

public money of this country, while he was a member of this House, for which he returned no services; and in another instance of having taken \$400 of public money while he was managing director of that paper and a member of this House, for which he returned no services. Of course the committee has not reported yet, but I think when the evidence is brought down the hon. gentleman will perhaps change his tune. Now, Mr. Scott is not here to answer for himself, and it is easy for the hon. gentleman to make statements of that kind; but, Mr. Scott is known in Regina and all through the North-west Territories, and I venture to say that his word will be taken any time as against the word of the member for Western Assiniboia. He tells us about having been fifteen years in this House and having had the confidence of the leaders of the Conservative party. Why, it is within the memory of all of us that on a certain occasion he came down here and told the members of the Conservative government that they were men without brains, that they were antiques. Now he speaks about Mr. Walter Scott as if this gentleman was a very ordinary kind of a man, and not to be believed. As far as I understand this transaction, which the hon. gentleman has gone into, I think if there is any person with a grievance, it is Mr. Scott. He said that he agreed, at a certain time, that he would sell this paper to Mr. Scott, and that Mr. Scott was to support the Conservative party, and to support himself. He says that Mr. Scott did not do that. I understand that Mr. Scott bought the paper for a certain sum of money, and that when the time came to hand over the paper, the hon. gentleman refused to carry out his contract with Scott, and insisted on mulcting him another \$1,000. Now the hon. gentleman gets up and says that Mr. Scott refused to carry out his contract, and he gives us the language that Mr. Scott used in his paper in regard to himself. But, he seems to have taken a different ground more especially on November 9, of last year. I submit that it would be better to defer this discussion until the papers are before the House, and then we can have a general discussion of the question.

Mr. DAVIN. The hon. gentleman wants to know why I did not notice that letter of Mr. Scott. There are four good reasons. In the first place, Mr. Scott had put it beyond his power by any slander or calumny to injure me. In the next place, I am well known in the North-west Territories; people know my character, and I can laugh at attacks of that sort. In the third place, these very statements that are made there were retracted by Mr. Scott, and in the fourth place—

Mr. DAVIS. Were they retracted after he published that letter? That is a fair question, and I want an answer to it.

Mr. DAVIN. Mr. Chairman, will you keep that gentleman in order? There is another reason. These statements are a rehash of statements that were made, and for which I brought an action of criminal libel against Mr. Scott. He fenced off for more than a year, and I could not get him down to trial. He used every chicane of the law, and when we were going to get to the trial he withdrew it all. How could a man injure me or any one by making statements that he had withdrawn, and said there was no truth in? He could not injure me. No matter what any man might say against me in this country now, I would never bring an action for libel against him because I consider that action is as good as dead the way the law of criminal libel is at present. For more than twelve months I tried to get that case before the jury, and for more than twelve months Mr. Scott fenced it off through his lawyer. For these four reasons, why should I bother myself about the letter? This hon. gentleman seems to think I should not have taken Mr. Scott's unwritten word. But I may say, in regard to a solemn contract, a contract made in writing, for which he got a most substantial consideration, that he, before twelve months had passed, in the face of a great battle, when he thought it would be fatal to me, having pledged himself to support me and the Conservative party, turned around and left me in the lurch. I do not know whether that is the conduct of a man whose word is very good, and I am not dealing with that. I did not know that when I made an arrangement with Mr. Scott. He had been during part of his apprenticeship in the office of which I was the managing director, and I had a high opinion of him. He himself had spoken of my unfailing kindness to him, and nothing had occurred up to the early summer of 1896, that would lead me to think that Mr. Scott was not a man with whom it would not be safe to make a verbal contract. I made a contract with him; all the circumstances show that I made a contract, and he does not deny it. However, I am not going into that. As the hon. gentleman (Mr. Davis) says, we will have that later. But I think it is desirable that we should have the facts. The hon. gentleman says, that with statements like that, when a libel is uttered against a member of the House in a newspaper, another member is justified in moving what is a county court matter into the Public Accounts Committee. I do not think that would commend itself to the right hon. leader of the House (Sir Wilfrid Laurier). I do not think it would even commend itself to the Prime Minister to say that it would be a right thing that anything like even the view of the facts that the hon. member for Saskatchewan presents should be moved into the Privileges and Elections Committee, but to move it into the Public Accounts Committee is monstrous.