

Commons. The leader of the Opposition has deprecated interference with municipal organizations, and he has contended that electoral divisions should coincide with county and township divisions. My opinion is that it does not make much difference as regards counties, but certainly it makes a difference when townships are divided, because they would then be required to have two sets of voters' lists. My hon. friend from West Durham referred approvingly to the speech of the leader of the Government in 1872 in favor of maintaining the county organizations the same as the electoral divisions. One would consider, however, that his position, as former representative of South Bruce, was a little different from the position he takes to-day on that question. In that speech the leader of the Government said that a young man first enters the Township Council, and if he there displays some ability he is selected as a reeve, then he graduates into the County Council, probably becomes warden, and finally represents his county in Parliament. Now, it is worthy of remark that the first entrance of my hon. friend into political life was by successfully opposing the warden of that county. That warden was a farmer in the county, he became a councillor, then a warden, then a reeve, and finally warden of the county, and then the hon. leader of the Opposition defeated him.

Mr. BLAKE. And then another of them.

Mr. SHAW. It did not end there, we put forward another gentleman in that riding. He was first a councillor, then a reeve, and afterwards warden, and the hon. gentleman defeated him. The fact was that no municipal officer in that county would be returned by the Conservative party, and it had finally to get a lawyer to try issues with the hon. gentleman. Such were the acts of the hon. leader of the Opposition; but perhaps he is not here to give his own opinions on the matter, but simply to advocate the opinions of the party he represents. It appears to me from the hon. gentleman's acts in connection with South Bruce, that he was simply carrying out the opinions of the party, and whatever the Reform party desired that he sought to carry out irrespective of county or municipal organization. It may be said it was all right that the hon. gentleman should oppose those wardens, and if it had ended with simple opposition it would have been well enough, but when all the influence of a party is brought to bear against the municipal officers who are running for Parliamentary honors, the position is a great deal worse. Those elections, although I do not charge any corruption or impropriety against the leader of the Opposition—

Mr. BLAKE. You had better not.

Mr. SHAW. By no means, I do not mean to do so, and I do not do so; but I do say that a large amount of money was expended in those ridings to carry the elections, and that the hon. gentleman did carry the election by these means, and that he would not have carried it by any other means. I say, further, that managers of money-lending institutions were sent, not gerrymandering through the country, but meandering through it, where they had mortgages—two or three of them—during these elections, and that they did produce an effect in the county, and the result which was intended, the election of the hon. gentleman. I have heard it said, and I believe there is truth in it, that the leader of the Opposition felt some delicacy in accepting the position after he was elected, having ascertained that so much money had been spent there; but party exigencies again overcame the objection and the hon. gentleman accepted the situation. Those things usually have to be done for the purpose of party, it is said, and I suppose the Reformers are not much better than the Conservatives in that respect, although they profess a great deal more. I would not have extended my remarks to such a length upon those clauses, were it not that I heard the right hon. leader of the Opposition say that the division of

the Bruces was one of the grossest cases. I am glad he has said that, that he has expressed that opinion, because, when it is committed to the electors of that county, I have no fear of their opinion on that subject if that is the grossest case.

Mr. BLAKE. I never said that was the grossest case. I said it was one of the grossest cases.

Mr. SHAW. If it is one of the grossest cases, I think it will be accepted by the county as about fair and just.

Mr. BLAKE. The hon. gentleman heard my speech, and he has produced his own speech.

Mr. SHAW. Not from notes at all events.

Mr. BLAKE. The hon. gentleman has endeavored to show that my course is inconsistent, because I defeated two candidates who happened to be wardens. I have always said, and made the statement publicly on the platform, that a local man had many points of advantage over a stranger in a political contest. I stated that I only asked to be judged and voted for, for or against, after a fair and just allowance had been made. I have always admitted that candidates, such as wardens, possessed a great advantage, but the hon. leader of the Government proposes to deprive local residents of those advantages, by abolishing the system of county organization. That did not occur in the case of Bruce, because it was divided into electoral districts, but it applied to the bulk of the changes as brought down. Of course, some clauses have since been altered; within a few minutes three clauses proposing great disruption have been altered for reasons which we all understand. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Shaw) says that the public opinion of the Bruces will approve of this proposed division, and that he is glad to hear that I said it is one of the grossest cases in the Bill, immediately afterwards stating that I had said it was the grossest case, thus contradicting himself. I said it was one of the grossest cases—I think so; it is not the grossest case, but one of the grossest cases. Here is a county which, even under the circumstances of the elections of 1878, under the difficulties in which the elections were run, particularly in Bruce as affecting the south riding, which the hon. gentleman well knows returned a majority of Reform votes. There was a majority in the combined votes of the two divisions recorded for the Reformers as against the Conservatives, and so it has been in preceding elections for a considerable time; and the hon. gentleman says that the honest men of Bruce will approve of the division, the inequality of population, and the design to stultify the voice of the majority, and give the Conservatives two votes out of three in a county, the people's voice from which, even as judged by the elections of 1878, was Reform rather than Conservative. That is the hon. gentleman's opinion of the majority and fair spirit of the electors of Bruce. I do not share it. There may be men there blind to everything but a sense of party advantage, who think politics is a game in which it is proper to strive with the opinions of the majority, and while the majority of the electors under the most unfavorable circumstances goes Reform, they so readjust the representation that two-thirds shall be Conservative and one-third minority. I do not doubt there are such, but many of the hon. gentleman's supporters will say it is not just, fair and reasonable, and since it does not equalize the population it is obvious that the purpose is that which I have stated. Of course, the hon. gentleman considers he has a convenient majority in that portion of the riding for which it is possible he can stand. It was impossible to provide otherwise without taking a portion of a strong Reform county; but the result of the division is to make a middle and two ends, so that according to the returns of 1878, the two ends will be strongly Conservative, and the middle an unfortunately stronger Reform constituency. It