

"I have been connected for five years in the House of Commons, and for the last year in the Local Legislature as well, with my friend Mr. Alexander Mackenzie—(hear, hear)—who has throughout taken a leading part in Opposition in the House of Commons up to this time, and has assumed office with me in the Local Legislature. Mr. Mackenzie has been more intimately thrown together with me for the last five years than, perhaps, with any other public man. Our intercourse has been most constant, cordial, and unrestrained; and there is nothing in my public life to which I can refer as having given me pain—and there are many circumstances which have given me pain—which does not sink into insignificance at the pain which I have felt at the unjust observations and gross attacks which have been made upon my friend on recent occasions. I have this to say, that when I was called upon to form a Government, I felt it necessary in the interests of the country that my hands should be strengthened by my friend taking office with me, and the greatest difficulty that I found in the formation of that Government was to persuade Mr. Mackenzie to assume the position he now so worthily fills, of Treasurer of Ontario. Not that he was unwilling—he had always been willing—to make any sacrifice in his power for the sake of his country, and of that party with which he felt the great interests of the country were identified, but that his own views of his public duty led him to hesitate. He offered his support to the Government outside the Cabinet, but he desired that I would not ask him to take office, and it was with the utmost reluctance that he had at length consented. I have found him the truest and most faithful of friends and colleagues. Efforts have been made by the adversary to weaken his position in the Legislature at Ottawa, and observations have gone abroad with reference to my relations with him, which have given great pain to me. It has been said that I am desirous of withdrawing from the Local Legislature, in order to obtain a leading position in the Commons. My only desire is to go there to assist my friend Mr. Mackenzie, as his faithful supporter in the future, as I trust I have been in the past. I have no ambition to be any other thing than a private member of Parliament. I believe in party government. I am a party man, and belong to a party to which I intend to stick as long as it carries out its principles. My personal desire has always been to act in the ranks, and along with the ranks of that party, and in no other or more prominent capacity; and in that position I shall find myself if returned to the House of Commons on a future occasion; and I have told my friends that whether on the left hand or on the right hand of the Speaker, my place must be in the ranks. I have to say to you and to my countrymen generally, that of all the public men whom I have met—and I have observed, I hope, not unfairly but closely, the men of both sides—I know no man of equal diligence, of equal self-sacrifice, of greater integrity, of a nicer sense of public and private virtue, no man more sternly devoted to the cause which he in his conscience believed to be right, and more willingly and incessantly lending his ever effort to the success of that cause, than my friend Mr. Mackenzie, whom we are all proud to acknowledge as one of the most prominent public men in the Dominion of Canada, and for whose good and great qualities my own admiration has been intensified by time."

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In the fall of the same year I dealt with the general subject thus:—

"I have been subjected, like my friends, to a sort of political warfare of the most unwarranted description. I have seen by the press that Sir John Macdonald has stooped to say, 'Why, look at my Government, were ever such charges made against my Government as are made against these men?'