

Mr. CAMERON (Huron). I have a word or two to say on this question. The hon. member for Laval (Mr. Quimet) concluded his speech with an observation which I think he ought not to have made. I do not think there are contained in the petitions any allegations that the hon. member for Richelieu (Mr. Massue), his son, or his agent, were guilty of perjury. That is not the ground upon which the present petitioners invoke the interference of this House, or an investigation at the hands of Parliament. It appears to me that the position taken by the member for Quebec East (Mr. Laurier) is clear and plain; and, in my humble opinion, the propositions he made to the House have not been answered, and are, in fact, unanswerable. The President of the Council Mr. Mousseau in anticipation of, and the hon. member for Laval after the speech of the hon. member for Quebec East, take the ground that this is an election petition. That this is substantially an election petition, and being an election petition that it is not a proper subject for enquiry by this House; that the matter having been disposed of by the law courts the petitioners have no right to come to Parliament for redress. It may be admitted, for the sake of argument, that if this were an election petition in which the petitioners were claiming the seat for Mr. Barthe, that it would not be a fit subject for inquiry here, and that the petitioner having resorted to the Courts, should be tried by the highest of the Courts. But I submit that there is not a word in this petition that affects the seat of the hon. member for Richelieu. By way of introduction and recital some statements are made with respect to the petition that was presented before the Election Court, but these allegations are only there by way of introduction. The real charges of this petition are embraced in two or three clauses of it. For the purpose of showing that the rights of the seat are in no way involved, I will read the first clause bearing on that question:

"That the proceedings before the Election Court were not carried on in good faith between the petitioners and the sitting members, but that, on the contrary, the said trial was carried on loosely and in bad faith between the petitioner and the sitting member, with the object of preventing a trial of the charges of corrupt practices against the sitting member."

There is not a word there that affects the position of the case up to the time of trial. What Mr. Massue did, or what his agents did, is not alleged in that petition as a ground of complaint. The ground of complaint is that the enquiry into the conduct of Mr. Massue and his agents was stifled by collusion and fraud. The next allegation that has any bearing is in the following words:—

"That the petitioners can prove that on the day fixed upon for trial, there existed between the petitioners and the sitting member an agreement by which it had been stipulated that the petitioners should bring forward no witnesses so that the petitioners should be dismissed, and on that account no witnesses were brought forward."

Now, there is not a word there that affects the relative position of the parties up to the day fixed for the trial. The allegation is that by a corrupt agreement made between the petitioners and Mr. Massue the whole investigation was stifled. There was a mock trial, the administration of justice was impeded, and on this ground it is asked that Parliament should interfere.

"That in order that the petitioners should call no evidence to prove their petition, the sitting member had then promised to pay, and has in fact since paid, to the petitioners considerable sums of money amounting to several thousand dollars, in which sums were the cost of the petition presented against Mr. Massue, the sitting member, and the cross petition presented against Mr. Barthe, the contestant."

Now, these are the three allegations, and they are substantially these: that by a corrupt agreement between the sitting member and the petitioners, that petition was not investigated in good faith, that the sitting member agreed to pay as part consideration for not calling witnesses, not only the costs of the petition which he filed against Mr. Barthe, but the costs thrown upon Mr. Barthe by the

dismissal of the case. In the case to which the hon. member for Quebec East has referred, the allegations were strongly in favor of the position taken by the President of the Council. In the petition presented to the Imperial Parliament there were some allegations that might be considered as affecting the seat of the sitting member. There it was alleged that the sitting member was elected by what is called in Scotland "faggot votes"—bogus votes; that he got fifty bogus votes; and that the political party opposed by the petitioners in that constituency had made an attempt to manufacture more "faggot votes;" and that if the sitting member were unseated and a new election ordered, these manufactured "faggot votes" would be used. There was an allegation that directly affected the seat. The attention of the Speaker was drawn to the point that it was substantially an election petition, but the Speaker said that there being no claim to the seat it was not an election petition and therefore could be received by the House. There is another case to which I would draw your attention that has some bearing on this point. It is the case of the Rochdale election. There was a petition filed against the sitting member. The matter was under investigation as to the right of the sitting member to the seat. It was charged that an attempt was made to keep a material witness of the petitioners out of the way. It was alleged that one of the friends of the sitting member had offered a bribe of £50 to this witness to absent himself from England and go to New Orleans for the purpose of escaping from the necessity of giving evidence in this investigation. The charge was that a conspiracy had been entered into between the sitting member or his friends and the petitioners; that the witnesses that were necessary for the purpose of establishing the charge in the petition were not to be called, by collusion between the sitting member and the petitioners or the petitioners' friends, and, by collusion between the sitting member and the petitioners, and so in the case we are now discussing, it is alleged that it was agreed that in consideration of a sum of money, no witnesses should be called, and that judgment by default should be taken, dismissing the petition on the ground of there being no evidence, and the sitting member retained in his seat. In the English case a petition was presented to Parliament, complaining that a man, by the name of Johnson, had offered a bribe of £50 sterling to a witness, to induce him to leave England and go to New Orleans for the purpose of avoiding the giving of evidence in the case. A Select Committee was appointed to investigate the facts. But the motion of my hon. friend does not go that far. His proposition now is that this petition should be received by the House, so that subsequent action may be taken upon it after further consideration. That case appears to me to be clearly analogous to the one we are now discussing. If the English case was a fit subject for investigation, then surely in this case it is a fit subject for investigation, whether this alleged corrupt conspiracy between the sitting member and the petitioners did take place or not. If it did take place; if these people, by this corrupt agreement, stepped in between the respondent and justice, then surely it is a proper subject for inquiry here. If the sitting member is innocent, and if no such compact was made, he himself, ought to be the very first to court investigation. The fact that the matter has been before the Court, and that judgment has been given, is no reason why Parliament should not interfere. A precisely similar point came before the Imperial Parliament. A petition was presented to the Court of Sessions in Scotland against Sir Sidney Waterlow, on the ground that he had a contract with the Government at the time of his election. That petition was withdrawn for reasons best known to the sitting member. The electors were not satisfied, however, and at the next session of Parliament they presented a petition complaining of what had been done, and