

friend from Souris should offer up the fervent prayer—not intended perhaps to be such, but sounding so much like one—that something might arise by which the leader of the Government could extricate himself from the serious difficulty in which those pledges had placed him. I did not expect that kind of support of this proposition from my hon. friend from Souris, nor did I expect the kind of support given by the Minister of the Interior.

While I am disappointed in those two gentlemen, there is another member from whom I expect to hear a great deal. We hope to hear from him before the conclusion of this debate, I refer to the hon. member for Calgary (Mr. R. B. Bennett). The member for Calgary for many years has been practically the mouthpiece of the Conservative party in the province of Alberta, their leading public speaker, and the exponent of good Conservative doctrine in that province. I understand that very recently the member for Calgary made a speech in his own city on that question of the restoration of the natural resources. He is reported to have said that if the Premier did not implement his pledge, he (the member for Calgary) would resign his seat in Parliament as a protest. If the hon. member for Calgary made that statement he was only being consistent, because campaign after campaign in the provincial elections of Alberta the hon. member for Calgary has taken the position that Alberta should have control of her own natural resources. I look for some real thunder on this question from the hon. gentleman who represents Calgary and, I might say, the entire Conservative party in the province of Alberta.

It is a useless thing for hon. gentlemen opposite to undertake to discuss the question of the fairness or the unfairness of the financial arrangements made with the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. You must have noticed, Mr. Speaker, that that has been the attitude taken by all the speakers on the Government side. They have discussed the Liberal attitude on this question. That is not the point, Sir. We are not discussing financial arrangements. We are discussing the position of the Prime Minister who, in opposition, and until the general elections had brought him into office, took the ground that the western provinces were unfairly treated, and who is responsible in a large measure for the discontent in the West over the arrangements made with those provinces through the autonomy Bills of 1905. Whether we on this

side of the House are satisfied or are not satisfied with these arrangements, we are not satisfied, I can assure the leader of the Government, that he should go on and hold up before the people of the West the possibility—not the possibility, but the definite assurance—that he would give to them all their natural resources when he came into office and then, Sir, turn around, as he did to-day, and practically put a wet blanket over the whole proposition. If I understand the English language, the words of the Prime Minister mean to the people of western Canada, as plainly as words can mean: Well, admitting the pledge and the promise, at the present time I can see no light on the horizon and as far as my wishes and hopes for the western people are concerned, at the present time, I, unfortunately, am in the same position in regard to the settlement of this question as when I came into office in September, 1911.

The hon. Minister of the Interior (Mr. Roche) undertook to take to task the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan, the Hon. Walter Scott, for what he called his reversal of attitude on the question of the provinces controlling their natural resources. When the leader of a great political party, year after year, makes a pledge, a promise, that he will do a certain thing, would my hon. friend expect the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan, even supposing he was satisfied with the financial arrangements of 1905, to be supine, to remain inactive in view of the fact that that political leader at the general election had come into office and that the people had given him the authority and the power to carry out these promises and pledges? The Premier of Saskatchewan would be recreant to his duty, recreant to the people of his own province if, when the present Government came into office, he were not to call upon the leader of the Government to carry out the pledges he had made to the people of the West. Supposing it was unanimous, supposing it was generous treatment proposed by the then leader of the Opposition, now the leader of the Government; notwithstanding, he gave the pledge and I say that the premiers of Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba would fail in their duty if they refrained from calling on the right hon. gentleman to carry out his pledges. It must have been very hard for the hon. member for Souris (Mr. Schaffner) to attack the attitude of his well-beloved friend and political leader in the province of Manitoba, the Hon. Sir Rodmond Roblin, and it must have been rather hard for the