

it may not have been killed openly, but, I am sure that the Ministers never lifted a finger in its behalf. I am sure also, knowing the great influence which they wield upon the representation in this House, that if they only lifted their little finger in favour of the Bill it would have been passed. For some reason or other a Bill similar was killed in a subsequent session. Now, while they were in Washington, the matter was discussed with the American Government, and as a result we are to have this humane legislation, because, it must be admitted to be a crying shame to these two civilized nations that such a law has not sooner been passed. Then, we are to have a commission to devise regulations for the preservation of fish, and to prevent the pollution of the seas. This is a technical subject which I do not profess to be competent to deal with, but I am sure that it is a subject of great importance, and one which must be productive of a great deal of good, that is, we can have international regulations which will apply both to the United States and to Canada to prevent the pollution of the waters, and to prevent the use of those means of catching fish which are so destructive. So far the visits of the Ministers have been productive of good. We are to have an international commission, and we are to receive a report of a commission of our own—the commission on the Civil Service. I will refrain from making reference to that subject until we have the report of the commission itself. This is a subject somewhat dangerous to touch on unless we possess full information, and I deem it more prudent at this time to say nothing about it, awaiting the result of the commission's report. But I am surprised that I am unable to find within the corners of the speech any mention whatever of another commission, which had been promised with great flourish of trumpets, and which was to investigate the working of prohibition legislation in foreign countries. I have not heard a word of it, I believe, since July last. I thought, and everybody expected, there would be some mention of this commission in the speech; because, if we remember rightly, this commission had been appointed to investigate and correct an error which had been committed by the Minister of Finance in a moment of weakness, and in a moment of courage he thought it better not to persist in his error, but to inform himself on a matter as to which he had pronounced without having sufficient information. But I am not to judge from what I fail to see before me, I believe the hon. gentleman has had another moment of weakness in this matter. As to the legislation which is promised, it is of a mild character, and, as was anticipated and suggested by the member from East Hastings (Mr. Northrup), it is conducive to a brief session. At least there is not much in it which should lead to protracted debate in this House, except one measure,—the measure with respect to the distribution of seats. This is, of all measures proposed, the most important that Parliament has to deal with, because it is the very basis of the system of government under which we live. The proper representation of the people, the fair and adequate representation of the people, the fair and adequate representation of everyone, is the very basis of responsible government. The hon. gentleman hoped a moment ago that this basis would be founded on the principle of fairness.

Sir, I am glad to hail this announcement, because it will be the first time such a measure was ever based upon such principles. There never yet was a measure of this kind that was based on the principle of fairness, and we shall see whether on the present occasion the Government will act up to the expectation of their follower, whether in the forthcoming measure they will or not follow the old method of giving the Grits so as to give a chance to the Tories elsewhere, or whether they will distribute the Grits and Tories alike so as to give a chance for the opinions of the country to be fairly expressed in every section and every division. I am not sure, however, that the hon. gentleman has not expected too much. I will not say he is misled. I will not venture any prediction, but I am glad to hail the information that he, at all events, expects fairness to be displayed, and I hope the same spirit will pervade every member forming the majority on the other side of the House. There is but one more remark I desire to offer, and it is one of sadness. The hon. member for East Hastings (Mr. Northrup) has referred in fitting terms, in most fitting terms, indeed, to the sad event which lately shocked all British subjects the world over, and not only British subjects but all civilized nations. There is, after all, a universal brotherhood in the whole human family. It is our misfortune that sympathy is elicited more by the sadness than by the joys of life. Nothing, indeed, can be sadder than the death on the threshold of manhood of one born to so great dignity, so full of hope, and surrounded by such love and affection. Certainly it is one of the most painful tragedies of this age, this death of one born to so great a dignity as I have said, of one on the step of the bridal altar. To those to whom he was so close it is impossible to offer any consolation, because this is one of the griefs which cannot be consoled on earth; but it is a melancholy pleasure for us to offer our sympathy, and to say to those who bear his loss to-day, that we, the loyal subjects of Her Majesty, and the future subjects of His Majesty, if he had lived, share to the fullest extent the loss they have sustained.

Sir JOHN THOMPSON. Mr. Speaker, if we on this side of the House cannot fully concur in all the remarks which the hon. gentleman has made, I am sure we can very heartily and sincerely concur with him in the congratulations he has extended to the mover and seconder of the Address. Those hon. gentlemen, I agree with him, have discharged the duty which devolved upon them with rare ability and good taste, and we cordially congratulate these two gentlemen on their first appearance this session in the House, the mover of the Address representing the young members, and the seconder representing gentlemen who have served with us before and are coming back with a warm welcome from their friends and coadjutors. I would have liked very much to have gone further and included in my expressions of concurrence and congratulation the leader of the Opposition himself, for, if we except three or four expressions which he used and which I am sure on a little reflection he would be disposed to revise, as, for example, the assertion that the patriots all sat on his side of the House, and, for example, the denial of the prosperity of this country, and the assertion that hon. gentlemen on this side were sitting with eyes perversely closed to the true