

Oxford this evening. I have said, Sir, that we thought we knew how much of truth there was in the hon. gentleman's statement; but until the hon. gentleman and his party went a few stages forward, and we found that, not only in this Province of Ontario, but everywhere else throughout this country, and even in the Maritime Provinces, of which the hon. gentleman has spoken as having been corrupted by Government influences, the money that was stolen from the treasury of a neighbouring province was used to help them in the elections; until we heard that development, and until we found men sitting in this House by means of that money, we could not suspect how much truth that hon. gentleman had uttered. The hon. gentleman has spoken of railway subsidies. When we consider that one railway company gave for his purpose as much as is alleged to have been spent in all these 25 constituencies, we can see that there was more truth than poetry in the hon. gentleman's remarks about a great mountain range of which Mr. Rykert was the visible top. Now, I have referred to the only matters that required attention in the hon. gentleman's remarks, and they did require some attention from me as a grateful tribute to the debt which I felt I owed him for the notice he took of me, and for the kind care and guardianship which he has shown for me in the past, but which I trust I have explained to him will not be a welcome attention in the future. I have only to say this, that speaking as the hon. gentleman has done with regard to being ashamed of his country, he has laid himself open to the very obvious answer that the history of the past twelve months has proved that this country is desperately ashamed of him. In the stigmatization and denunciation of his country, its institutions and his countrymen, which the hon. gentleman has used abroad without effect, and which he has used at home with desperate effect to his friends, the hon. gentleman felt that he needed some authority, and he failed to find any corroboration except himself. But, Sir, I venture to say this, that when on the 1st of July, the people of this country will meet in their various gatherings to be addressed by patriotic men, from east to west, while those who speak and those who hear will, I am sure, express, as they naturally would, the greatest desire for good government and good institutions in this country, there is not one of them who has a heart for his country but will repudiate in every breath of his patriotism, every word which the hon. gentleman has used with regard to his country to-night.

Mr. LAURIER. Mr. Speaker, if anything were wanting to vindicate the strong arraignment delivered a few moments ago against the Government of the day by the hon. member for South Oxford, it is the language we have just heard from the Minister of Justice in answer to the charges which my hon. friend has made. In answer—no; not a word did we hear in answer to the charges made by the hon. member for South Oxford; but from first to last the hon. gentleman had nothing in his mouth but personal abuse of my hon. friend. Usually cautious in his language, he stooped on this occasion from the language of parliamentary government to the invective of Billingsgate. My hon. friend beside me, I am sure, does not care to

be defended from hard language; he is accustomed to that. Time and again he has been assailed from that side of the House in a manner to which I am sure he has become callous many years ago. But there is just one word of the hon. gentleman which I care to bring to the attention of the House on this occasion; it is his statement that when my hon. friend was in office he jobbed the public treasury for party purposes. Sir, every man in this broad Dominion knows that never was a more wanton slander uttered. There is no love lost on the other side of the House for my hon. friend from South Oxford; but no man up to this moment has ever dared, in any manner whatever, to utter a single breath against his personal honour. Hon. gentlemen opposite feel so hardly against him that not one of them can forgive him for this, that he is above all things an honest man; and if they could by any means attack his honour or his honesty, man after man of them would rise and take advantage of the opportunity. But, Sir, he is proof against all these accusations; and, whatever may be said of my hon. friend, when the history of this country comes to be written, it will be written of him that, living in an age of corruption, he proved to the last an honest man. The hon. gentleman said a moment afterwards that my hon. friend had appealed to resistance. I did not so understand the language of my hon. friend; but even if he had, he would have the authority of a gentleman held in high honour on the other side of the House. He would have the authority of Lord Salisbury who, not many weeks ago, stated that on certain occasions men were free to disregard the opinion of Parliament and to take arms against the majority if the actions of the majority did not suit them, the minority. But there was not, as I said a moment ago, one word of answer in all the language of the hon. gentleman to the charges brought on this occasion by my hon. friend. The hon. gentleman resented the expression of my hon. friend when he spoke of the trial by the commission appointed to sit on the charges brought some time ago by the hon. member for West Ontario (Mr. Edgar) as being a mock trial. I have no hesitation in repeating the words of my hon. friend, and I do so advisedly. The trial, if trial it be, which is to take place before the royal commission, is to be a mock trial. Not that I want to impugn in any way the character or the reputation of the judges who are to hold this investigation; I would refuse on this occasion, as I did on a former occasion, to utter a single word against them; I will not even challenge the praise the hon. gentleman has expressed of those judges. But, as the hon. gentleman well knows, it is to be a mock trial because the charges are not only emasculated but made unrecognizable. He has again stated that he did not in any way alter the charges, that they were the same to-day as when uttered by the hon. member for West Ontario (Mr. Edgar), with the exception only that they were emphasized by the comments of the hon. members for Bothwell and South Oxford. These very words show to what extent the trial is to be a mockery. Whoever heard that charges brought by an hon. member against another were to be tried not upon the language in which they were clothed, but upon comments made by other members or by anybody else speaking on the same subject? This is not all. The hon. gentleman