

tention to the report of Major Walsh, their own commissioner, and to the statements that the Minister of the Interior has allowed to pass unchallenged here; and now to-day, for the first time, we have this high character given to Mr. McGregor. Months ago these statements were made on the floor of this House, and it is only to-day that we find this gentleman given a high character. I say, if he is as innocent of any wrongdoing as I hope he is, the men with whom he has most ground to find fault are not those who made the charges in this House, but those who have given utterance, not to my views, or my opinions, but this man who stated on a passenger steamer, in the presence of scores of passengers, a gentleman who has been mining in the Yukon two years, that Mr. McGregor and Mr. Norwood made fortunes in a few months, and it appears to be true, and appears to be proved, so far as Capt. Norwood is concerned. I say that when such statements as those are made, it shows the absolute necessity there was for this Government to appoint a commission to make an investigation into those charges.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. The somewhat painful experience the leader of the Opposition has had during the last fifteen minutes is a good evidence of the utterly baseless character of these Yukon charges. The hon. gentleman's experience is just such as would have met a commission of judges, if they had been sent up into the Yukon district to investigate these charges. He has had to acknowledge publicly, on the floor of this House, that he did not know what he was talking about, when he made these charges against Mr. McGregor. It is all very well for him to say that these charges had been made before on the floor of this House against Mr. McGregor. It is true that such charges have been made by the hon. member for Pictou (Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper) and the hon. member for West Assiniboia (Mr. Davin), who went so far as to call Mr. McGregor a horse-thief. We have paid no attention to those charges; those who know Mr. McGregor, knew well that they were false, and did not think it worth while to pay any attention to them. But when a gentleman of the standing of the leader of the Opposition gets up and calls a man like Mr. James McGregor a rascal, describes him as a man whose proper place would be behind the bars of the penitentiary, then it is time for those who are friends of Mr. McGregor to insist upon a vindication of his character. Surely an hon. gentleman of his experience ought to know better. It does not matter much what the hon. member for Pictou says in this House in regard to these Yukon officials, it does not matter much what the member for West Assiniboia says about them, but when a gentleman of the standing of the leader of the Opposition makes such charges

Sir CHARLES TUPPER.

as these on hearsay evidence, on the word of some unknown English gentleman, some remittance man, perhaps, who came out to this country to seek his fortune, some specimen of the class to which the hon. gentleman himself is so much attached—I say when a man of the standing of the hon. gentleman brings such charges against Mr. McGregor, a man who is respectable, a man who is well known in the province of Manitoba as a business man, it is time for his friends to pay some attention to them. The hon. gentleman does not give us the name of his informant, and when he does not give us the name of his informant he assumes on the floor of this House responsibility for the statements he has made. I happen to know Mr. McGregor, I have known him for fifteen years. It is true Mr. McGregor buys horses occasionally, and sells horses occasionally, and so do I; and I defy the hon. gentleman to say that I am any the worse or any more dishonest on that account. Some of the most honourable and respectable members of this House, on both sides, are in the habit of buying and selling horses. Mr. McGregor is a large dealer in horses, I myself have bought horses from him time and again, and I am proud to stand here and bear testimony to the fact that in every way in regard to business I have found Mr. McGregor a thoroughly honest, reputable and upright man. He is a large dealer and stockbreeder in Manitoba. His word is his bond. The reputation of James McGregor throughout the province of Manitoba is such that his friends deemed it unnecessary, when attacks were being made upon him in Parliament, in the earlier part of this session, to reply to them at all. But, as I said before, when the leader of the Opposition gets up in his place and makes such an uncalled for and slanderous charge as he did against Mr. McGregor this afternoon, then his friends began to think it was time to take his part. Now, Mr. Speaker, I think it is clear that the hon. gentleman is in the habit of getting up in this House and speaking of what he knows nothing about, and it does not come well from a man of his position. I must say, as a young member of this House, I feel a little diffident in calling attention to the attitude of a gentleman occupying his position, and to his reckless disregard of the rights of private citizens. It was painful for me to see the hon. gentleman crawling down as he did as soon as he found out that Mr. McGregor had friends in this House, although I am glad that he had the good sense and the discretion to recede from the untenable position he had taken in regard to that gentleman's character. I will say in conclusion that so far as my experience and my knowledge go, the men who went into the Yukon country as officials were first-class men, and if all the charges which have been made against the Yukon officials have as little truth in them, or are as foundationless as the charges which were made by the leader of the Opposition against