

if they had the opportunity, of a like advantage, and their protests to the contrary is political hypocrisy. Again, it has been the effort of the Liberal press, ever since the difficulty began, to destroy my character in every part of the Dominion, more particularly in St. John. The hon. member for St. John (Mr. Ellis), in his paper, I am sorry to say, has brought recklessly from day to day charges and imputations that the meanest ingenuity alone could invent, and when his own invention failed all that could be borrowed from an equally partisan and hostile press he added to his stock. He has kept constantly before the public everything that could possibly belittle me, but I am bound to say neither he nor his friends have succeeded to any great extent as yet. Among the truthful things said against me is that I occupy a back seat, but I am not aware that that is any reflection on one's dignity as a member, for most new members take back seats. Again, they have said that I am of no use as a member of this House. Quite true; but if that be the case, I have the glorious satisfaction of knowing that I am in plenty of company of the same kind, and first among them I would hail the hon. member for St. John (Mr. Ellis). His usefulness has yet to be discovered, and I think if any of his deluded constituents would come up here, they would find what a splendid failure they have on their hands. The *St. John Globe*, the *Cape Ann Advertiser* and the *Portland Argus* have claimed that he is the most important man in the Maritime Provinces, and that he would soon set this Parliament straight on fishery and international questions; but, notwithstanding all their prophecies, if his constituents would come up here, they would find he is about as useless as I am. I am happy to say his strictures fall very lightly upon me. If I have sinned against a political opponent or against a single constituency—which I do not admit—I can say he has sinned against the whole nation, and that nation his own country. Disloyalty, separation and annexation has been the theme of his life. It has been his life-work to foment disloyalty in the hearts of the people; he has been constantly engaged in spreading the seeds of sedition and disaffection in the minds of a contended people, by enlarging existing evils and inventing ones that never did exist, through the medium of a mischievous press, and in this way he has kept himself before the public merely to satisfy his own selfish and vain-glorious ends. Side by side, working with him, has been the *Daily Telegraph*, of St. John, controlled by a broken-down and dissatisfied politician, who has had a standing call at political elections ever since I can recollect, who has run very vigorously up to nomination day, but who never dared to make his deposit of \$200, knowing well he could not carry a one-third vote in his native county. This gentleman can write very ably on the subject, but I am prepared to bid defiance to all these gentlemen. I can afford to trample on their opinions and to defy their ablest efforts. I do not ask them to desist. I urge them to go ahead, and I am positive they cannot deprive me of five votes in the county of Queen's. If the public were to believe what has been published against me, they would believe that my capacities for mischief are almost endless. They would believe that I have induced a returning officer to violate the sanctity of his oath and make false returns; that I have taken hold of this young man, who stood so well before the world, and led him from the path of rectitude into the broad highway of shame. This is the language of these gentlemen, but, according to them, another step had to be taken. Judge Steadman came down to attend to the work of counting me out and Mr. King in, and my attorney, by my order, obtained a writ of prohibition from the Supreme Court to stay the judge in making that recount. Then a new outburst came from the Liberal press. I had seized the Supreme Court by the throat; I had induced

Mr. BAIRD.

one of the judges to violate the solemnity of his oath; I had induced him to soil his judicial ermine and prostitute his high office for the sake of party. This was the very language used by the Liberal press; and when I called upon them to answer to the Supreme Court for their language, I was charged with interfering with the liberty of the press, the glorious liberty of the press. It was a glorious liberty, they claimed, to call our judges perjured villains. That is rather too much liberty, and I do not think they will keep that liberty long. Still, they may, and I may be wrong. Yet the matter cannot stop. Another step has to be taken. As Richard III said, "Crowns gained by blood must be by blood maintained." Another step has to be taken—the ballots have to be burnt. The papers announce that Baird has perpetrated the last act of political brigandage, and the ballots have been burnt. As to the member for the city and county of St. John (Mr. Weldon), I cast no reflection upon him; he is not a vindictive man; I have always found him a fair man and an eminent lawyer; but, when he mentioned the fact that the ballots were burned, though I could not contradict him, I knew as well as possible that every ballot and every paper would come to you as faithfully as the hand of man could return them. But it is all in keeping with their stories, and if they are false in part they are false in the whole. And now what is it? I have come here. The press announces that I have captured the Government, and that I hold this seat by the force of a party vote. In this matter I wish to speak plainly. When they intimate that I am the ward of the Government, that I am the *protégé* of the right hon. gentleman, the leader of this House, I say it is false; I say that up to this moment I have never spoken one word to the right hon. the leader of this House on this question, or exchanged a single line with him in reference to it. I am proud that I can say this, and that I can say it at this particular time. As to being the ward of the Government, or being under their protection, I do not admit that. When I claim this seat, I claim it as my right—I demand it as my legal right. I do not ask to hold it by force of a party vote. I do not wish to hold it as a matter of political favor. I ask it as my right, as my legal right, as my right under the laws of the land as they now stand. I say I am entitled to it in that sense; that the ruling of the returning officer is in that direction, and is unrevised; and those returns which have been sent to you show the same thing, that the matter has been fairly investigated, that it has been successfully contended that Parliament has long since surrendered to the courts the right to try controverted elections and all questions in relation to controverted elections. I say that is established not only by the positive language of our statutes, but by precedents under other statutes. When I claim the seat, I claim it as my right; I do not claim it as a matter of political protection. I do not wish it to be understood that I am getting this protection; and, if there is a ruling in my favor, it will be as the law directs. That it is the very conclusion that the committee of this House were, I may say, forced to take, after spending two or three days in hunting for precedents, and examining carefully into the law bearing upon the matter, they were driven irresistibly to the conclusion that Parliament has not the right to deal with this matter, has not the right to unseat me and to place Mr. King here, to deprive the constituency of Queen's of any privileges they would enjoy had he brought the matter before an election court. It is in that respect that I ask it. I freely admit that you have the power, but I deny that you have the right to unseat me. Still, it is not for me to dictate, it is not for me to say. The prerogative, the high prerogative, rests with this House. Theirs is the right to determine, and theirs is the responsibility of that determination. It is for them to command and for me to obey; and if in the exercise of their discretion, if in the