

FULLY EXONERATED.

[Continued from second page.]

White—We must infer that some pressure was brought to bear upon Mr. Quinn, because we find him on the stand making a statement entirely at variance with this declaration. When the investigation was entered upon not one of these gentlemen was found bold enough to come forward and support the charge. Instead of that the very gentleman who made the charge said he had made no charge; that there was no charge; that if there was Mr. Blair had made it himself. Was it not absurd for Mr. Pitts to make that statement in view of his words in the house and the declaration which he had read in support of them? It was apparent to all that the charge was made rather with a view of injuring the attorney general's character—not with a desire of having the matter investigated in order that the truth might be ascertained. It was only the other day that Mr. Stockton and Mr. Phinney both of them repudiated all responsibility in connection with the making of these charges—a most remarkable statement in view of their conduct as revealed on the inquiry.

Mr. Stockton—You are misrepresenting me. I did not make the statement that I repudiated the responsibility for this proceeding.

White—I am not misrepresenting the hon. gentleman. I ask the house whether the hon. member did not give us to understand that he was sorry the charge was brought.

Stockton—I say that is false. White—It is not false and the house knows it is not false. I have no doubt the honorable member feels keenly his present position, and that if he had this thing to do over again he would do it in a far different manner. I beg to move the following resolution, seconded by Mr. Killam.

Whereas, Herman H. Pitts, a member for the County of York on the 20th day of March, from his place in the house, made statements injuriously reflecting on the character and conduct of the honorable attorney general, Mr. Blair, as a member of the government and of the legislature; and

Whereas, The attorney general at once, from his place in the house, gave a full and unqualified denial to all such charges, and the said Mr. Pitts, instead of moving to have the said charges referred to the proper tribunal for investigation of the same upon evidence under oath, subsequently on the second day of April, instant, reiterated the said charges, and read a declaration of one William H. Quinn, prepared and published with a view to give color to the same; and

Whereas, The said attorney general thereupon again denied the truth of the said charges, and requested the said Mr. Pitts to move to have the same inquired into upon evidence under oath, and which Mr. Pitts refused to do; and

Whereas, The said attorney general in consequence of such refusal, and in view of the fact that the said charges had been widely disseminated throughout the country felt called upon to move, and did move, for a committee of investigation into the said matter, which the house granted, and investigation into the said charges was thereupon had before a committee of this house, and the evidence of all parties in any way connected with the alleged matter and able to give any material testimony touching the same was taken upon oath before such committee, and the committee have reported such evidence in full, together with their findings thereon to the house, which evidence and report are now before this committee, and by the said report said Hon. Mr. Blair is found exonerated from all said charges; and

Whereas, The attorney general having denied the said charges and imputations, and having urged the said Mr. Pitts to move for a committee of inquiry, thereupon and challenged the fullest investigation of his conduct in connection therewith, and having denounced the making and procuring of the statutory declaration of the said Wm. H. Quinn and the publishing of the same in order to give color to said charges and without any intention of calling for investigation thereof, Mr. Phinney a prominent member of the party opposed to the government in the house from his place indignantly procured having had any part in procuring such statutory declaration or in promoting the said accusations against Mr. Blair, and Mr. Stockton, the leader of the opposition, also gave the house to understand that he was not a party to the making or preferring of the said charges; and

Whereas, Notwithstanding such denial of said Mr. Phinney and statement of said Stockton, it subsequently appeared in evidence on said investigation, that said Messrs. Stockton and Phinney had, on divers occasions, visited the dwelling house of said William H. Quinn, and there induced and procured him to make and sign the said statutory declaration so that the same might be read in the house and published in the newspapers and press, and the said statutory declaration was read by Mr. Pitts from his place in the house;

Resolved, That while this committee of the whole house fully recognizes that whenever a member of the assembly believes any other member guilty of conduct unbecoming and improper to him as a representative of the people, and has fully satisfied himself by careful enquiry, and does honestly believe that he can sustain a charge for such misconduct by credible testimony, it is not only his right but his duty to prefer such a charge to the house, but to do so only for the purpose of securing an investigation thereof, and as a necessary preliminary step to such an investigation. In order that the honor and character of the legislature and its members may be maintained and vindicated, this house desires in the most emphatic manner to mark its disapproval and censure of the course pursued by Mr. Pitts in making charges and imputations of an injurious character against the Hon. Mr. Blair, and, when he had directly and emphatically denied the truth thereof, refusing to withdraw such charges and imputations or to call for a committee of investigation thereon, and in the committee of this house in the usual manner.

