

of that Prime Minister; not one of them will do more damage to the government or impress the country more forcibly than when it goes abroad that when an hon. and learned gentleman (Mr. Borden) wishes to pursue an inquiry that was not completed last year, an inquiry that showed there was a corpus delicti of the gravest sort, the right hon. gentleman should get up and say: My dignity won't allow it. Dignity! What place has dignity in that connection? What is he doing? He is shielding rascals from exposure. That is all very fine for dignity. I do not like to use the comparison that rises to my mind when I hear these lip professions of dignity, and then whispering to the rascals behind: Never fear, I will shield you; I will throw around you the weight of my high position; I will—

Mr. CHARLTON. I rise to a point of order. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Davin) is imputing conduct to the leader of the government in the highest degree dishonourable. He is asserting that the leader of the government tells his followers in the rear that he will protect them in their rascality.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Not at all.

Mr. CHARLTON. I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that such is not parliamentary language.

Mr. DAVIN. Mr. Speaker, everybody knows what I was referring to. I was referring to these rascals that were exposed before a committee of which I am a member. I was referring to rascals that hon. and learned gentlemen in this House did everything they could to shield, doing everything they could to prevent that inquiry from being effective. And what did they do at last? Although we had nine witnesses there ready to be examined, they went back without being examined, because those gentlemen opposite would not sit of an evening. The hon. and learned member from Halifax (Mr. Russell), a strong lawyer from whom I would have expected something better, he threw all his ingenuity, and the hon. member for Kingston (Mr. Britton) threw all his pettifoggery in the way of anything like an inquiry.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES (Sir Louis Davies). Order. I ask you if it is parliamentary, Mr. Speaker, to accuse an hon. member of this House, a learned gentleman at the bar, of being guilty of pettifoggery. I appeal to you, Sir, is that parliamentary?

Mr. SPEAKER. My impression is that it is not parliamentary to apply the term pettifoggery to the action of a committee of this House.

The MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES. It was applied to one member of that committee.

Mr. DAVIN. Well, I can withdraw it. He threw all what in him is not pettifoggery, and that is not a great deal. Now, Sir, there was another gentleman in the history of England, Chesterfield. He was the pink of politeness, but he had not a character that we would think a great deal of. Then we come to Beau Brummel, and then to George IV., the finest gentleman in Europe. But we need not go to Thackeray's Four Georges to apprehend how much real respect he was entitled to at our hands, and after all, Mr. Speaker, when we are to judge the character of public men, that they can bow gracefully is not enough; we want from them such demeanour going to the root of action as will enable us to respect them. I agree with my hon. friend from Norfolk (Mr. Charlton) that this House has fallen within the last four years, and it has fallen because my right hon. friend, who is, I admit, in so many ways a charming man, has not weight enough to keep his followers behind him in order. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Charlton) accused the hon. member from York (Mr. Foster) of having said he would block the business of the House. The ex-Finance Minister (Mr. Foster) said nothing of the kind. He (Mr. Foster) said that if the Prime Minister would allow his followers to weigh down the Order paper with questions such as have disfigured it from day to day, and which, as my hon. friend says, has disgraced it; then the ex-Finance Minister said that two could play at that game. If, Sir, the opposition wishes to resort to that sort of warfare, it would be an extraordinary thing if we could not bring something more like powder and shot than these poor wretched volleys of soap suds that have come there in the shape of questions from day to day. And if we have to resort to it, it will not be soap suds we will send across the House, but we will send dum, dum bullets that will explode in the bosoms of hon. gentlemen opposite and we will expose the mean heart that lurks beneath the star.

Mr. WOOD. That is more Boer like.

Mr. DAVIN. I love the hon. member for Hamilton (Mr. Wood) under all conditions, except when he tries to be witty, and then he loses for me that perennial interest and that abiding beauty that are his chief characteristics.

Mr. WOOD. There are two of us.

Mr. DAVIN. Now, Mr. Speaker, I must say with all respect that I have had myself a great deal of parliamentary experience. I am now getting to be one of the old members of this House. I occupied a more elevated, and, I was going to say—but I will not say it, out of respect to my brethren of the hour—I was going to say the more dignified position of a seat in the reporters' gallery in the House of Commons in England. I say that the man who sits in the