

House of Commons, in which an amendment to an amendment to a motion to go into Committee of Supply, was ruled to be out of order.

Hon. Mr. FRASER pointed out that a similar amendment to an amendment to go into Committee of Supply was received by that House last session. He thought they should follow the rulings of their own House rather than those of the House of Commons.

Mr. SPEAKER, after referring to the rulings of various Speakers in the House of Commons in England and of Canadian Speakers, said there was no doubt that the well established practice in this country was that an amendment to an amendment to a motion to go into Committee of Supply was irregular, and notwithstanding his belief that this practice was the result of misapprehension, he did not feel able to take upon himself the responsibility of overturning the practice which had been so well settled. He must, therefore, decide the amendment to the amendment out of order.

Mr. D'ARCY BOULTON said he could not give a silent vote on these motions. They involved a principle on which he desired to make a few observations. He was satisfied that the practice inaugurated by the hon. Commissioner of Public Works was one that would be condemned by the country. He was assured that the hon. gentleman would not have allowed the men to go to the nomination unless he was satisfied they were politically favourable to the Government, and he thought no such interference should take place with the freedom of election. The hon. gentleman had come across a paper in which he found that the Gladstone Government had committed an act of corruption in England, and that was offered as a precedent for the commission of a corrupt act in Canada. He condemned the Commissioner of Public Works for allowing Mr. Dickey to take possession of the men and lead them to the hustings to interrupt the Opposition party, and said there was no ostensible purpose for allowing those men to go to the nomination, except that of shouting for the Government candidates, and groaning down the Opposition candidates. The hon. Commissioner of Public Works had no more right to pay those men \$200 for their time than he had to put his hand in the public treasury, and abstract a similar sum for any other purpose. It was necessary to put a stop to corruption at its first appearance, or it might go on to an alarming and indefinite extent. He did not desire to drive the hon. member from public life, and if there was anything which would induce him to vote against the amendment it would be the fear of this result. He trusted that the honourable gentleman would not be driven from public life, but at the same time he did not think he should be whitewashed even on account of the services he had rendered to the country and his party. He regarded the action of the Commissioner of Public Works to be as corrupt, although on a smaller scale, as the sale of the Pacific Railway Charter, and he thought it wastime the Legislature should say such acts were improper, and ought not to be done. He would support the amendment of his hon. friend for East Toronto.

Mr. PRINCE desired to see the logical sequence of the observations of the hon. gentleman who had just taken his seat, but he could not. He contended that it was reasonable to give public servants a holiday without deducting the time, and thought the charge was of a most ridiculous and contemptible character.

Mr. O'DONOGHUE did not see from the evidence, so far as it related to the Commissioner of Public Works, that he had been guilty of the charges laid at his door; and he thought that the Government should be generous to their men in this respect, and accord to their men an opportunity of exercising their franchise free and untrammelled.

Mr. SEXTON said it was plain from the remarks that had fallen from one hon. gentleman that this resolution was a stab in the dark at the whole Government. After referring to the circumstances of the charge, he said there was no evidence that any influence had been exercised with regard to the way these men should vote. If a wrong had been committed they should look at the motive which prompted that action, and it was patent that no corrupt influence was used. He denied that there had been any interference with the freedom of election in this matter. The strongest term he could apply to the consent given to those men to attend the nomination was that it was an indiscretion. He thought it was absurd to compare the charge before the House to the Pacific Railway charge. The

question really before the House was whether the act was one on the ground of which they should withdraw their confidence from the Government. He for one did not feel inclined to withdraw his confidence from the Government on the charge, and would therefore vote against the amendment.

Mr. CUMBERLAND said he could not but feel that the impugning of the character of a Crown Minister was one which could not be treated with flippancy. The Government had erected a fine standard of public morality, upon which he supposed they would stand or fall. He would not have hesitated in giving his vote if the hon. gentleman had merely given the men liberty to vote, but to give liberty to attend a nomination was, in his opinion, a doubtful thing, and he thought the Commissioner erred in judgment when he gave them liberty to leave their work in order to be present at the nomination. For this reason he approached the vote with considerable reluctance.

Mr. ROBINSON said that in his constituency he had seen Government officials of the late Government working for six or eight days in the elections, and during that time their wages were not stopped. If the hon. Commissioner of Public Works had been possessed of the sophistry peculiar to many of the lawyers on the other side of the House, he would not have had the amount charged to the working-men, but to Colonization Roads. (Hear, hear.) Then there would not have been a word of complaint about it. He did not consider that the evidence warranted the charges, and said he would vote against the amendment.

Mr. DALY said that the reference the member for Stormont had made to what he called the Grand Trunk Frauds was a very unfortunate one, as the Government of the day in which these occurred was the Hincks-Rolph-Cameron Government—a Reform Administration—and one about whom it was claimed there was not a taint of corruption, though if the Press of the other party was to be believed there never was so corrupt a Government. He held that the House had the best possible evidence that the gentlemen who occupy the Treasury benches had been as extravagant as men could possibly be.

If it were only the few hundred dollars that were lost to the country through giving the Central Prison workmen half a day to go to the nomination the House could have overlooked it, but they had reason to believe that thousands, and tens of thousands perhaps, had been expended by the Government in worse ways than this. If the House condoned this offence they would establish a precedent under which millions of dollars of the people's money might be spent in the same way. With respect to the reference to the men of the Woolwich Arsenal being allowed by the Gladstone Government to have a portion of a day in order that they might take part in the election, he said that it might be true that these men, having been allowed to go away from their work that day, did not come back again, but they were given the time to go and record their votes, not as in the case of the Central Prison workmen, to attend a nomination, and, if he was correctly informed, to disturb those speakers who held views different from those of hon. gentlemen opposite. It had been contended by gentlemen belonging to the party of the Government that there should be no connection between this House and the House of Commons, and if this principle was correct, why had it not been acted upon in the first election to which this debate referred? How was it the Government had not found it convenient to give these workmen a half holiday at the last election as well as at the first? It was because they knew they had done wrong in the first, and had established a precedent which they believed to have been a dangerous one. He held that the working-men of this city were so independent that they could afford to go and record their votes without requiring to be paid for the time it took them to do it. As he had said, it was not the trifling sum lost in paying the Central Prison workmen for their time that was complained of, although to give them that was wrong, but it was a fact that nine-tenths of them voted for the candidate who was the friend of gentlemen opposite, and it was the bringing to bear on them an undue influence in order that they might do this that those on that side of the House objected to. Gentlemen opposite had seen fit to bring up the Foote job. What were the facts with regard to it, but that the Reform Administration paid the account after having put the country to the expense of enquiry into it, and he believed they afterwards had such transactions with Mr. Foote as had been condemned by them. Everything that had been done wrong in this case had condoned by the leader of the party of gentlemen opposite.