

got his majority in the province of Quebec by corrupt and scandalous means. That language was used in the right hon. gentleman's presence; but the language, whether fair or unfair, covered the opinion of the hon. member for North Simcoe, based upon admitted facts in regard to the readjustment of the provincial subsidy. And I have not been able yet to obtain the slightest hint from any occupant of the Treasury benches that the promise of the right hon. gentleman is to be redeemed. In this debate I would ask and press the question upon the gentleman, whether he is able now to say if he has the slightest intention of carrying out the terms of the Quebec conference of 1887.

Now, after this pitiful condition of affairs—for that it is pitiful, those who consider these promises and these pledges made at the time and under the circumstances, and not merely the absence of the performance or the absence of the excuse for the non-performance, must see—it need not surprise us to find the dissensions to which I have referred, and the incapacity which has been demonstrated and no attempt made to defend it or explain it away, in regard to our financial matters. We have practically repeated in Canada an Aberdeen Ministry—Aberdeen in the sense of being torn by dissensions, Aberdeen by reason of its incapacity. And as that incapacity becomes notorious, as did the incapacity of a former Administration of the same name, I have no doubt that the same fate will overwhelm it. I might be charitable and suggest an excuse to the Prime Minister for not keeping these promises. One will have to cudgel his wits very hard to suggest even a plausible excuse. But as I see these charges pressed home and an absence of any explanation from the Treasury benches, when, indeed, I find the hon. gentleman, even on the question of prohibition, endeavouring to hedge and to frighten off those who would otherwise vote for prohibition, should he give them an opportunity, in the manner which has been proposed, I have to suggest to him an excuse which was given by Mr. Hall Caine on one occasion during his visit to this capital. Speaking after dinner on an important question, he asked that his statement should be taken qualifiedly owing to the time of the evening when he spoke. And he illustrated thus: Once upon a time, a rat was drowning in a vat of beer, and a cat passing by, the rat appealed to her to save him, saying that death from the fumes was so horrible that it would infinitely prefer to be eaten by the cat. A bargain was then and there made on this basis. The cat gave its paw to the rat, which jumped out and at once ran into a hole near by, and, while brushing himself off, looked out. The cat reminded him that there was part of the bargain which had escaped his memory, that in consideration of the assistance given him, he should submit to be eaten. "Oh," said the rat,

"that promise was not binding; as you saw yourself. I was in liquor at the time I made it." That is the only possible suggestion that I can offer to the hon. gentleman for his failure to carry out this long string of promises, some of them made after dinner, all of them brought to his memory time and time again, yet never fulfilled.

I wish to make an observation to the mover (Mr. Bertram) of the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. And I have a small quarrel with him, seeing the secret is now out how it came about that my representative in the Cabinet, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding), the Minister from the province of Nova Scotia, was not able to hold up the Nova Scotia end in the readjustment of the tariff. We have some important industries in the province, and I believe those industries have the good will of the Minister of Finance. I have reason to believe that, and have never had reason to believe the contrary. But it is clear, after the statement of this gentleman in Toronto, who wished to obtain articles of our manufacture in the steel and iron works of Nova Scotia at a lower rate, so as to be able better to handle his finished product, as he would consider it, he readjusted that tariff in the very way that the Minister of Finance and I did not wish to have done. And I say that what has given him joy—and after all is said and done, and since it cannot be mended, I hope it has given him better than joy, some substantial return—I wish him to understand that it has been largely at the expense of Nova Scotia labour; for, while the tariff has so far not caused the works in Nova Scotia to be closed down altogether, the way in which they have been kept open since the time that tariff was changed to their detriment has been by reducing the wages of the workingman. I do not think the hon. gentleman from Centre Toronto, in making the tariff, was compelled to reduce the wages of his workmen or employees.

I desire to draw the attention of the Government to a serious subject, and not in a captious spirit shall I approach it. It is a subject of importance to both the east and west of this country, it a subject occupying a great deal of the attention of the boards of trade, and it is a subject which the hon. Minister of Trade and Commerce referred to in general terms when he spoke of the conditions that existed in the large political sense, and the forbearance that should be exhibited by Canada in dealing with, if I understood him to say, matters of foreign relations, as we can act in those matters only through those who advise the Queen outside of our own Cabinet. Now, this is a subject not wholly of the Yukon Railway. I agree with those who have spoken in this debate that a subject so grave as that, and indeed so exciting, is much better and more calmly discussed when the House is