

administration of public affairs in the Province of Ontario, know that, for a period antecedent to the general election, the system of the sale of timber licenses was one which altogether forbade its being used as an instrument of corruption, for the sale of these licenses was well known to be by auction to the highest bidder. There was no alienation except on these terms, and the statement is so unwarranted that its recklessness will be patent to every person acquainted with the affairs of the Province.

But if it were true that the hon. gentleman had used corrupt means to defeat hon. gentlemen; if it were true that the Opposition candidates in Ontario used corrupt means to defeat him, I do trust and hope that this House will not so far degrade itself, will not so far fall below its high duty, as to aver that the offenses of others was an excuse for the omission of this great crime. (*Cheers.*)

Sir, his business was to fight the battle by fair means. He had his candidates presumably as wealthy as those of the Opposition; he had his private and personal friends presumably as numerous as those of the Opposition; he had the legitimate influence and patronage of the Government, the effect of which he has told this House, when he has more than once talked of the enormous influence and patronage of a Local Government, and if the Government can add to all these enormous advantages, which belong to it over the other side, the price of public contracts, then we may as well at once give up what will have become the farce of representative Government. It would be more economical to give the gentlemen in power a perpetual lease of it than to go through the ceremony of recording votes which have been purchased.

The hon. gentlemen has said that this is to be vindicated by reference to transactions which have taken place in England. I wonder what they will say in England when they hear the defence of the hon. gentleman. The hon. gentleman has told us that because in former times, when the country was just emerging to a certain extent at any rate from corrupt influences from the old borough mongering times, when able men—pure, wise, honest, and honourable men, according to the standard of public morality which at that time prevailed, thought it not indecent to buy a borough, the hon. gentleman, referring to these times, he told us that because a Secretary of the Treasury received subscriptions from political friends—not, Sir, from public contractors, (*hear, hear*),—not as a condition of public benefits to be handed over to individuals, he compares a Secretary of the Treasury to the First Minister of England; and because a Secretary of the Treasury received some subscriptions from political friends to help in the elections, he says the First Minister of England would have received the price of a contract from a public contractor. There is no comparison between the two cases, nor am I disposed to compare the state of public morality of that day with the state of public morality at this day.

I rather look to the wholesome doctrine enunciated in the Churchward case, nor can many of the gentlemen opposite, who may yet propose to defend this act, resist the proposition that if this contract had not been relinquished they would have felt bound to vote for its cancellation. I believe a large majority would have felt driven to do that, and yet I defy those who would have voted for the

cancellation of the contract to show a ground upon which they would have so voted, which does not also form a ground for the condemnation of the Ministers who signed the contract. (*Cheers.*)

The hon. gentleman adverted to English transactions. If he has to advert to English opinion, let him look at the tone of the English House. I am not one of those who are disposed to bow down and worship English or other outside opinion, whether it be the opinion of law officers or newspapers, but no man can deny that upon given facts the great bulk of the press of a country will give you fair indications of what the average nation is to the political morality or to a particular transaction in that country.

There can be no doubt whatever that you can have no better test of how this transaction would be looked at in England, apart from party views altogether, or party views swaying the English press in favour of Ministers, than by looking at the tone of the press. Yet that tone is one of most universal reprobation. Abandoning all idea of the contract, looking merely at the relation between Ministers and Sir Hugh Allan, the tone is one of universal reprobation, and therefore we had a pretty good guide as to what English opinion is; and since the hon. gentleman is pleased to refer to English transactions as his justification, I point him to English opinion.

All these transactions were done, the hon. gentleman tells us, for what purpose? For that purpose for which his Government has maintained itself in power—to preserve the connection between the mother country and Canada—necessitated and united these Acts.

On what is the connection based? It is based on mutual affection, which cannot exist without mutual respect. (*Hear, hear.*) So soon as we find ourselves confessing that we belong to a lower scale in the rank of nations; so soon as we find ourselves publicly acknowledging that a different code of political morality must exist here from that which exists in England; so long as we pronounce ourselves unable to be measured by the same standard of political purity which is there administered, I say, Sir, the moment that we shall make that confession, if unhappily for our country we should be determined to make it, that moment one of the greatest ties for the connection is destroyed. (*Cheers.*) That moment we are not politically upon an equal footing with those of our fellow subjects who inhabit the British Isles.

They have the control of an insignificant portion of our affairs; if you are to add to the political inferiority a personal inferiority, and if you are yourselves to mark that personal inferiority; if you are to tell us that that may be done in Canada which would make our heads hang down with shame in England; then I would like to know upon what basis we can hope for a connection which rests upon mutual affection long subsisting? If we become objects of contempt, we shall soon be cast away; if we lose our self-respect and the respect of England, how can we hope to attain that which the hon. gentlemen opposite do not seek to aspire to, but which I confess I do aspire—is the possession of the full measure of a Briton? How can we claim that if we endorse the action of the gentleman opposite? How can we, with those doctrines of Government, with those notions of political morality—how can we