

extracts from public documents, I am sure the hon. gentleman would at least have given us a few moments notice of his intention to do so, in order that we might have ascertained what it was in our speeches that he was likely to complain of, and have furnished to the House the evidence to sustain our charges, if we were in a position to sustain them, and at any rate, that we might have had documents here to compare the extracts which the hon. gentleman read to the House with the original reports themselves; because the essence of this whole discussion is a charge against the hon. gentleman of having misquoted on a former occasion. When he came to discuss the charge of having misquoted from public documents before this House on this Indian question, if he desired to have a careful examination of that charge and a careful criticism of it by members of this House, he would have made it impossible to charge him now with being guilty of misquoting, by giving us some notice so that we might have had the documents here. The hon. gentleman has carefully refrained from pursuing that course, and it is most significant that he has done so when we consider more especially the history of this discussion from the beginning. Now, it was, as the hon. gentleman says, on the 15th of April, 1886, that he brought these sixty charges against the administration of Indian Affairs, to the notice of this House. The Indian Department was at that time under the management of the Right Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald, and the charge was made, as this attack has been made this afternoon, without one moment's notice being given to us; it was made in a carefully-prepared speech, supplied with a multitude of so-called extracts from public documents, not giving a moment's notice to any member of the House that such charges were to be made, or that such extracts were to be read, and at a time when the First Minister, who was in charge of that department, was lying prostrate with severe illness at his home in Earncliffe. On the 15th April, 1886, that matter was brought to the notice of this House, in an elaborate speech, and with a motion on going into Supply. He was answered as well as he could be on the spot, by persons who had little knowledge of the details of the subject, and went to a vote of the House. But the hon. gentleman is entirely mistaken in his recollection of what took place in the same session, for, no doubt contrary to his anticipation, the Right Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald recovered from that illness in time to be present in the House before the session closed, and to review and deny the accuracy of every one of the charges which the hon. gentleman had made. The hon. gentleman was under the impression when he spoke this afternoon, that Ministers were dumb, that Ministers had no answer to make to these charges; and that the session closed six weeks afterwards, without any one venturing to dispute the correctness of what he had said, and that we sought the platform in his absence and behind his back—an expression which he used a number of times—for the purpose of attacking him, and making what was not a genuine answer to his complaint. But the House did not close within six weeks from that time without an answer having been made, for I find that on the 2nd June, in the same year, Sir John A. Macdonald, being in his place, referred to all these charges in a long address, a portion of which I will read to the House:

Sir JOHN THOMPSON.

"I do not know that I would have gained much information by it, because the speech was an elaborately prepared one, in which the hon. member went into a number of details which could not be answered on the spot. So soon as I was aware of the speech made by the hon. gentleman I obtained a copy of it and transmitted it to the North-West. I asked for a report not only as regards the Indians, but in regard to all the matters referred to, and I gave instructions that every charge should be brought up, every statement should be examined into and verified or refuted. In order to do that a great extent of the country had to be traversed. Each charge consisted in a distinct allegation of wrong-doing, a sin of omission or commission. The evidence to meet each charge had to be collected and investigated. Only within the last two or three days I have received additional evidence. I had intended, if my strength had allowed me, to have gone into the whole question, but it would have taken a much longer time to have read the evidence in rebuttal than it occupied to make the charges, and the House would not have listened to me. The speech of the hon. member has been published under the auspices of hon. gentlemen and widely distributed. I shall take care that the answer shall be distributed equally widely. I will let the country see from the evidence that, from the beginning to the end, the speech of the hon. gentleman is characterized by the same want of accuracy as has characterized all the speeches and attacks on everybody and everything made by the hon. gentleman in the House this session. I shall be able to show that to the satisfaction of the country."

The hon. gentleman complains of being spoken of behind his back. I have shown the House that the hon. gentleman's whole attack on this subject was made behind the back of the Minister who had charge of that matter, and who was not able to be in the House in consequence of severe illness, until some weeks afterwards. But when the election campaign came on and his county was invaded by some of the Ministers, of whom I was one, the hon. gentleman complains again that we spoke of him behind his back. I can only say, that from the time when I went into his constituency until I came out of it, I never heard an intimation that he desired to be present at any meeting we should address except once, and on that occasion Sir John A. Macdonald stated, that if Mr. Cameron desired to come and address any meeting at which we were to be present, he should be allowed by all means to do so. The hon. gentleman, therefore, cannot impute any blame to us if the hon. gentleman desired to be heard and was not heard. But I presume, inasmuch as our stay in that constituency was only a stay of a few hours and the election campaign was then on, that hon. gentleman had abundant opportunity to discuss this question after we left. His constituents had read our speeches. We were but casual visitors there, we were wayfarers, and he was a resident of the county; the people knew him perfectly well, and with our statements before them, he had an opportunity of making the most complete refutation which it was in his power to make, and I presume he made it, and I also presume the people decided the question in 1887 after hearing everything the hon. gentleman had to urge. If the result was not satisfactory to him it was by no means our fault. Now, Mr. Speaker, I will call attention again, when the hon. gentleman complains of what we said behind his back, to the fact that, returning to this House at the present session, evidently smarting under the imputations which were contained in our speeches, the hon. gentleman had an opportunity for four weeks of discussing this question in the presence of the venerable statesman who was in charge of that department when the grievances alleged were supposed to have occurred. The hon. gentleman again, with the discretion which he evinced