

constant state of turmoil. There was scarcely a day when he was not throwing difficulties and obstacles in his way. He was in the Cabinet, and out of the Cabinet; but one thing is certain, he was always the power behind the Throne, and he was not content until he attained the position he now held as leader of the Opposition. The country will join me in the wish that he may long occupy that position. Mr. Speaker this debate has been sprung upon the House, I think, altogether unnecessarily. However, I can safely throw out this challenge: that whenever the time arrives for a comparison to be made either as to the administrative ability of the Ministers whom the Opposition have attacked, or as to their personal integrity, we will be quite prepared, individually and collectively, to meet any charge those hon. gentlemen may think proper to make; and I would advise them, when they have charges to make, to make them boldly on the floor of the House. Let charges be properly made and investigated, and we have no fear of the result. Let them act towards the hon. Minister of Railways precisely as I did to the late Speaker. When I had a charge to make I made it boldly, I placed it upon the Journals of the House, it was referred to a Committee, and the result is well known. Let hon. gentlemen opposite adopt the same course, and until they are prepared to do that, it will be more in accordance with parliamentary proprieties for, them at least, to hold their tongues upon questions affecting the personal honor and integrity of others. The hon. member for Centre Huron (Sir Richard J. Cartwright) has particular delight in stirring up this kind of debate. The hon. gentleman did me the honor on one occasion to visit my constituency; he made an elaborate speech with the mercury 8° or 10° below zero, and it so completely froze the hearts of the people and so convinced them he was wrong, that I secured a large majority in the only Radical township then in my riding, a majority which is increasing every year; and if he with his friend from Gloucester, and Mr. Jones, of Halifax, would visit the riding at the next election, probably the majority would be a great deal larger than it has ever been in the past. In the meantime, I again advise hon. gentlemen opposite, if they have any charges to make, to make them in the proper manner, and we shall be quite prepared on any occasion to meet them. We only desire that when they fulminate charges they should be placed before the House in a manner so that they can be reached.

Mr. BLAKE. In view of the language used, and the compliments paid to me in the several speeches made by hon. gentlemen opposite, perhaps the House will indulge me a few words on questions personal to myself which have been raised. I do not presume to engage in the general debate, and reply to other statements and arguments which have been urged and which must be replied to, if they be replied to, by other speakers. The statement which I made I must confess did not appear to me to warrant such an exhibition of feeling as has animated hon. gentlemen opposite. The reference to the recorded views of one colleague as to another colleague, is a reference which has always appeared to me perfectly justifiable, perfectly reasonable and perfectly proper, as furnishing fit occasion for explanation or correction. That was all that was done. If there was an accusation it was not our accusation—it was the accusation of his colleague, the President of the Council. The gist and weight, perhaps the gravity, of that accusation was in the quarter from which it came; he was wounded in the side by his personal friend, and it was thought fit to call the attention of the House to those statements coming from that quarter, with a view to obtaining an explanation. I make these observations, because I think I am entitled to make them from the personal aspect which this debate, as relating to myself, has subsequently assumed. I have to say this: that were I as black as

I have been painted, it would not make the hon. Minister of Railways any whiter; it has nothing to do with the question raised by these quotations. That hon. gentleman stated, with respect to myself and my hon. friend beside me (Sir Richard J. Cartwright), that we, having been defeated, looked, as Japhet in search of his father, for some constituencies which might be bribed to elect us. That statement, so far as I am concerned—I was not in the county at the time, but I believe I can speak for my hon. friend—is absolutely without foundation in fact. It is well known that prior to the General Election of 1878 I had the honor of receiving nominations in the county of South Bruce and in the county of West Durham; that, owing to ill-health, I declined both those nominations, and intended to retire altogether from public life. I was ordered to desist from any active exertion whatever. At a subsequent period my friends in the county of West Durham were very anxious that I should allow myself to be nominated, and it was represented to me that I would be elected, although I was obliged, as I was ordered to do, to leave the country. I thought of accepting that nomination. Communicating it to some of my friends in the South Riding of Bruce, they said it would be discouraging to the party there if I declined their nomination and accepted another. Upon that I finally and irrevocably declined the nomination for the West Riding of Durham, and presumed myself entirely out of the contest. At a subsequent period, many gentlemen of weight and influence in the South Riding of Bruce called upon me, and requested me so earnestly to allow my name to be used, although I could give them no assistance, that I yielded to their request so far, although I was obliged, according to my announcement, to leave; and I was defeated in South Bruce under circumstances and by means that I need not now allude to. I declined to receive a constituency. I did not open the West Riding of Durham; on the contrary, had I been consulted when the West Riding of Durham was opened, I would have declared to my friends that I would not accept the vacancy; but the vacancy having been made without my knowledge, and my being asked to accept it, I felt myself bound to accept it, which I did, and I was elected by acclamation. These are the circumstances on which the hon. gentleman based his accusation that being rejected by South Bruce, I went about seeking a constituency that I might bribe to elect me. The second statement he made was one which I was not surprised at. He declared that I was afraid of him. I have been sitting opposite the hon. gentleman in this House during fourteen years. During the larger part of that time he has had the sympathy of a majority of this audience. I do not know any audience equally critical in this country. I do not know any audience which one might be more afraid to face, in view of meeting superior powers. I am not going to contrast our powers. I will only state that I have not felt that impulse of fear which the hon. gentleman attributes to me; that whenever I have found it necessary, I have dealt with the hon. gentleman's policy and measures as I thought truth and the interests of the public demanded, and I intend to continue to do so until the end. The hon. gentleman shall not move me either by threats, accusations of fear, or in any other way, into feelings of indignation. Many long years have elapsed since the hon. gentleman lost the power of awakening in me the feelings either of surprise or of indignation. The hon. gentleman says that I was guilty of a corrupt bargain in connection with a change of administration that took place in a Local Legislature. We have heard a good deal to-day of the impropriety of dragging before this House occurrences that took place in Local Legislatures; it was a shocking thing, an unparliamentary and undignified thing, and a waste of time to discuss what happened in Nova Scotia. But I have found, from year to year and from Session to Session, no more appetizing morsel rolled under the tongues of those hon. gentlemen than what