

charges against Judge Hughes, of the county of Elgin, asking for an investigation into those charges. Repeated enquiries have been made up to this date, and no satisfaction has been given me by the Government. Why the Government should feel a desire to withhold this information I am at a loss at present to understand, unless they desire to shield the Judge and thereby prevent the people in that county from being freed from the injustice under which they have been labouring for a long time. It is well known, I think, to every hon. member here, that in the year 1862 there were charges preferred against Judge Hughes; that these charges were tried before a competent court, and after a long and thorough investigation was made into them he was found guilty and impeached; and I may say, that if the law had been vindicated, if the decision arrived at by that court had been carried out by the Government of the day, Judge Hughes, on account of the offence committed at that time, would have been no longer competent to hold the position which he has held from that time to the present. Now, Sir, having as I thought, a perfect right to present to this House an Address, I asked that returns might be brought down in order that I might have an opportunity early in the Session, of seeing whether those charges were of such a nature as justified the people of that county in demanding redress at the hands of the Government. I moved early, and it is now nearly the close of the Session, and yet I am without those papers; I have had no opportunity of seeing those papers, although I have asked for them so frequently as, doubtless, to weary the House. This is my last attempt, as I know full well that even if the papers were all brought down at this time of the Session, I would have no opportunity of bringing the matter up. Now, Sir, I would not, perhaps, have adopted this course had it not been for a statement made by the First Minister in, reference to this matter, when he used these words:

"THE COUNTY JUDGE OF ELGIN.

"Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Before the Notices of Motions are called, I would beg to state that the hon. member for Elgin has moved several times for papers connected with the petitions for the removal of Judge Hughes. I ascertain from the House that one of the objects of the return was to get copies of papers under the impeachment. The papers were dated as far back as 1862 and diligent search has been made in the Department of Justice and in the Secretary of State's Office, every where, but they cannot be found.

"Mr. MACKENZIE. Look in the Minister of Interior's pigeon hole.

"Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The Secretary of State has written to Toronto to try and get copies of the papers connected with that impeachment. In the *Globe* of the 18th March, it was stated that the Dominion Government has shown signs of intending to do nothing in the matter of the petition for the removal of Judge Hughes; that the petition has been returned with several small objections, the return being an insult to the people of Elgin; that Judge Hughes is a man after Sir John's own heart, who wants the matter to be allowed to drop. The small objections against the petition amounts to this: that there was a paper sent down professing to be a petition, but no signature was attached to it, and it was sent back for the purpose of getting one man at least in Elgin to sign it. It was sent back with the request, first, to get the signatures of the petitioners; secondly, to get the dates when the acts complained of were done; and thirdly and generally, for a more orderly arrangement of the ground, which spread over twenty-five years.

"Mr. WILSON. I might ask the hon. First Minister when this supposed petition was returned to Mr. Stanton.

"Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The petition was received in the Department on the 21st January, and the Address was moved on the 28th January, so the hon. gentleman had full notice that petition was coming down, and he moved immediately after he heard it was sent down. The petition was unsigned, and complained of acts happening a great many years ago. I cannot exactly tell the hon. gentleman, because I do not know; the information was not supplied to me, but I will ascertain, when the letter was written back from the Department of Justice asking that a petition might be sent, if it was to be sent."

Now, Sir, although perhaps my hon. friend might have imagined that there were no petitions—and he distinctly stated that there were none sent down, that there was merely a paper with no signatures to it, I would like to call his attention to a petition that was sent down a year ago last March and still, remains in the Department, and is in

Mr. WILSON.

the possession, I suppose, or it ought to be, of the Minister of Justice. Has he made any effort to ascertain whether that petition was there or not? Was he correctly or properly informed in reference to their being any petition or not? I hold in my hand evidence showing that that petition was sent down a year ago, with a number of signatures. He certainly should have ascertained whether that petition was lying in the Department, and he certainly ought to have made a return of the paper that was in the possession of the Government. I think, therefore, I have just cause of complaint that there was apparently a desire on the part of the Government to prevent my obtaining those returns in time to ascertain whether any action should be taken or not, and therefore the statement made by the *Globe* is to a certain extent borne out by subsequent events. It so happens that at the time the petition was prepared, it was resolved to petition not only the Dominion Government but also the Ontario Government, the petitioners not knowing definitely which Government had the right to investigate charges into the conduct of a country Judge. Two petitions were prepared; the signatures placed upon each were identical; one was to be sent to the Dominion Government and the other to the Ontario Government. The petitioners did not send the petition to the Ontario Government, and I have the document in my hand. The other one was forwarded to the Governor in Council, and is, I suppose, still in the hands of the Minister of Justice notwithstanding the First Minister's statement to the contrary. If there is any doubt as to the genuineness of that petition, any doubt as to the signatures attached to it, I can show the First Minister this petition, which is a *fac simile* of the other one, and he will find among the names a number of the leading men of St. Thomas, including several lawyers. The petitioners asked for an investigation into the charges preferred against Judge Hughes, calling the attention of the Government to the fact that that Judge had been impeached so long ago as 1862. As regards the assertion made by the First Minister, that I was notified in regard to there being a petition brought down against Judge Hughes, I may say that I had no knowledge, either directly or indirectly, until I saw the statement in the public press; that I had no communication, either directly or indirectly, with the parties who were presenting these charges. As there might be a question with respect to the petition having been sent, I will read a portion of it. This one is addressed to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Ontario, and is, as I have before said, a *fac simile* of the one sent to the Minister of Justice. The petition says:

"That David John Hughes, Esq., has been for many years past and is now Judge of the County Court of the County of Elgin, and holds other official positions which by law are entrusted to him as such County Judge.

"That many years ago a public investigation into the official conduct of the said David John Hughes was held before the Court of Impeachment at the City of Toronto, whereat the said David John Hughes was found guilty by the unanimous verdict of the said Court of Impeachment of making a personal profit out of his patronage of the appointment of a Clerk of the Division Court in St. Thomas, a verdict which makes him legally and morally incompetent to hold his present position."

Then the petition goes on to refer to other charges which it is not necessary to read. If the First Minister desires to see the petition and the names attached, I will allow him to do so. The petition is signed by William Coyne, merchant; H. Lindop, builder and contractor; Elijah Moore, J.P.; Henry H. Waddell, merchant; James Stanton, barrister; W. F. Ellis, barrister; John H. Robinson, barrister; in all, eleven or twelve leading citizens. In order to show that the Department of Justice did receive the petition, and that the First Minister was incorrect in his statement that the petition was not in the Department, I will read the following correspondence. The Deputy Minister of Justice wrote as follows, under date of 27th March, 1883:—