

THE WEST YORK LIBERALS

ADDRESS BY MR. EDWARD BLAKE AT RICHMOND HILL.

Review of the Promises and Practices of the Present Administration—The Liberal Attitude Towards the Traffic—Speeches by Messrs. Ross and Hartly.

A large and influential gathering of the electors of West York took place near the railway station of Richmond Hill yesterday, to hear addresses from the Liberal leader, Mr. Blake, and other prominent politicians. The audience was an unusually intelligent and appreciative one, being composed, for the most part, of the leading farmers of the riding, and their reception of Mr. Blake and his friends was hearty in the extreme. A considerable number of ladies graced the occasion with their presence.

Mr. W. A. Wallace presided, and among those present, in addition to the speakers, were Wm. Eakin, warden of West York; James Lawrence, secretary of West York; Reform Association; Dr. W. H. Wood, M.P.; W. H. Baglow, M.P.P.; Peter Patterson, M.P.P.; Dr. McCullum, J. C. Stokes, reeve of King; Benj. Reason, reeve of Markham; Chas. Irwin, G. B. Smith, Hugh Miller, Wm. Robinson, John W. Hamilton, John Parkdale, L. C. Arturs, Geo. Scott, D. H. Allen, Joseph Tait, W. H. Wood, John Aronson, J. P. Isaac, Towell, J. P. Tins, Russell (North York Reformers), R. C. Johnson (Markham Reformers), J. D. Edgar, Wm. Malow, Mr. Bell, L. A. J. ...

Mr. Geo. W. Jones, M. P. for West York, presided, and the first speaker, Mr. Wallace, dealt with the financial position of the province, showing that, with the exception of about \$100,000, the whole of our public debt of \$150,000,000 was due to the government entered into by Sir John Macdonald's government from 1867 to 1873; that our present public debt amounted to a heavy sum of \$85 on every penny in Canada, and a mortgage of \$500 on every farm of a hundred acres in the Dominion; that whereas the Mackenzie government had proposed the cost of our civil service, the present government had increased both the number of civil servants and their salaries, and that the travelling expenses of ministers was during the five years of Mr. Macdonald's administration, than it was during the first year of the present government. When Mr. Blake was required to go to England on public business, the journey cost the province \$700, when Sir John Macdonald went his trip cost us \$2524. Sir Richard Cartwright floated a loan in England, by expending \$500,000 travelling expenses, to do the same work Sir Leonard Tilley required \$2141. The speaker illustrated the effect of the N. F. by a couple of weeks of a religious meeting a colored gentleman went to take up a collection in his hat, and started with ten cents. After he had collected it all he looked into his hat, and said, "There ain't one cent in this congregation, and ten cents I started with in mine." The other story of the politician who picked a man in an unconscious state out of the gutter and ran him in. At the station the politician asked, "Did you do anything to renegeate him?" "Oh yes," replied the politician, "I searched his pockets, and he was full of bills of what the N. F. had done for the people. It had not realized the glowing promises made of it before the election, and in the operation there was an unprecedented disposition on the part of the people to leave the country. Mr. Blake, on rising to reply, was heartily cheered. He ventured to hope that the verdict of 1878 would be reversed, as it had been obtained by protestantism which had been broken, promises which had not been performed. What were the promises and professions made to the people in 1873? He quoted from a pre-election speech of Sir Leonard Tilley to the effect that there was no intention to increase the taxes, but to reduce them. That pledge, he declared, had been broken. Although Sir Leonard Tilley before the election stated that \$18,000,000 were all that were necessary for the public service, he had taken \$24,000,000 from customs and excise. By increasing the more than they said was necessary, they had obtained a surplus. It required no statesmanship to increase the people's taxes, and to propose a budget in that way. If the surplus came from some other source there would be reason for satisfaction, but because of a tax on the people, it was an infamous thing. As long as there was money in the public chest, that would be an excuse for spending it. It was not merely of the increased rate of taxation, but also of the incidence of the taxation. This tariff, in its distribution, was unequal, and it was a violation of the principle of justice. He thought the taxes should be imposed as near as possible in such a way that the taxpayer should contribute in proportion to his capacity to pay; but if there was to be discrimination, it should be in favor of the poor man. The present government had acted on the very opposite rule. He cited several articles to show that on goods consumed by the poorer classes the government had imposed much heavier taxes than on goods consumed by the richer classes. This tariff was not only a help, but a positive hindrance to the school of political economy, condemned taxes on raw materials. The cost of production was increased, and the consumer paid a more than proportionate price for the article. The taxes had also been greatly and unnecessarily increased on the prime necessities of life, and to-day they stood in need of further readjustment. He did not believe Conservatives were sincere when they said that a change of administration means the ruin of manufacturers. It did not mean it. We knew that the government were rendering it more necessary from year to year that we should endeavor to raise a very large revenue, and we knew that our revenue must be raised largely from taxation on articles capable of being manufactured in the country, and therefore there would be a very large measure of restriction. But instead of protective tariffing up to 50 and 60 per cent, what we complained of, and what we wanted, was to give the people more freedom than they now have. He had nothing to say against manufacturers. The interests of all classes in this country were united, but the young men of the country, the great productive classes—the agriculturists, the lumbermen, the fishermen—were made as prosperous as possible, and so they would be able to contribute more than otherwise. And how were they to be made as prosperous? He was glad to know that their government was honestly, equitably, and frugally managed, and that their liberties were restricted as little as the fiscal necessities of the country re-

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