

Mr. Whitney at Toronto

A largely attended meeting of the Liberal-Conservative Association of Ontario was held in Toronto, Sept. 2nd and 3rd, 1901, and on the evening of the closing day of the meeting Mr. Whitney addressed the meeting in Victoria Hall on the public questions of the day. He said:—

"Mr. Chairman and gentlemen—This being a gathering of picked men, so to speak, from all sections of the province, we may well confer together upon the political situation and endeavor to show to the people at large what our position is, and this is one that should be endorsed by the people. What I propose to do is to take up the history, very briefly, of the Liberal-Conservative party in relation to provincial politics, to bring it up to date as well as I can in my feeble way, and along with it the record and history of the Ontario Government in relation to ourselves as an Opposition. I propose to show the reasons why, in my opinion and in the opinion, I believe, of the majority of the people of this country, the position of the Liberal-Conservative party to-day is one, as contrasted with that of their opponents, which will conduce to the benefit of the people of the Province of Ontario, and which will be accepted by them as soon as they have an opportunity to signify their acceptance or refusal of it. (Applause.)

STATEMENT OF POLICY.

We hear a great deal about statements of policy. Our opponents, of course, claim that the Conservatives have no policy, utterly oblivious to the fact, well known to every adult person in the Province of Ontario, that whatever policy they have that has good in it has been filched from the provincial Conservative party. (Applause.) They are so very anxious to hear what our policy may be that they fall into the opposite extreme of contending we have none at all. But to-night, as I am speaking, and to-morrow, as the report of my speech is circulated, all over the province the supporters of the Government will be listening with mouths wide open to take up and treasure even the droppings of the Conservative policy.

I shall endeavor to bring up the record of the Conservative party to date, to define our position, and show why it should be endorsed by the people of the Province of Ontario. I say there is enough in the present policy of the Conservative party to justify the people in endorsing it, so much so that I am prepared to go to the people of the province and I tell now, the Government of Ontario, that we of the Opposition in the Legislature are ready for the issue of the writs to the people next week if they dare, and we invite the verdict of the people, and if we have no policy the people will not endorse us. (Applause.)

DATE OF THE ELECTIONS.

From time to time we are bound to listen to the addresses, public and private, of the Ministers, and their utterances on the subject of the election are to the effect that we will have no election until next June. I am prepared