

In addition to that, first as Minister, and now as Premier, he had invariably supported the strengthening of the ties which bound them to the dear old motherland.

And that ought to have made his person almost sacred to those patriots who wave the flag on every occasion. Well, Sir, we read again from a speech of this same gentleman at another place. But I forgot to mention, Mr. Speaker, that this opinion entertained by the hon. Secretary of State in reference to the Prime Minister's capacity and ability, was entertained as late as December 7th, 1895. Well, about a month before that, namely, on November 15th, 1895, when at Smith's Falls, he had as much faith, for the "Mail-Empire" reports him as bestowing a warm eulogy upon Sir Mackenzie Bowell:

Whose character, after seventeen years of administration of one of the greatest departments of the Government, had not shown one trace of dishonesty or incapacity. He reiterated the statements of Mr. Foster and Mr. Haggart, ridiculing the assertions that the Cabinet was disunited.

He was not even content with saying, as they said, that the Cabinet were united, but according to this report, he ridiculed the statement the Cabinet were disunited. Sir, we read how his praises were sounded, how the hon. gentleman carried the audience with him, treating as the most preposterous thing it was possible to conceive of, the accusation that in that happy family there was anything but union and brotherly love existing in its fullest and most complete sense:

When the time came, they would show their opponents, that, far from this being the case, they were united as ever they were, and they would win, not only in constituencies where they had formerly been successful, but in constituencies where victory had not previously been with them.

Well, that is a prophecy. We have not had the general elections, but we have had some since then, and the prophecy has not been very well fulfilled. Then we had the hon. Mr. Foster, no longer ago than November 15th, speaking at Smith's Falls:

After stating that, from reading Grit literature lately, he had come to the conclusion that the grand old Conservative party outside of Ottawa was disunited, demoralized and on its last legs, it was a great relief to him to know that this was not the case, at least in Smith's Falls, and to find present the remnants of the grand old party, and to feel the old-time enthusiasm, and to know that he had been simply reading a concoction of lies.

Then he went on to say:

He had another reason for being glad to be present. They had, perhaps, learned also from the Grit press that their Government at Ottawa was disunited and demoralized. Having reassured him, as they had, that the Conservative party outside of Ottawa was in good health, he was there to demonstrate to them, with his two col-

leagues that were present, and also for those that were not present, that the Liberal-Conservative Government now as of old was a Government which was united on its different lines of policy, without one shred of disunion.

"Without one shred of disunion," "united now as of old." And that gentleman, when he made that statement to the public, and whose words ought to be taken anywhere, according to the revelations made in this House, was aware of the fact, I suppose must have been aware of the fact, that one of his colleagues in that Government believed that another colleague in the Government was base enough to write anonymous letters in order to do him harm. If he did not know it, we had it told here, that one of the colleagues in that Government endeavoured to secure another colleague to lend his influence to drive some member out of the Cabinet. But, Sir, we know more than that and we know it from the lips of the Prime Minister of this country whom, though they have charged with incapacity, they have not yet ventured to charge with uttering falsehoods. And what did he say? In his speech delivered in the Senate, commenting on a paragraph of the statement that was read in this House by the Finance Minister, the Premier said:

I shall not comment upon that statement.

That is, that they were loyal to him:

I could, however, characterize it in other language than that in which the sentence is couched, and more than that, with no less degree of truth. Then, they stated that they waited upon me repeatedly in order to insist upon the Government being strengthened in its personnel. That is quite true. But is there a single word in any of those sentences which would lead you or might lead others, after what has been whispered about the country, to conclude that it was the head of the Government they were striking at, instead of the other members of the Government.

This united family:

It is true, they waited upon me and pointed out the necessity of strengthening the Government, as all governments ought to be strengthened, and according to my own views, I should acquiesce in any proposition of that kind, and there were intimations at those interviews pointing to certain members of the Government who, in their opinion, ought to go out.

Yet these hon. gentlemen stated in the face of thousands of Canadians that all was harmony, peace and union in their ranks. The Premier continued:

Certainly they never meant themselves, because from their statement one would suppose that all the wisdom was concentrated in their craniums. But there were others of whom they had not such exalted opinions; had they intimated to me that I was one of them, I should have made way for them, but I heard nothing of that until two days after Parliament had met. I make these explanations in order that I may show the nature of their anxiety for the strengthening of the Government.