

because I told him this morning it would be necessary to bring the matter to the notice of the House. I think he should have told me that he intended bringing it up.

Mr. MILLER. I was simply doing what he said to me in his letter ought to be done.

Mr. MONK. I did not intend bringing it to the notice of the House without first informing my hon. friend and my colleagues on the committee. I was surprised at my hon. friend doing so without informing his colleagues that he has such a proceeding in mind. I quite recognize the truth of what my hon. friend says as to the way in which he has seen fit, *ex parte*, so to speak, to present his case to the members of the House and the public. I must say that if we tolerated such a course we would be admitting a principle and changing a custom of parliament, admitting a principle that appeals may be made by members of this House to influence opinion on a subject matter which is being considered by a select committee. It is conceivable that that would give rise to grave abuses. I intended to put the question in the shape of a motion which would allow the House to lay down the principle which I think has been laid down time and again in England, that such a mode of procedure is absolutely irregular.

Mr. BLAIN. As a member of the committee, I had no notice of this matter coming before the House to-day. Therefore, I will make no comment on the question under discussion further than to say that in my opinion the House should seriously consider whether, after an hon. member presents a Bill and that Bill is referred to a special committee, it is proper for him to be himself the chairman of that special committee appointed to investigate the Bill. I think this difficulty would not have arisen had that circumstance not existed. I am not offering any criticism, only saying that in my experience, I think it would be in the interest of everybody concerned that the gentleman who introduces a Bill, and gathers evidence and brings it into the House, should not be selected as chairman of the sub-committee appointed to consider his own Bill.

Mr. SPROULE. I received a copy of that pamphlet. This is my view of the case: parliament has charged that special committee with a certain duty, namely, to consider a certain Bill, to call witnesses, to order the payment of those witnesses, to take down evidence, and report it for the purpose of enlightening parliament. During the time that sub-committee is engaged in this work, I think it would be improper for any member of the House to refer to the subject in this House or to discuss it in any way. The order of reference

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was for a committee to take evidence as they saw fit and report their evidence to parliament. While I think it might not be considered perhaps improper or irregular for a member of that committee to address any appeal to any person outside this House, I do think it was very improper to address any argument, by way of pamphlet or otherwise, to any member of this House. Parliament, as my hon. friend from Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) says, is supposed to have an open and unbiassed mind, and to reach no decision until it has received and considered the report of its sub-committee. Therefore, I thought, whether the hon. member meant anything wrong or not, that he had not a very keen appreciation of the proprieties of parliamentary life and the ordinary usages of parliament, when he addressed a pamphlet like that to every member of the House at the very time the subject matter was under consideration by a committee.

Mr. MONK. I had not under my hand a moment ago the parliamentary rule with reference to this matter. I find it in Bournot at page 155:

The House has also frequently decided that the following matters fall within the category of breaches of privileges:—

4. All attempts to influence the decision of a committee on a Bill or other matter before it for consideration.

There is a note referring to a case in England:

In 1879 Mr. C. E. Grissell and Mr. J. Sandilands Ward were ordered to attend at the bar for attempting to influence the decision of the Committee on the Power High Level Bridge (Metropolis) Bill in the interest of certain parties from whom they expected to receive some pecuniary advantages for their services.

Mr. MILLER. Does the hon. gentleman think this is a parallel case?

Mr. MONK. It is a different case, but it illustrates the principle of attempting to influence the decision of a committee.

Mr. FIELDING. The case the hon. gentleman quotes referred to outside influence.

Mr. MONK. I will finish my quotation:

Mr. Ward was ordered into custody and subsequently released; Mr. Grissell evaded the order, but was afterwards arrested and imprisoned in Newgate.

Now the distribution of such a pamphlet not only to members of the House, but to members of the committee, is an attempt to influence them and is, therefore, a breach of privilege.

PURCHASE OF DREDGES BY THE GOVERNMENT.

Mr. GERMAN. I wish to call the attention of the government to a matter af-