

I believe that the hon. gentleman had no right to touch on that question. That suit is sub judice and he had no right to bring it up here. But, it was for the purpose of getting at my hon. friend from North Toronto and other hon. gentlemen who have the honour of occupying seats on this side of the House that the hon. member for Yale-Cariboo brought up the subject. I know a great deal more about the hon. gentlemen who compose that company and who are interested in that suit probably than the hon. member for Yale-Cariboo does, and I want to say that there exists to-day the very best of feeling between the hon. gentlemen who are connected with that suit. It is simply a friendly suit. There is some little dissatisfaction in respect of some commission that is to be paid. I am exceedingly sorry that any hon. gentleman should introduce such a matter into a debate of this kind in which we of the opposition are interested in getting at the bottom of one of the most iniquitous contracts that was ever entered into. We not only heard from the hon. member for Yale-Cariboo—but we had the distinguished honour of listening to an hon. member from Quebec. I may say that I have a very great regard and a very high respect for the hon. gentleman who discussed this question here the night before last but it was the greatest comedy that I think I ever saw. The other hon. gentleman did make some attempt to discuss the question but the hon. gentleman to whom I am going to refer in a minute never alluded to the question under discussion. I do not think he ever mentioned the name of the company to which this amendment refers. He went far afield to attack the hon. member for North Toronto because he was interested in some mining companies and some land companies. I think that any hon. member in this House, whether he sits on the right or left of Mr. Speaker, has a perfect right to invest his own capital in mines or lands or anything else. I challenge that hon. gentleman as a responsible member of this House to point to one act that my hon. friend from North Toronto has done in the public life of Canada, and the search light of the people has been upon my hon. friend for the last twenty-four years, which is in the slightest degree derogatory to his position as a member of this House. I say there is no hon. member who can point his finger at one act which in any way reflects upon my hon. friend and yet these hon. gentlemen will throw out innuendoes and insinuations that are unworthy of those who do that sort of thing.

I will, with your permission, Mr. Speaker, endeavour to show you what the committee learned during the examination by my hon. friend from Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk) of the ex-deputy Minister of the Interior. What did we find? We found that in 1899 a contract was entered into between the gov-

ernment and a company known as the North Atlantic Trading Company. I submit that the questions asked of that witness by my hon. friend were perfectly fair and legitimate and that they should not have been answered in the manner in which they were answered. I must say before I deal with the evidence—and I intend to deal with it in a few minutes—that it ill became the hon. gentleman who had the distinguished honour of being selected to fill the position of Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture—I do not see him in the House—to so far forget himself as to give the decision that he did give when he was asked for his decision by the members of the committee, or by my hon. friend who was examining that witness, Mr. Smart. The decision of the Chairman of the Committee was that the witness need not answer the question, and as there are many members of this House who are not members of this committee let me point out what that question was—

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order.

Mr. SPROULE. The report of the committee is before the House.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. My hon. friend (Mr. Gunn) is a new member of the House and I do not wish to interrupt his speech but I submit to the ruling of Mr. Speaker, that the hon. gentleman has no right to refer to what took place before the committee on a question which is still before the committee.

Mr. URIAH WILSON. At the first meeting of that committee a motion was proposed by the Minister of Agriculture, that when the evidence of any witness was concluded it should be forthwith reported to the House, and Mr. Smart's evidence has been reported to the House.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. But the case is still pending.

Mr. SPEAKER. If, as I understand it, the case is still pending before the committee of Agriculture, no reference can be made to it in the House.

Mr. URIAH WILSON. But that evidence has been reported to the House.

Mr. SPEAKER. My ruling was asked and I gave it under the facts which have been presented to me; it cannot be further discussed.

Mr. GUNN. I accept your ruling Sir. As the right hon. gentleman has said, I am a new member of the House and I am sorry if I have not kept within the rules. But, Sir, I presume I will be allowed to say what I saw reported in the newspapers.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Hear, hear.