And this committee further desires to record its disapproval of the conduct of Messrs. Pitts, Stockton and Phinney in procuring the said statutory declaration and causing the same to be read in the house, and in thereby promoting the charges and imputations which had been previously made, as such action on their part was manifestly designed and intended to injure and asperse the character and reputation of Mr. Blair, in disregard of the honor of the house and not for the purpose of having the said charges investigated so that the honor and character of the house should be maintained.

After Mr. Phinney had spoken

Hon. Mr. Tweedie arose and made one of the best speeches ever heard in the legislature of New Brunswick. He said Mr. Phinney had made a very elaborate speech, but the force of his effort was largely lessened by the fact that he appeared, after all, as the paid advocate of Mr. Quinn.

Mr. Phinney—Who said I was paid by Mr. Quinn.

Hon. Mr. Tweedie—You said before the committee that you were there on the retainer of Mr. Quinn and you cannot take it back now. The hon. member had referred to the charges which had been brought by Mr. Blair against members of the old government, as if that was any justification for the cowardly underhanded efforts made by these gentlemen to destroy the character of the attorney general. One of these charges was brought against Mr. Adams, and he (Tweedie) was glad to know that he was exonerated, but he had never heard even Mr. Adams claim that Mr. Blair had no reasonable grounds on which to make or prefer a charge. In the Fraser government, although Mr. Fraser in the end was completely vindicated, yet Mr. Blair was entirely justified in having the matter investigated, for it was a matter of common knowledge at that time that the clerk of the peace, Mr. Bliss, was claiming to receive a salary greater than appeared in the public accounts. The hon. member for Kent had a mind of such a diagonal turn that it was impossible for him to

Argue any Political Question Fairly or without dragging in side issues. It was useless for these hon. members to attempt to bury the issue, or to try and escape the unenviable position in which they had placed themselves. When Mr. Pitts had made his charges Mr. Phinney and Mr. Stockton disclaimed any knowledge of them; they claimed that they were deniers that the honor and integrity of the legislature should be maintained, while at the same time they were urging forward the hon. member for York and dodging around the Quinn mansion in pursuit of evidence upon which the honor and integrity of members of the legislature were impugned. The sincerity of Mr. Phinney, in his expressed solicitude for the honor and integrity of the house could be estimated by the fact that he had admitted that he had these documents in his pocket over a year ago. (Applause.) These gentlemen opposite were very fond of arraying themselves in the robes of honor, when at the same time they were engaged in the most sordid and unbecoming tactics which were necessary to accomplish that purpose; and when that gentleman was fairly and fully acquitted before the committee they dragged in side issues and still claimed that he should be convicted despite the evidence.

It was idle for these gentlemen to say that they had made no charge against the attorney general. They had made the charge, through their mouth-pieces, Mr. Pitts, and having entered it over the length and breadth of the country they hoped that would be the end of it. If they had had the faith in the Quinn documents that they professed to have, why had they kept silent about them for over a year? Why had they skulked around Mr. Quinn's place in the darkness of the night to induce him to sign a declaration when they themselves were afraid to formulate their charge. The attorney general, however, had not been afraid to

Have the Fullest Investigation and on his motion a committee was appointed. What position did these high-minded gentlemen take then? Why, they claimed that they could not get a fair and full investigation of the matter; that the inquiry would be biased; that the charge had been limited and the evidence would be shut out. Of course the charge was limited to the attorney general, for against whom else was the charge preferred? Was the conduct of any other member of the house impugned? Would any member of the opposition say that they had been unfairly treated in that investigation? Would they say that the inquiry had not been a full and fair one? Could they have produced any testimony that they were not allowed to produce? It was not true even that the evidence had been narrowed down to the attorney general's connection with the case, for every possible fact bearing on the whole matter had been elicited. Every question that was asked, with one or two exceptions.

