

effect that if the province of Quebec would give my right hon. friend a majority he would see that the province of Quebec got an increased subsidy. That is the statement the hon. gentleman made yesterday. Now, he has given us no evidence of any such compact, and I am bound to say that while I do not wish to discredit the hon. gentleman too much I would like to have some evidence of a compact because I have never seen it. I can assure the hon. gentleman that he is labouring under a delusion. As in the case of the hon. gentleman who sits beside him in dealing with the French treaty the hon. gentleman (Mr. Foster) had not taken the trouble to get the facts, because if he had he would not have said that my right hon. friend had made a compact with Mercier. Anybody hearing the hon. member for North Toronto yesterday would assume that the question under consideration was that of an allowance to the province of Quebec; that it was a question between my right hon. friend and the province of Quebec. I want to tell my hon. friend that there never was such a question as that referred to by my hon. friend of granting a subsidy to the province of Quebec. The subject referred to was a proposal to grant subsidies to all the provinces of the Dominion. Therefore, that which he has described as a compact with Mercier in Quebec was as much a compact with Ontario and with the other provinces of the Dominion. But my hon. friend unfairly described it as a compact with Mercier for the special benefit of the province of Quebec. I think he spoke without a knowledge of the facts, and if he looks into it he will see that I am correct in saying that there was no compact with Mercier, and that any transaction, any communication, any discussion in that regard between my right hon. friend and the late Hon. Mr. Mercier had reference not to something for Quebec only, but to an equitable distribution among all the provinces in the Dominion.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Then there was a compact?

Mr. FIELDING. My hon. friend says so. I have asked him to produce the evidence. I do not know that there was.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I thought the hon. gentleman said there was.

Mr. FIELDING. I do not know what my hon. friend may call a compact. I remember seeing it stated that my right hon. friend the Prime Minister said that he approved of the resolutions which were adopted by the Quebec conference. If that makes a compact, then it was a compact with Mercier, with Mowat, with Fielding and with all the provincial premiers of that day. If my hon. friend had said that the crime of my right hon. friend was that he was willing to add to the subsidies of all the provinces I would have no complaint to make.

But his statement was that this was a compact with Mercier for the special benefit of the province of Quebec.

Now, I have been occupying the time of the House too long, I am afraid.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Go on.

Mr. FIELDING. My hon. friend the leader of the opposition had something to say about the Quebec bridge and he said it had always been a marvel to everybody that this government had made this arrangement with a company to build the Quebec bridge. A marvel to everybody! Nobody could understand it! It was not a marvel to the hon. gentleman on October 22, 1903, when the record of this parliament shows that on that day the project to which he refers was brought into this House and when the hon. gentleman allowed it to pass without a single word of complaint. It passed unanimously. It became an expression of the whole parliament of Canada and not of this government only. Then the hon. gentleman went down to Quebec and at a public banquet that was given to him there he took credit to himself for co-operating with this government in bringing about the construction of the Quebec bridge. Well, the bridge, of course, has gone down and we can all be wise after the event. My hon. friend has discovered that he marvelled much, but the record shows that he did not marvel when the Act passed. I want to warn my hon. friend against this weakness that he has of allowing things to pass without opposition—very often supporting them—going out and taking credit for them, and then, when something unexpected happens, turning around and condemning the government for the thing he supported. I think my hon. friend should guard against that.

There was one important question that the hon. gentleman discussed towards the close of his speech, and I must say that he did so in rather more temperate terms than usual. It was the question of corruption at elections. I want to say that when that hon. gentleman, or any other hon. gentleman in this House, claims that there should be some improvement in our election laws in order that we may avoid such things as have happened too often, as has been shown in the disclosures of our election trials, I am most heartily with him, and if my hon. friend had taken that ground, if he had recognized the situation frankly—if he had come to this parliament and gone to his supporters and said there has been looseness in this respect, men on both sides have committed faults, there has been a lack of careful reflection, many men have gone into elections in a way they should not have done, both sides have been guilty and we should unite in making the conditions better—that would have been a position which we could all commend. But, has he pur-