

on these subjects; but I think the House will bear with me while I repeat a few words that I myself addressed to my constituents two or three years ago, when these matters had become known to every hon. gentleman who paid any attention to public affairs, but before we had obtained the overwhelming proof we have to-day of the results which, as sure as night follows day, follow such practices. I quote this speech the more especially because I felt it my duty to cause copies to be sent to every member of the then Parliament, and I have had reason to observe, in the speeches subsequently delivered by many of them, that they had read though not profited by it. What I said was this, speaking at Ingersoll on the 14th November, 1889:

"I presume if there is any one thing more than another on which honest men of all parties ought to agree, it is this, that no man engaged in constructing public works should be allowed to make presents to public officials, and least of all to Ministers of State. To this I add, nor in all conscience should such a one be allowed to contribute to election funds, either while his contract is going on or while he has unsettled claims awaiting the action of the Government. Surely this is fair and reasonable, and yet four distinct times has a Bill to this effect been introduced into Parliament, and four several times has it been evaded or point-blank voted down; and that, too, in spite of the fact that on one occasion the clause to which objection was taken, namely, that forbidding contractors to subscribe for political objects, has been reported to the House by a Select Committee, of which the then Minister of Justice, Mr. Macdonald, now Chief Justice of Nova Scotia, was one, and though a clause of similar import had been recently made law in the United States. So also was another Bill, dealing expressly with the case of men making presents to Ministers, voted down, its rejection being moved, with a fine sense of the fitness of things, by Sir Hector Langevin, himself the recipient of a testimonial subscribed for by just such persons as I have mentioned above. Ministers should not take gifts. Now surely, if there is any one maxim in political ethics better established than another—if there is any one thing which ought to commend itself to every honest man of every party in Canada, it is this: that under no circumstances should a Minister of State permit himself to accept gifts, either directly or indirectly, while he continues in office. Least of all should he accept them from public servants or from men employed in carrying out contracts of any sort. Sir, the reason is most obvious. From the very nature of the case, the contractor in almost every conceivable public work is, by the expressed terms of the contract, left very much at the mercy of the Minister. That Minister can, as a rule, make his fortune or mar it. At any rate, he can almost invariably affect the contractor's profits enormously, and, if displeased, involve him in a tedious and costly litigation. Consequently the temptation to the contractor to secure the good-will of the Ministers by all means is irresistible. He is really not a free agent, not merely while he is performing his contract, but until he has been finally paid for it, and every sound political rule dictates that such a person should be debarred, under stringent penalties, from purchasing the favour of Ministers, either by subscribing to testimonials (?) or to election funds. If a man's political supporters do really desire to testify their admiration by making him a gift of money, let them wait till he is out of office, and then subscribe to their heart's content. Sir, there is not much fear of corrupt influence then, but very few and far between were the testimonials subscribed for by admirers of the present Government while they were out of office. Perhaps their supporters thought Sir Hugh Allan had done enough in that way. Sir, these are no light matters, and they have led to no light consequences."

These were the words which I addressed not merely to my constituents, but through the press to the whole people of Canada two years ago. By those words I stand, by those words I am willing to be judged, and by those words I demand that this question be adjudicated upon. I need hardly recall certain occurrences which took place in this House a year ago when I was compelled to intimate my conviction that a certain notorious individual was standing on the peak of a veritable continent of

undeveloped rascality, and that when he was expelled from this House, the ground he took was that it was very hard that he should be singled out for judgment when there were twenty others as guilty as he. This is a new Parliament, a number of new members are assembled here, to some of whom these facts may not be so well known as they are to the older members of the House, and, therefore, I propose to give these new members a chance of clearing their skirts from old scandals by referring to some former revelations and by making the motion which I am about to do. These new members have clear and strong evidence—evidence stronger than has ever been submitted to any deliberative body within my knowledge—with regard to the facts to which I refer. Let these hon. members take the chance now. They will do so if they are wise. If it is any relief to them to abuse me for what I have said, they may do that. I have been dipped too often in the political Styx to care very much what they say in regard to me, but I say, like Themistocles, "Strike, but hear me." Abuse me if you like, but pass my motion. It would be in their own interest, I think, that those hon. gentlemen should vote for this motion which I propose. If you vote against it—and you cannot amend it; you must vote yea or nay—then you vote that you approve of Ministers of the Crown receiving bribes, because that is what these gifts and testimonials amount to, you vote in favour of their having pecuniary relations with contractors or receiving gifts from contractors or officials. I do not pretend to condemn the gift which may be made to a Minister by his political admirers, but I do complain of any Minister receiving gifts from sources such as these, sources from which he cannot accept without injury to his own honour and to the public treasury. It may be well to consider how the country will regard the action of the supporters of the Government if this motion is voted down. For a long time the country has been rather apathetic in regard to matters that should have stirred the people up, but now there appears to be a spirit moving among the dry bones, and I tell the hon. gentlemen opposite that their action in regard to this matter will be very closely watched. Here you have a motion forbidding Ministers to receive contributions from contractors and persons of that kind, and I cannot conceive how any honest or honourable man can defend the practice of making such presents to Ministers of the Crown. Further, the House has to consider what is the effect of this on the outside world. Everyone knows that our conduct in this matter has attracted a great deal of unfavourable and hostile criticism, and I say that, if the result of this debate shows that the majority of the Parliament of Canada sees nothing wrong in Ministers taking bribes, not merely will our reputation, but our credit suffer in the markets of Europe, and that very seriously. If the Canadian Parliament—which I cannot and will not believe until I see the vote recorded—refuses to declare on this plain question that they consider that the taking of gifts by Ministers from those persons who are specified is improper and ought to be condemned, all I can say is that, as a Canadian, I shall regret the result and I believe that Canada will become in the eyes of the world a synonym for rascality. This vote cannot be evaded. Hon. gentlemen are bound to take one or the other alternative. They cannot