

LETTERS

ON

English Parliamentary Precedents

AS AFFECTING THE

CANADIAN PACIFIC SCANDAL.

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POLITICAL OR PARLIAMENTARY VERDICTS.

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"The Court of Star Chamber became a Court of State, not a Court of Law. By an extension of its jurisdiction it, *for a time*, superseded the exercise of the more legal proceedings of Parliament against similar offences, and which would otherwise have become the object of Parliamentary prosecution."—*Halsell's Precedents of the House of Commons*, Vol. IV., p. 73.

SIR,

Every historical incident bearing upon the constitutional question involved in the Pacific Scandal enquiry, is instructive to all who are conservative of constitutional practice, or students of Parliamentary Law; and in that view, few will read the references I give in this letter without feeling how aptly they apply to the present position of affairs.

The statesmen of the reign of William III. cannot be charged with unfaithfulness to the constitutional rights of the people, or to the privileges of Parliament. Their views then—expressed after the contests between the