

that, after it was granted, it was offered in this city and all over the Province for a small sum, it being believed to be of no value. There is another statement to which I will allude, for when the matter is properly and thoroughly investigated, which I hope it will be, and when all the facts have been obtained so that hon. members can pass an intelligent judgment on the case, I venture to say hon. gentlemen will find that this motion is a tissue of misstatements from the beginning to the end. The hon. gentleman in his motion states :

“ The said John C. Rykert did agree with the said Adams to use, and did inform the said Adams by letters signed with his own hand that he was using, corrupt influences—”

The hon. gentleman cannot lay his finger on proof of that—there is not one word of truth in the statement. He says I was using corrupt influence

“—with certain members of the Government of Canada and of the Parliament thereof.”

There is not a word about members of Parliament in this correspondence. There is no evidence that I told Mr. Adams I used corrupt influences; but, on the contrary, there is evidence that I used influence, not as a member of Parliament, but that influence which any one had a right to use, in order to have a wrong corrected. That is my position. I will show to a committee, if one is granted, that everything I have done was in every way honorable. The hon. gentleman, in formulating a lot of charges, has made the statement which in effect is, that I wrote Mr. Adams long after the old gentleman was dead; for he died in 1883. I can show a committee of the House, and I can show the country, that the indictment framed by the hon. gentleman is a tissue of falsehoods and misstatements, and I claim that this House has no right to pass judgment on me on a one-sided statement. If this House is to pass judgment on the evidence, it must be considered as a whole. The hon. gentleman himself admits that I have not been guilty of any corrupt act; I deny that I have been guilty of any corrupt act, and the hon. gentleman admits it, and this House must take the whole evidence. The hon. gentleman cannot take a portion of the evidence and throw aside the balance. Taking the whole evidence, this House cannot say that I was guilty of any corrupt act: it can only do so through a committee; and if the hon. gentleman thinks he can establish this charge before a committee, he is at liberty to do so. I do not propose to follow the hon. gentleman in the statements he has made with respect to hon. members of this Parliament and hon. members of the Government, as to their rascality, and so forth. I do not propose to follow him in his vile abuse of the constituencies, and his declaration that where hon. members have been guilty of offences, the constituencies are equally guilty with them; but what I do say is this, that the hon. gentleman's statement is a most discreditable one. If the hon. gentleman had chosen to make a fair and proper indictment against me, if he had desired to give me fair play in this free country, he would have prepared a record containing all the facts of the case and have had it submitted to a committee of the House, in order that I might have an opportunity of defending myself and of submitting evidence in rebuttal of the charge of corrupt practice. I have not, since I have been a member of Parliament, in any way infringed the privileges of members of

this House, but I have always conducted myself otherwise, and the hon. gentleman cannot lay his finger on a single act I have committed since I have been in Parliament in which I have done any injury to my constituents; but the hon. gentleman has dragged in private and confidential correspondence, and has thus been enabled to formulate charges which are not borne out by the facts. Let me have a fair and impartial trial, let this question go before a committee of this House, where it can be properly investigated—that is all I ask hon. members to do. It is not fair or right that this House should seek to condemn me without my being allowed to be properly heard. My proper course would have been to have simply denied the statement and allowed the case to go to a committee of the House, but I felt, in justice to hon. members and to the Ministers, that I should exonerate them entirely from any connection with this matter, in so far as any charge of corruption may be made. I maintain that no man can truthfully say that in any one of these letters I endeavored to act corruptly towards the Government, and no man can point his finger to any evidence which will satisfy the House and the country that Ministers went out of their way in doing anything I asked them to do. I have letters and evidence of importance to place before the House, and in order that I may justify myself, I ask the House to appoint a committee for the purpose of considering this whole matter. I believe, and I am confident, that I can justify my conduct in Parliament; I am not afraid of the hon. member for South Oxford, or of his friends, for I have met them often on the public platform, but I simply ask to be put in a position to place before the country the entire facts in regard to this matter. If the judgment of the House is a condemnation of my course, I shall abide by it, and I will resign my trust into the hands of my constituents if necessary, but before the House resorts to any extreme measure, it should say “we will give the member a fair and honest trial, in order that the people of the country, and the constituents of Lincoln, whom he has represented for thirty years, may see if he has acted improperly or not.” The House should give me an opportunity of defending myself against the slanders of hon. gentlemen opposite, who have accused me of crimes and misdemeanors. I feel proud of the confidence reposed in me for the last quarter of a century by my constituents of the County of Lincoln, and I should be the last man to hold my seat for a minute if the House should decide that I was not fit to retain the trust which those constituents have placed in my hands. I simply ask the House for justice; I ask hon. members to give me the opportunity of defending myself before a committee, where I can have the charges investigated.

Sir. JOHN THOMPSON. The manner in which this charge has been brought before the House, and the manner in which the hon. member for Lincoln (Mr. Rykert) has replied to it, constitute to some extent, a departure from the usual course of proceedings in investigations of this character. I think the House will agree with me, that the usual course of procedure is, that a charge involving the character, or the seat, or the standing of a member, whether in the form of a resolu-