

was the same gallant knight who, to-day, has addressed this House. We know he took the most conspicuous part on that occasion, and here, for the second time in the history of Canada, we find that hon. gentleman has again allied himself with letter stealers with the view of driving me from Parliament. It is a very singular circumstance, but we have the fact before us. I have the right to know, when standing here accused and making my defence before my peers in Parliament, who are my accusers? I have the right to know what reputation, as public men, those men have, who are standing here as my accusers; I have the right, before the verdict of this Parliament is passed, to point out that the witnesses who are brought against me are not credible. The hon. gentleman, I am glad to know, has very little sympathy among his own friends in his present course, because I know that members on the other side have expressed their abhorrence of this motion. Every person who knows the political history of Canada for the last thirty years, knows well that I have been made a target by hon. gentlemen opposite, because I have had the courage of my convictions, because I have dared to stand up, in Parliament and out of Parliament, in season and out of season, to defend the acts and the administration of the Conservative party. This is only one of a series of attacks made during the last thirty years. The County of Lincoln bears evidence of the fact that hon. gentlemen opposite, during the past twenty-five or thirty years, have done their best to drive me from public life; but I can say, with regard to my constituency, what the hon. gentleman who attacks me cannot say of any constituency that he has ever represented, that I have represented the County of Lincoln for the past quarter of a century, in spite of all his efforts, while the hon. gentleman has been driven from pillar to post, rejected by every constituency, until at last he was dropped into a hive of Grits in South Oxford. Hon. gentlemen opposite have fought me in the County of Lincoln, and I enjoy the proud distinction of having had two protests against me at the same time, both of which I defeated. It does seem to me that the slander which the hon. gentleman has cast upon the County of Lincoln is not deserved. That constituency, which is not inferior in intelligence to any other in this Province, has, year after year, elected me to Parliament. In spite of what the hon. gentleman and his friends could do, for over a quarter of a century I have represented the people; and they must lack that order of intelligence which they are supposed to have to allow a member so corrupt and dishonest, as the hon. gentleman says I am, to represent them so long, and to return me year after year by acclamation. It was given out at the last elections by these hon. gentlemen, that I was to be driven out of Lincoln; and they came down, twenty-seven of them, headed by the hon. gentleman, bent on destroying me in my county. The hon. gentleman came to Beamsville and made a tremendous speech, in which he talked of thieving and bribery, and all that sort of thing, and he arraigned me on the very question we have before us to-day. He charged me with robbing the country of \$200,000 and with robbing a poor old Dutchman of \$200,000, and when some man asked him how it was I could rob the country and

the Dutchman both, the hon. gentleman was somewhat abashed and could not answer. He could not understand that argument at all. On that occasion, he took the opportunity of informing the electors that I had no right to be elected because I supported this rascally Government. He talked at great length on the blind share scandal, in reference to which the hon. the Minister of Customs came in for a lashing at his hands. I defended the Minister of Customs on every platform in the county. But even if there was a charge made against me, there was no foundation in fact for it. He charged the hon. the Minister of Public Works with having received presents from contractors. He charged the late John Henry Pope, formerly Minister of Railways, with having put in his pocket \$166,000. He charged the Government with all kinds of rascality, and then turned round and asked the people how they dared to submit to such a state of things; and for the first time in the County of Lincoln, I had a majority at the place in which the hon. gentleman spoke of 96 votes in my favor, although on every previous occasion I had had a majority there against me. That shows the people thought very little of what the hon. gentleman said. That hon. gentleman and his friends, headed by the notorious Preston, scattered broadcast all over the county this same literature. We saw them going from pillar to post with these same documents charging me with rascality in every shape and form. They called on the people to rise in their might and drive me from Parliament, because, they said, I had violated the Independence of Parliament Act, and had forfeited my position as a member of Parliament; and yet the people declared they did not believe in his word. They charged me with having robbed different persons, and yet the people declared that they did not believe one word of the story. A person who was standing in the crowd asked: Who was that gentleman, who it was, who was roaring and bellowing? And when the people were told that he was the man who had wrecked the Commercial Bank, and had wrecked the Mackenzie Administration, they stood aghast, and said: This is not the man we want; and the result was I had ninety-six majority in a place where in all other elections the majority had always been against me. I have a right to know who are my accusers, and if they are not men who have a record which cannot be attacked, they have no right to come here and attack me in the manner the hon. gentleman has done. If the hon. gentleman had been desirous of treating me fairly, he would have taken up the matter more temperately; and I am perfectly justified in asking what kind of a special record the hon. gentleman has? The hon. gentleman has accused me of treachery and rascality of every description, but I recollect when he was accused of treachery by his own organ and of voting money for his own pocket. He has been accused over and over again of other corrupt practices, all of which I shall take the opportunity of enumerating, perhaps, before Parliament closes. At any rate, I know this much, that the hon. gentleman stood convicted before the people as being one of the most corrupt men who ever sat upon the floor of Parliament.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Oh, oh.

Mr. RYKERT. Of course the hon. gentleman does not coincide with that, but the records of the