

I never heard or supposed that Mr. Sifton had carried or was carrying on the proceedings on his own account or advancing money.

54. I do not remember that as Attorney General of Ontario or Minister of Justice I ever gave my private note or accepted a private draft to raise funds for a criminal prosecution. Mr. Sifton appears to have been more public-spirited in the matter than I ever had occasion to be. Certainly we all thought the frauds were exceptionally extensive and dangerous to the public.

55. I do not produce an arrangement in writing referred to in this question.

56. I do not know that there are any letters or correspondence respecting these prosecutions which, or copies of which, are not on the official files.

57. I did not personally while Minister of Justice tax any bills of costs that I remember, and I cannot state anything as to fees taxed by the department of from \$100 to \$45 a day for similar work to that in question. Mr. Newcombe, who has had to do with such matters for several years, can tell as to fees of from \$100 to \$45 a day being allowed, if there were any such.

58. I think that where a great crime has been committed or is believed to have been committed in respect of Dominion elections in the province of Ontario or any other part of Canada, and the public interest requires its investigation and prosecution on the part of the Dominion, it would be proper for the Dominion to undertake such proceedings and prosecutions, having regard to all the circumstances. It would seem to me unpardonable that in such a case the criminals should escape exposure and punishment unless the provinces should undertake the expense. Every case should be determined on its own circumstances on the responsibility of the government having the confidence of parliament. There is great difficulty in presenting an election case in such a way as to compel a verdict, and exceptional efforts must be made to ascertain the facts and procure evidence of them.

I am aware of the constitutional rule and a minister's oath of office in regard to matters passing in Council, forbidding the communication of these except to other members of the Council, but I am informed by the Premier, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, that he has the authority of His Excellency the Governor General to have everything made public with regard to all these matters, thus enabling ministers to answer all questions in regard to the said proceedings.

O. MOWAT.

July 14th, 1899.

*(To correct an error made in the evidence of Mr. Gisborne.)*

OTTAWA, 25th July, 1899.

D. C. FRASER, Q.C., M.P.,

Chairman Public Accounts Committee,  
House of Commons.

SIR,—Upon referring to the report of my evidence given before the Public Accounts Committee on 28th June last, a printed copy of which I have just seen, I notice at the end of my evidence the following questions and answers:—

*“By Mr. Powell:*

“Q. I suppose Mr. Osler is only engaged in connection with large matters—important matters?—A. I have never known him engaged except in large matters.

“Q. He was never engaged in small matters, as in Manitoba, as to whether men received a couple of dollars for their vote?—A. I do not think so.”

The last answer does not correctly state what I said.

My reply actually was: “I do not think that is a fair question.”

I knew nothing of the Manitoba prosecutions referred to, except as disclosed in the evidence given before the Public Accounts Committee; it being no part of my duty to deal in any way with Manitoba legal accounts.

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

FRANCIS H. GISBORNE.