

from Lunenburg (Mr. Maclean) who spoke for three hours upon a contract that has been already cancelled, but I shall refer very briefly to the contract and some of the statements that have been made by hon. gentlemen. Hon. gentlemen, in attempting to defend this most iniquitous and disgraceful contract, have tried to bring up all sorts of things in connection with the old Conservative government that was in power up to 1896. They have raked up all the colonization contracts and all the contracts in respect to immigration into our western country. They have complained that the great northwest was tied up so that when they came into power they found every part of it covered. Well, Mr. Speaker, the right hon. gentleman and his party had one section of the country that was virgin to them when they came into power, and that was the Klondike. That was a place where no Tory mischief-maker had set his foot. There was an unsullied page upon which they might write political history. Well, Sir, the page is filled—filled, Sir, from top to bottom and a sorry looking page it is to-day—filled with concessions like the Treadgold concession, concessions like the Bronson and Ray concession, concessions like the Macdonald concession, which gave the whole water front to one individual. The worst examples of graft that have ever been known on the North American continent have been in the Klondike. We were told that the Klondike would be a large revenue producing country, that it would more than pay the cost of its administration, and, Sir, I want to say that unless that country can pay for the cost of administration it is not much use to the people of Canada. What are the facts? That because of the course that these hon. gentlemen are pursuing that country is being rapidly depopulated; that there is not half the population in the Klondike that there was three or four years ago; that the revenue has long ceased to be equal to the expenditure and that every year we are conducting the affairs of the Klondike at a very great cost and a very great loss to the taxpayers of the rest of the country.

Now, Sir, to come down to this contract itself, we were not surprised when the hon. Minister of the Interior (Mr. Oliver) the other night stood in his place and after making a long speech in defence of this contract and in defence of it all the way through, announced that he was going to cancel it and that he had already sent notice of the cancellation of the contract. We were not surprised, because we had an idea that whatever his predecessor might be like, the present Minister of the Interior had some glimmerings of honesty in his composition and make up and that this contract was so rank, that it so smelled to Heaven, the minister could no longer endure to have it in his office. But it was somewhat of a matter of surprise that the hon. gentleman should take up two hours of the time of

Mr. FOWLER.

this House in attempting to defend that contract—a contract which was so bad that he had already cancelled it. What does he give as a reason for cancellation? He says that the company have not lived up to the contract. Has he told us any one particular in which they have not lived up to the contract. Surely he had ample time to do it. Surely the reasons why he cancelled the contract must have been in his mind. If not he has acted very wrongly towards that company. Surely he had in his mind the grounds upon which he cancelled the contract. Yet he stood up and talked for two hours in a lame defence of the contract, but never deigned to take the House into his confidence and tell us why he had cancelled the contract. Why, Sir, even his own supporter, the hon. member for Lunenburg, had to admit to this House that he had not the faintest idea of the ground upon which the minister had cancelled the contract. The hon. member spent his time in a lamentation that the minister should have cancelled so good a contract, and in order to get a step-father for this child—this awful child—this illegitimate child, I was going to say—he dragged in the white hairs of the venerable Lord Strathcona and tried to make him stand sponsor for it. I have too much respect for Lord Strathcona to believe that he would be a party to any such infamous or immoral contract as the one before us. The hon. member for Lunenburg (Mr. Maclean) said this—I took down his actual words, they were good words, I will read them so that they may form a text for gentlemen on the other side, for it is a text they need to learn and practise. The hon. gentleman said:

The meanest subject in the land can be hired for a consideration to slander the noblest person in the land.

And the hon. member from Yale-Carboo (Mr. Ross) applauded that sentiment, and not to be outdone his fellow conspirator from Three Rivers joined in the applause.

Mr. BENNETT. And the member for Cape Breton.

Mr. FOWLER. Oh, he always applauds anything said on the other side; he doesn't count. Now, Sir, I am opposed to this contract because it is an immoral contract, and I will tell why. What reason does the government give for not giving the names of the parties with whom the contract was made. I have here the return that was brought down to this House and just as it was brought down. We have in it the name of 'Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior' and we have the name of the North Atlantic Trading Company, but the portion which should bear the names of those who should sign for that company is torn off. Perhaps the Prime Minister does not know that; perhaps he does not know that this mutilated copy was brought down to the House