man who had any real authority to do anything, and he got in there on the 21st of May last. All that has happened in regard to which there has been any discussion has practically taken place since the ice went out of the Yukon River last spring, about ten months ago. What have we done in that time? We have taken over a country flooded by men of the most diverse character from all over the western country and the Pacific slope. It has been said that that country has been a by-word for official corruption. They forget to say that country has been a by-word with every man who has ever been in a mining camp for the perfect preservation of law and order under the most trying difficulties. There has been no crime unpunished, there has been no disorder, there has been no rioting. A New York lady who had been there, calling in my office not long since, told me that she felt safer in her tent on the trail any where in the Yukon than she did in her residence in the city of New York.

Sir, is that nothing to say on behalf of the men who have done this work? I think that it is something to the credit of the Dominion of Canada, and to the men who have gone through the arduous labour which they were called upon to do. Our men have gone there, they have struggled hard, they are struggling hard now with the initial difficulties of overcoming all these things which have to be overcome, of learning those matters which have to be learned and properly studied out in order that they may be able to deal with the peculiar circumstances of a peculiar situation. We have established a government there, we have put a local government in operation, of a bureaucratic character, it is true, but of that character because it is the only kind of government applicable to that country until we know more about it, and the population is more settled. That government is at work. I have read you a list of the operations of the Council, showing that they are going into all the details of administration, that they are trying to take care of the people and meet their wants, and administer the affairs of that district in a business-like and a proper way. The affairs of government are on a proper footing. Building accommodation has been found for our

police force. From Lake Bennett to Dawson City a man can now go over the ice without spending a night out of doors, a great difference between this and last year. When Major Walsh and myself were at Lake Bennett there was not a single post between that point and Dawson City. But at present there is a line of posts stretching through the whole district, under Canadian and British authority, so that there is no possibility of any man's life or property being in danger. Now, what have we today? We have permanent public buildings that could not have been expected to be put up last year. There is regular transportation by which proper materials for buildings can be carried in. We have roads to build, and some stretches have been built already of the most immediate necessity. We could not take an appropriation last year for the reason that we did not have information which would enable us to decide where the roads ought to be built. If we had had the money last year we would not have spent it, because we did not know exactly where the roads ought to be made, and for fear of wasting the money we should not have undertaken to expend any. We propose to ask Parliament this year for an appropriation to build a telegraph line; we propose to ask for an appropriation for a road; and I believe that seven or eight months from today, when next session closes, the Yukon district will be under a regular and proper administration of law such as will satisfy the requirements of the people of the district, and such as would serve for any province in the Dominion of Canada. One word more. I ought not to sit down without referring to the fact that throughout the speech of the hon. gentleman there has been a continuous trend of suggestions that there was some improper or corrupt connection between myself or some member or members of the Government with the Klondike district. I want to say that I challenge the hon. gentleman, the leader of the Opposition, I challenge the members of his party in this House, I challenge the members of his party outside this House, I challenge the press of his party, to produce their private detectives, to come here upon their responsibility and press their charge; I challenge the member for Pictou or any man in this House, to lay upon the Table of the House the charges that he has to make, and declare his ability to substantiate them by evidence, and he will get his investigation, and I will be able to convince the hon. gentleman who makes that charge that discretion on his part would have been the better part of valour.