

Robert Wynn felt an inward gratulation on the superiority of his auspices. True, the promise made in January yet remained due in July, but there were numberless excellent good reasons why Mr. Currie Faver had been as yet unable to redeem his pledge.

Robert turned his paper to look for the news: a paragraph in the corner arrested his attention.

"We learn from the best authority that, owing to the diminution of business consequent upon recent Acts of the legislature, it is the intention of Her Majesty's Commissioners of Public Locomotion to reduce their staff of officials, so that no fresh appointments can be made for some months."

He gazed at this piece of intelligence much longer than was necessary for the mere reading of it. The Board of Public Locomotion was the very department in which he had been promised a clerkship. Robert made up his mind that it could not be true; it was a mere newspaper report: at all events, Mr. Currie Faver was bound by a previous pledge; whoever remained unappointed, it could not be a friend of the hon. member for C——.

There were voices in the next compartment, and presently their conversation was forced on Mr. Wynn's attention by the strongly stated sentiment, "The finest country in the world—whips all creation, it does."

Some rejoinder ensued in a low tone.

"Cold!" with a rather scornful accent, "I should think so. Gloriously cold! None of your wet sloppy winters and foggy skies, but ice a yard and a half thick for months. What do you think of forty degrees below zero, stranger?"

Robert could fancy the other invisible person shrugging his shoulders.

"Don't like it, eh? That's just a prejudice here in the old country; natural enough to them that don't know the difference. When a man hears of seventy degrees below the freezing point, he's