

case. They may have such peculiar views about political and moral ethics as to see nothing wrong in these transactions. But I am unable to agree with them, and I conceive it to be part of my duty as an independent member of Parliament, who desires the good of his country, to denounce such conduct. The whole system is subversive of the independence of Parliament. It is incompatible with a nice sense of political honor; it is calculated to control action and conciliate support by the use of corrupt methods, and it is a system that should excite alarm in the breast of every member of this House and every citizen of Canada for the future of this country. I beg to move in amendment thereto to leave out all the words after the word "that," and add the following instead thereof:—

The practice of members of the House applying for and becoming personally interested in the disposal by the Crown of those public resources, which are dealt with by the Executive, or by Parliament on its recommendation, has grown to alarming proportions, is in its nature liable to abuse, has in fact been abused, and should be checked, in order to avoid lasting injury to the public interest and to restore and maintain the independence of this House.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). Mr. Speaker, before I venture very briefly to refer to the speech which the hon. gentleman has just delivered I desire to call his attention to what seems to me to have been a breach of arrangement of which he has been guilty. I owe him the duty of saying that last week he was kind enough to intimate to me that he intended to bring up this general question to-night, and it was understood at that time that we would endeavor to get into Supply at as early an hour as possible in order that he might make his speech and that the reply might come within a reasonable hour at all events, and if possible a vote be had on the same evening. I know the hon. gentleman was engaged to-day in connection with a duty in which he takes a great deal of interest in connection with his own church, and this afternoon I received from him the following note, which I had torn up never imagining it was necessary to keep anything of that kind, but the pieces of which have been picked up since, after the manner of picking up another famous document that had some influence in public matters in olden times, and put together.

Mr. COOK. Spittoon.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). I shall deal with the hon. member for Simcoe before I get through with my speech—I promise him that. The note is to this effect:

"THURSDAY, 4th May, 1886.

"MY DEAR MR. WHITE,—I shall be unable to leave my committee this afternoon, as it would be deemed a lack of courtesy to its members, and neglect of my own duty in the premises. I hope this will make no difference to you, and that we shall be able to proceed with the matter to-morrow.

"Yours truly,
"JOHN CHARLTON."

I got that note this afternoon. A number of hon. members asked me whether this question was coming up to-day—gentlemen whose names have been mentioned by the hon. gentleman in speeches out of this House, and by another hon. gentleman in speeches out of this House—and I told them it was not. After dinner I saw the hon. gentleman again. I spoke to him about the matter. It was then agreed that this debate should come up to-morrow, and not to-day. I had left the Chamber, and was engaged in other duties when, to my astonishment, a page was sent to tell me that Mr. Charlton had commenced his arraignment of the Government.

Mr. CHARLTON. I desire to make a personal explanation. When I sent the hon. gentleman a note from Knox's Church, I did not anticipate being here this afternoon, and I considered, as a matter of course, that no opportunity would occur to go on with the question until to-morrow. There is a misunderstanding between the hon. gentleman and myself as to what passed between us after dinner. I

understood the hon. gentleman to express a preference to go on with the question to-morrow. The debate on the Home Rule matter was then in progress, and I did not anticipate myself there would be any opportunity to go into this subject, to-night; but I asked the hon. gentleman what was his preference, but I made, as I understood, no statement of my own. I should have preferred going on with the question to-morrow, but certain circumstances render it desirable that I should leave the city. My father is very ill, and I have been detained here against my will and am anxious to leave; and for that reason, believing it would make no difference to the Minister of the Interior, not knowing that the matter could go on, when a conclusion was unexpectedly reached to the debate on Home Rule, I took the floor.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). All I can say is that I have very great sympathy with the hon. gentleman in the cause which is likely to lead him to leave town. But I am very glad indeed that the matter of the arrangement as to the first part is in writing, because after I had spoken to him, and it was perfectly understood since dinner that this subject would not come up to-day, the hon. gentleman approached the leader of the Opposition and spoke to him, whether on this subject or another I cannot say, but the probability is that the leader of the Opposition told him to go on to-night. That is briefly what really occurred, notwithstanding the arrangement to which I have referred.

Mr. CHARLTON. I propose a solution of the difficulty by the hon. gentleman adjourning the House, and he can go on to-morrow.

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell). I propose to do nothing of the kind. I have no objection to going on, and I would just as readily have gone on to-night if the hon. gentleman had frankly said so when he returned, because I took the trouble to go and speak to him. The only thing I object to is that, when arrangements are made between hon. gentlemen on both sides they should be broken; the question of whether or not arrangements at all should be made is within the option of either side. In view of the fact that this is a question affecting the personal character of a number of members of this House, who had a right to some information as to when it was to be brought up, I think it was hardly fair on the part of the hon. gentleman, after having made the arrangement, that he should have gone on with the matter to-night. That is, however, a matter of no great consequence affecting the question itself. The hon. gentleman commenced his speech by referring to what he feared was the condition of public sentiment in this country. He feared very much that the public conscience was being blunted, and that the public estimate of wrong-doing was becoming lessened in consequence of the general corruption which prevailed in our public life. All I have to say to the hon. gentleman is this, that if that is the case in any way whatever, it is just such speeches as he delivered to-night that is producing that result. When the public find that the charges which are hurled against hon. gentlemen on this side have no better foundation than the mere fact that they write a letter to the Department asking for something for a friend which that friend had a right, under the law, to get, when the hon. gentleman lays it down as a sin, as a corrupt act, as something to be denounced, and in relation to which the public conscience should be roused, that such letters as he quoted to-night are offences against propriety, I do not wonder that the public conscience becomes indifferent to the charges which come from that side of the House, and that there is danger, as undoubtedly there is, of the public conscience becoming blunted in regard to even more serious matters. Sir, I recognise as much as anybody can do the importance of the public conscience in relation to the conduct of public men. I recognise as much as anyone