

charges were being investigated. Some of the members of the Opposition could not have fully realized the gravity of the charges under consideration, and what they involved in regard to the honor, and even the safety, of the gentleman accused. He did not wish to give any opinion as to the character of the member for Manitoulin. He knew nothing of it. He had, however, the strongest possible feelings in regard to a man who would endeavor to entrap another to commit a crime. He did not assume the charges were proved. The Government supporters would accept the innocence of the Minister accused until he was proven guilty. The question of patronage as involved in this matter was not one to involve the Ministers referred to in the charges. The question of patronage was a proper one for discussion in the House, and the hon. members opposite were welcome to make what they could out of the statement of the Commissioner of Public Works (Mr. Latchford). The charges against the Provincial Secretary, however, were of a more serious nature. The Government had absolute confidence that he would meet the charges in a dignified way. He immediately denied the charges, and the proposed Royal Commission was in accord with the better part of public opinion. The Government, in taking this position, was not adopting any new policy. He had not been impressed any more by the quotations given from former leaders of the Liberal party than by those of the Conservative party.

#### Some Precedents.

In 1884 Sir Oliver Mowat decided that in case of charges affecting the honor of members of the House, the charges should be submitted to a judicial commission. So the action of the Government to-day was no new step. Mr. Blake, in addressing John Macdonald regarding his refusal to sit on the Pacific scandal commission, said that he did not think it consistent with his self-respect to sit upon a commission appointed by a gentleman who had made such references as he (Sir John Macdonald) had made concerning him. It was quite wrong, therefore, for the members of the Opposition to state that Mr. Blake refused because he preferred a committee to a commission. In 1899 Sir Wilfrid Laurier adopted the same opinion as Sir Oliver Mowat. Sir Charles Tupper at the same time held the same views. Hon. George E. Foster, speaking of the same case, said that the commission filled the bill exactly, and was infinitely preferable to a committee of the House. Sir Louis Davies and others could be quoted to the same effect.

The Opposition contended that they were giving away the rights and privileges of the House. He replied that they were not doing so; they were merely delegating their own powers to another body—two Judges, who would report to them, and the matter would then be before the House to take whatever action they liked.

#### Wanted a Roving Commission.

The Opposition objected to putting charges in writing because they might be called upon to prove them. (Applause.) The Opposition wanted a committee to deal with the matter, so that they could bring all sorts of rumors and charges which would not need to be proved. What they wanted was not a Royal Commission, but a roving commission. (Hear, hear.) Among the sensational and remarkable incident in this case, Mr. Pattullo asserted, was the disappearance of the papers in the case.

Col. Matheson—They'll turn up.

Mr. Pattullo—I hope they will. (Applause.)

Col. Matheson—Are you afraid they'll be burned?

Mr. Pattullo—No, I am not afraid of that. But I am afraid as to the documents remaining intact. We have no guarantee that those documents will not be added to or taken from. Would the guarantee of their author be sufficient? I think not. Among those documents, Mr. Pattullo said, were the

notes of three stenographers from Gore Bay. He was not aware that stenographers grew on the trees at Gore Bay, and he doubted the ability of any stenographers to take notes in the dark behind piano boxes. They would like to know whether those notes would be revised before they appeared before the commission. (Hear, hear.)

#### History Recalled.

Mr. F. G. Macdiarmid (West Elgin) thought it necessary in order to assert the liberties of the people that Parliament should take its place as supreme authority in this matter. Whenever a man took a position on the commission he became the creature of the Executive. That was not safe when the matters involved affected the existence of the Government. Mr. Macdiarmid referred at length to some of the West Elgin incidents, and stated that it was the policy of the Commissioner of Public Works to insist upon support of the Government in order to obtain patronage, a statement which Mr. Latchford promptly denied. He believed that the money of the country belonged to the people of the country, and should not be paid out only on the condition of supporting the party in power. (Ministerial applause.)

Dr. H. G. Lackner (North Waterloo) made a speech of some length, during which he enlarged upon his views of the doings of the Liberals in North Waterloo. In conclusion he spoke for a few minutes of the commission, affirming that the Government were afraid to have their case come before a committee of the House, though for what reason he could not understand, when, as they knew, they would have