Had Been Allowed. True, Mr. Quinn was not allowed to state what he understood the \$50 endorsed on the note was for but would it not have been absurd to allow one man to give what was in his own mind without allowing the other man to state what was in his? Mr. Quinn was asked to state all that was done and all that was said, and it was for the committee to draw a conclusion as to what the understanding was. When hon. gentleman opposite says that Mr. Quinn was the party charged they know they are stating what is not correct. Mr. Blair was the party charged, but they were afraid to make it openly and squarely. They must have had some reason for this course, and his (Tweedie's) belief was that they themselves had doubts about the authenticity of those papers. Vigorous warfare against a political opponent is an admirable thing, but when prominent public men assume the role of the detective and eavesdropper, prowling about at night for evidence against the object of their hatred, and then stand up in the house

and express the hope that he will be able to clear his skirts, they are taking a course which the people of this country will not endorse. The attitude assumed by the hon. member for York was an extraordinary one. He seemed so entirely oblivious of what was right that it was difficult to believe that he was sane. The whole thing appeared to him (such as his moral obligation of vision) like a huge joke. It might be a very amusing thing for him to go to destroy the character and good fame of the premier of this province, but the people would not regard it so.

Mr. Tweedie strongly condemned the course of Mr. Hazen, who had assumed Mr. Blair to be guilty before there was the semblance of a trial. He could assure that gentleman that the conservatives of this province were not in accord with him. Not many years ago Mr. Hazen was the firm friend of the leader of the government and he came to Fredericton and voted an open ballot for him; now having secured his own ends he had turned against the party to which he was once allied, and hated it and its leader with the

Relentless Hatred of a Renegade. The hon. member for Kent claimed that the charges were narrowed down to the attorney general. If so, upon what ground could he justify his course in addressing himself for over an hour to the charges against Mr. Wilson? He claimed that there must be perjury somewhere, yet he had entirely ignored the clear and positive evidence of the attorney general that he had no dealings himself, nor any knowledge of the dealings of others with respect to trafficking in public offices; that he had never received a dollar or known of any one else receiving a dollar for political purposes from the Quinns. Was Mr. Phinney prepared to say that he did not believe that evidence? He would ask the hon. member for York (Pitts) who had an occasional glimmer of fairness in his make up, if he did not feel when the inquiry closed that no charge had been made out against the attorney general?

Mr. Pitts—Always said that the charge hadn't been made out and couldn't be made out.

Hon. Mr. Tweedie—Then why didn't you act upon it? Mr. Pitts—I acted upon it and you know I did.

Hon. Mr. Tweedie—Yes, you were with us in the committee room, but you went upstairs with Mr. Powell and came down with your name signed to a refined argument that was drawn up by that gentleman. I say I will submit that evidence to any fair-minded man in this province, and unless he believes the attorney general swore falsely, he will be obliged to admit that there was not a

Syllable of Evidence Against Him. Indeed, if Mr. Blair's testimony was ignored altogether he could come to no other conclusion. Were the sins of others to be visited upon the attorney general? Was he his brother's keeper? Was he responsible for what Mr. Wilson or others may have done behind his back? But I take the ground, also, that there is nothing that can fairly be charged against William Wilson. I say that any jury would find without leaving their seats that he was guiltless. It does not follow that in order to believe Wilson you have got to discredit the evidence of Mr. Quinn and his daughter; but I say that, knowing Mr. Wilson as I have, I require a greater strength of imagination than I am capable of to believe that he would produce a receipt that was forged before that committee and which had no existence prior to the meeting of this committee, and that he

