

April 15, 1874

that after that motion a stream of abuse and obloquy was sought to be cast upon him (Hon. Mr. Blake) by the press which the hon. gentleman and his friend controlled. The circumstances were misrepresented, and, forgetful for the moment that their own friends were involved with him (Hon. Mr. Blake) upon that occasion, they sought to pursue him to the bitter end for that vote. Even then it was not without a demand made that he entered upon an explanation. It was quite true he did then make a statement, and he was now prepared to stand by what he had said. He had nothing to retract; and if the hon. gentleman had anything to complain of in the substance or tone of that speech he (Hon. Mr. Blake) would like to hear what it was.

Mr. BOWELL: What speech does this hon. gentleman refer to?

Hon. Mr. BLAKE: The speech at Bowmanville.

Mr. BOWELL: I did not complain of it.

Hon. Mr. BLAKE said the hon. gentleman said it was an inflammatory speech. He (Hon. Mr. Blake) had taken down the hon. gentleman's words. It was true an amendment was moved to the motion of Mr. McDougall (Lanark North). Gentlemen who were then members of the House would remember the circumstances. Mr. McDougall in his motion recited that the hon. member for Prince Edward (Mr. Ross) had made certain statements regarding the connection of the then member for Provencher (Hon. Sir George-É. Cartier) with transactions in the Northwest, but the hon. member for Prince Edward denied he had used the words attributed to him in the resolution, and that all he was prepared to say was that it had been reported round the House; he, however, had not materials to prove it. To that was added the evidence of gentlemen of the House. At once the hon. member for Selkirk (Mr. Smith) rose in his place, and stated that there was no foundation for the allegations. The hon. member for Prince Edward rose and repeated his denial, telling the House he had heard the rumour in the corridors and his friend from Napierville (Hon. Mr. Dorion) moved an amendment indicative of the state of facts which had just been described, asking the House to conclude under those circumstances, no member of the House having made a charge, that there was no case for a reference to the Committee. He moved that in amendment to a motion which was previously moved by Hon. Sir George-É. Cartier, for a reference of the matter to the Committee on Privileges and Elections.

He (Hon. Mr. Blake) thought then, as he thought now, that it was their duty not to be carried away by passion or prejudice, or the chances of obloquy and misrepresentation, to which he knew they would be exposed by the hon. gentleman opposite and those who acted with him. He believed then, as he believes now, that it would be a dangerous precedent to allow the honour and standing of a member of the House to be the subject of investigation under such circumstances. If anything could have tended to cast a doubt on his mind upon the correctness of that conclusion it was the company he found himself in upon that occasion. (*Hear, hear.*) He supposed the hon. gentleman would not consider it was a great crime to be found voting with him for once, but to himself (Hon. Mr. Blake) it was

not an additional attraction to the vote he had then thought it his duty to give. (*Hear, hear.*)

The hon. gentleman tonight, forgetful no doubt of the circumstance, told the House that by that vote he (Hon. Mr. Blake) had frustrated the success of the motion. Why, he was almost alone on that occasion. The great majority of those with whom he usually acted had a different opinion with regard to the system of Parliamentary law and of what course it was proper to pursue. His hon. friend whom he then, as now, followed, and those who usually acted with him excepting one or two gentlemen, voted against him. He would not desire, even by the bare statement of facts which he had given, to justify that vote if he had not been attacked under circumstances which rendered it necessary that he should do so.

How would the hon. gentleman justify himself for having told the House, nearly one-half of which was not cognizant of these transactions, that by that vote he (Hon. Mr. Blake) frustrated that enquiry, when he knew that it was frustrated by his own friends under the leadership of the hon. gentleman of whom he had always been an undeviating, he would not say a subservient, supporter?

Mr. BOWELL said that the hon. gentleman had made a statement which was not borne out by the journals of the House. He had not the journals with him now, but he would take the first opportunity of showing that what he said was true. He had not voted on every occasion with the hon. member for Kingston (Right Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald).

Hon. Mr. BLAKE said that there was an occasion, he acknowledged, when the hon. gentleman voted otherwise, but he appeared on the journals of the House, as a reference to them would show, as an undeviating supporter of the late Government.

Mr. BOWELL said that that was just the point to which he took exception, and he would prove this to the House.

Hon. Mr. BLAKE said they knew that the hon. gentleman was a military man, and had had a quarrel with the Minister of Militia.

Mr. BOWELL said he had never had a quarrel with the Minister of Militia.

Hon. Mr. BLAKE said that at any rate the hon. gentleman had had a difference with the Minister of Militia, and had spoken to him with considerable spirit. He did not presume to be precise as to date, but he reiterated the statement that the journals and records of the House showed that the hon. gentleman bore the character of a steady supporter of the late Administration.

He replied to a reference of the member for Wellington Centre (Mr. Orton) to his absence from the House during the first week of the session and reminded the hon. gentleman that neither the stability of the Government nor the interests of his constituents were endangered by the fact. He had spent an evening to some advantage in his old riding in Durham during the contest in which his hon. friend from that constituency was then engaged. He was not customarily absent from his place in this House. He had paid diligent attention to the spring session of last year, and also the session of last autumn. (*Hear, hear, from the Opposition benches.*)