

I am not responsible for telegrams being sent; I am responsible for the replies. There was a telegram sent from Victoria, from a lawyer—I would not call him a heeler, I would not describe him in that way; I cannot state what the telegram says, because the information comes to me in a way that I cannot disclose. If the hon. gentleman had given me a name, if he will give it to me now, I will look; I will meet him on his ground and prove that he does not know what he is talking about; but I can only look around and see how the story got around. The law partner of the member for Pictou (Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper) is the only man that the public or private records of this Government show has ever telegraphed to a member of this Government from the city of Victoria about a liquor permit. He telegraphed to one of my colleagues. My colleague asked me about it. Well, what I told my colleague is best evidenced by the answer that my colleague sent. The answer that my colleague sent was:

Saw Minister of Interior. Regret exceedingly impossible to grant permit.

It being Six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair.

After Recess.

THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR (Mr. Sifton). Mr. Speaker, when the House rose at six o'clock, I was dealing with the charges, or statements, of the hon. member for Pictou (Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper), with regard to the administration of the Yukon, and I think I disposed of the allegation of the hon. gentleman about the telegram. I desire now to say, with reference to the statement of the hon. gentleman (Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper), as to a fee of \$500 having been paid to a lawyer who was described as a heeler of the Grit party, that it turns out, according to the best information I can get, after searching the public and private files of the members of the Government, that the reference must have been to the partner of the hon. member for Pictou (Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper). Whatever fee may have been paid to this gentleman is not my business, and it is not the business of the Government, and it is not part of the official duty of a Minister of the Crown to regulate the fee which may be paid to a lawyer in Victoria for any business which he may do with the department. What I am responsible for is what I do, and if a gentleman telegraphs to me, I am not responsible for his telegram; I am responsible for the answer; and I have shown absolutely beyond any doubt, that the statement of the hon. gentleman (Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper) is altogether incorrect. No such permit as that to which he refers was ever obtained. The only application that was made for a permit to which he could possibly refer was made in that way, was made by

his own partner, and it was properly refused. It surpasses the wit of man to understand what the hon. gentleman (Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper) could have meant by making such a statement in this House.

The hon. gentleman (Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper) made another statement, which I will repeat to the House, and I will let the House decide between the Minister of the Crown and the leading member of the Opposition who made the statement. The hon. gentleman (Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper) deliberately stated that I had stopped liquor at the boundary of the Yukon so that liquor that was being taken in by friends of mine might catch up. That was his charge. So I understood it after reading the "Hansard" report, and so I understand it now. I do not think there can be the least doubt that what he charged was about what he meant. Sir, I have already stated what my position upon the liquor question was. I have stated that there were not any permits I had granted, that there were no friends who got any permits, or who were taking any liquor up there. The statement of the hon. gentleman (Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper) is, therefore, without any foundation. I will go further, however, and I will make to the House a complete disclosure of all the knowledge I have with regard to the question, with special reference to the question of the hon. member for York, N.B. (Mr. Foster)—who is not now in his place—when he asked me, if 105 gallons for which I gave permits for personal use, and druggist use, and so on, was the only liquor that had gone in. At the end of August, 1897, as I said to the House last year, I made up my mind to prevent, if possible, liquor from being sent in, and that matter was brought up in the House last session and then discussed. That resolution I adhered to up to the time when the local council took charge. Whatever Mr. Ogilvie and his council may have done since, I have no returns from them on the subject; but I have no doubt that I will be able to assume the responsibility for what he and his council have done up to this time, and may do in connection with the question. As to that, however, I have no return up to the present time. It was a matter of discussion in the House last session, that I had had an interview with the members of the North-west Government. The question as to whether they had power to advise the Lieutenant-Governor to issue permits came up, and, without attempting to come to any decision upon the legal aspect of the question, or upon the propriety of the Government undertaking to interfere and by force of its authority over the chief executive officer of the North-west Territories or its relation to him, to prevent the issue of these permits, an understanding was come to. I interviewed in the city of Ottawa the two members of the North-west Territories Government, and I stated to the House last year, if I recollect it aright—I have not seen the