Would Perjure Himself before his country and his God. Mr. Phinney had bitterly complained of what had appeared in the Telegraph newspaper by way of criticism of himself and the leader of the opposition. Why did not the hon. member rise in his place and protest against the slanderous article that appeared in the Telegraph press? He (Tweedie) did not believe in imputations in papers of either political side, and he felt free to say that in his opinion the newspapers of this province had to a great extent forgotten their high mission as educators of the public, and prostituted themselves to the ends of partisan warfare. He would ask the hon. member of Kent in all fairness what he thought of the treatment the attorney general had received.

From the Daily Sun? The opposition were not sincere in their claim that their interests had suffered because no counsel had been allowed to appear for Mr. Quinn. Mr. Powell, one of their ablest members, had conducted the examination with great shrewdness and force. Mr. Quinn was an outsider altogether. He stood merely in the position of a witness, and had no more right to be represented by counsel than had Mr. Wilson, Mr. Barry, Mr. Wetmore or Mr. Anderson. The committee had decided in strict accordance with legal principles when they rejected that application. The opposition members themselves could not have been very strongly impressed with the force of their contention, for they also put forward with equal vehemence the equally absurd claim that they had a right to appear as counsel for the legislature. In conclusion Mr. Tweedie urged the opposition members to rise above the selfish motives of political warfare, and do justice to the attorney general in a matter that affected his personal character and reputation. If they did this they could not fail to find that not a title of evidence had been adduced in support of the charges made against that honorable gentleman.

After some discussion Mr. White's resolution was carried by the following vote: Yes—Mitchell, Emmons, White, Tweedie, LaBelle, Lewis, Harrison, Theriault, Russell, Siveright, Mott, Killam, Scott, Baird, O'Brien, (Northumberland), Dibble, Robinson, Dunn, McLeod, Farris, O'Brien, (Charlotte)—23. Nays—Powell, Smith, (St. John), Alward, Allen, Howe, Pinder—6.

Hon. Mr. Blair said he did not propose to make any lengthy remarks to the committee. He thought he would be able to recall to the minds of the committee what had transpired in connection with this matter. In the course of the address which he had delivered to the house after the statutory declaration was read by Mr. Pitts, I said that I wanted to know the circumstances under which that statutory declaration had been procured. I said that I imagined I saw some men identified with the opposition party and who were anxious to injure myself, prowling around in the dead hours of the night to prepare that declaration. I did not make any charge against any particular member of the house, because I did not have it in my mind that any gentleman in the house had been a party to it. But when I made that statement the hon. member for Kent indignantly called on me to say whether I meant to charge him with prowling around at night, or having anything to do with that statutory declaration.

Phinney—That is not true. You are a base slanderer.

Blair—Every member of the house knows that is true, and yet the hon. member dares get up and deny it. When he called on me to say whether I meant that any member of the house had been a party to getting up that declaration, I said that I had no thought of making such a statement. It is altogether too late for the hon. member to say that he did not seek to entirely disconnect himself from the paper read by Mr. Pitts.

Stockton—Why, I said I had the letters in my room.

Blair—Yes, at the close of my speech I said I had seen in the press that the papers were in your possession, and I called on you to produce them, and you man understood from any remark of yours that you were connected with the preparation of that declaration.

Mr. Wells said a large portion of the charges and insinuations of the opposition had been leveled at Mr. Wilson, a gentleman who was not in the house and not amenable to the authority of the house, and who had not the chance to defend himself. Mr. Wilson, though a most reputable man, had even been accused of being a perjurer and a forger. He would move seconded by Mr. Ferris—Resolved, That there has been an attempt by certain members of this assembly to injure the reputation of a gentleman (Mr. Wilson) not now a member of the house, and such an attack, in whose case an expression of opinion as to the merits of the matter is not within the competency of the house, is highly improper, is unjust to the person involved, and is incompatible with the dignity of the legislature.

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