

to investigate the matter before the Public Accounts Committee, he said, but that had not been permitted by the majority, and deferred to their opinion that the House was the proper place to lay his charges. "I did not want to bring the matter up here, but wanted the committee to deal fully with the questions involved, but, feeling that I had no other recourse, and feeling that the matter is one which, in my opinion, should be dealt with, I desire to discuss it here.

"Therefore, sir, recognizing the responsibility of my position, recognizing the graveness of the charges which I am about to place before the House, but do so with very great reluctance, and only because I deem it in the public interest and in the interest of the Province that the matter should be dealt with, that I take this course."

With this brief introduction Mr. Proudfoot proceeded to read the formal charge. There were only two interruptions, and these by Sir James Whitney. The first was when he made the statement that all the matters had been laid before the Prime Minister regarding the granting of the fiat.

"Absolutely false," commented Sir James.

And again when the charge read that Sir James Pliny Whitney had "illegally, corruptly and improperly" caused the issue of the fiat.

Here Sir James repeated "Absolutely false."

Sir James' Bitter Denial.

As Sir James Whitney rose to reply to the charge a burst of applause came from the Conservative benches which was continued for some minutes and finally broke out in loud cheers. The Premier asked first that the charge of Mr. Proudfoot be placed in the custody of the Clerk of the House. "Of course this is an important matter," the Premier went on. "One often finds in this world, one meets some good people, and one meets abandoned wretches of the worst type, without all sense of decency, fair play and self-respect."

This was merely a soliloquy, commented Sir James, addressed to those who might be listening.

"The House has the statement of the hon. gentleman, Mr. Proudfoot. He expected the House to believe that I acted corruptly with reference to the issuing of a fiat. Did he mention that there is not another hon. gentleman in this House or there is not another man who knows me in the Province of Ontario who would risk such a statement? (Loud applause.)

"The hon. gentleman, after considerable cogitation, has finally taken the plunge, and now this matter will be followed to its end." (Cheers.)

Investigation by Committee.

Sir James referred to his statement on Monday, with regard to the proceedings of the Public Accounts Committee, that of any hon. gentleman had a charge to make the Government would afford ample investigation before a select committee or the Committee on Privileges and Elections. "I shall carry out that promise." (Hear, hear.)

Sir James referred to the statement made by Sir George Ross (then Premier) at the time the Gamey charges were made, on March 12, 1903, that the matter would be referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections. "That is the position which naturally he took, being an old Parliamentarian. That is exactly the position I took, unconsciously, in what I said the day before yesterday."

Continuing, Sir James said with reference to the charge: "He (Mr. Proudfoot) will have the time, having taken the grave responsibility of declaring that he believes the charge—of which I do not believe he has a shadow of proof—made against a man in my position, and my colleague here. He has taken that responsibility and he will go through with it." (Applause.)

Wary of the absence of a direct denial being misconstrued, Sir James declared "there is not one atom of truth in these charges. (Loud Con-

servative applause.) They are worthy of the low and ignoble mind of the man who has put them out before the public."

"Is that Parliamentary language?" asked Dr. McQueen, and Mr. Rowell rose to ask the Speaker if such expressions would be permitted.

Did Not Refer to Mr. Proudfoot.

Sir James explained that he had not used the remark with reference to Mr. Proudfoot. "They were worthy of the low and ignoble mind of the man who originated them"—(hear, hear)—adding, "I think my hon. friend (Mr. Rowell) is pretty nearly of the same opinion."

Sir James then moved his amendment that the charges preferred by Mr. Proudfoot be referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections, with full power to investigate and examine witnesses and documents, and the committee might sit during any adjournment of the House while the charges were before it.

Hanna Welcomes Inquiry.

The applause which greeted Sir James when he rose to speak was equalled only by the ovation accorded Hon. Mr. Hanna when he proceeded to make a statement. It was some minutes before the Provincial Secretary could get a hearing. "Mr. Speaker," he began, in dispassionate tones, "I rise to assure this House and this Province that I do not for one moment shirk investigation under the rules of this House. On the contrary, I welcome it. When those who are making these charges to-day are through with what they have to say I shall make full answer without qualification or reservation. When I am through there will not be one act of mine that will reflect in any way on my honor or integrity, or on the conduct of my department, or on my public life in this Province; and this I will be content to leave to the judgment of every fair-minded man in this Province."

Calls it Blackmail.

Continuing, Mr. Hanna declared the charges were "blackmail," that he had been subjected to for upwards of a year and a half, but he knew what the hon. gentlemen who made the charges did not know. "That is the fact," he asserted, "and, sir, let me say, and I say it in order that it may not go out to-morrow that I have sat silent in this House when any charge was made against me personally or against me in my public career in this Province of Ontario, that I did not at that time say one word. One week ago if anyone had said to me that there was a charge against me personally or against my conduct in my department I would have stood up in this House and said to the members of the Opposition, 'Select your own committee, name your own Chairman from your own followers in this House,' and I would have gone into the investigation feeling that there was not one man there who would have done me an injustice in these matters. But I want to say what has happened to-night and what has happened in the Public Accounts Committee, what has happened in the way of innuendo has entirely altered me in that particular.

"So far as Taylor, Scott & Co. are concerned, all that could in any way, shape or form be used against me on a public platform or off it was included in the statement of Sir James Whitney on the floor of this House on Monday. (Applause.) I want to say more: I want to say that in so far as the coal tenders and the underfeed stokers are concerned, every suggestion, every innuendo is absolutely false, is entirely without foundation.

"I will say more later on, but in the meantime I wish to make this statement to-night to the House," said Hon. Mr. Hanna in conclusion.

Mr. Rowell Asks Special Commission.

Mr. Rowell followed. "I submit, Mr. Speaker," he began, "that having regard to the position of this important matter and in the interest of all parties concerned it would be better that the matter should be dealt with by a commission of two Judges of the Supreme Court." (Cries of No! no!) The Liberal leader pointed out that the Judges would be appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor upon the recom-