

OTTAWA LETTER.

Parliament Helpless in Regard to Yukon Expenditure.

McCain of Carleton, Purdy of St. John and Lt. Gov. McClellan Make a Good Thing in Hay.

Reforming the Civil Service—Regulating the Size of Apple Barrels—The Standard Dozen of Eggs Shall Weigh One Pound and a Half.

OTTAWA, June 18.—Yesterday's discussion was of larger interest to the city of Ottawa than to other parts of Canada, for Ottawa has a larger civil service population than any other city in the Dominion. Mr. Fielding is restoring the third class clerk whom Mr. Foster discontinued. He calls the new officer a junior second class, which, however, does not distinguish him from the old third class, except in name. Mr. Foster's idea was that the work in the department should be sharply divided into two classes, all the technical work and all requiring initiative or the exercise of discretion and responsibility, should be assigned to men and women receiving the pay allowed a second class clerk. All the other work which was purely clerical he assigned to a writing class whose pay would not be higher than \$600. The old third class, whose pay ran from \$500 to \$1,000, would, according to Mr. Foster's plan, gradually disappear as no more appointments would be made to it. The necessity for this action arose from the fact that by the statutory increase, third class clerks who were perhaps mere copiers and writers, gradually worked up until they had salaries of \$1,000, or nearly equal to that paid to men and women of considerable responsibility.

Mr. Fielding and his colleagues take a different view. They base their objections on the ground that there is a large gap between the writing class and the second class clerks, and that it is too much of a jump to raise a clerk from the pay of a writer at \$500 or \$600 to that of a clerk at \$1,100. Mr. Fielding therefore proposes to restore the intermediate class, with salaries from \$500 or \$600 up to \$1,000. Mr. Foster says that the result of this will be the crowding of service again with clerks receiving for purely clerical work double the price at which such work can be bought. He still insists that the English system of retaining a writing class is the logical and proper one, and that those clerks who do not aspire to anything higher than that class of work should be content with the pay that any business firm would allow for it. As for those who are ambitious and capable, the work as a writer furnishes a good training, and a person so qualified has a right to receive good pay when advanced to a position of responsibility.

There is some reason in Mr. Fielding's claim that an advancement from \$600 to \$1,100 is too sudden a rise. But one cannot understand why this difficulty could not be met by reducing the minimum of a second class clerkship from \$1,100 to say \$750. However, we shall have the new class, and these who come into it will be in the fight every year for increases of salary, and the civil service expenditure will accordingly go up.

Parliament seems to be perfectly helpless in regard to Yukon expenditure. Hundreds of thousands are collected in that district and paid out there under the authority of an autocratic local administration. The government at Dawson is not responsible to the people in the district. The residents elect nobody, they do not see the accounts; they have nothing to do with the raising of money by liquor permits or licenses or other taxes whereby a local revenue is produced. The council of the Yukon attends to all. This council is appointed by the government here, but the government here knows nothing of the administration. In the public accounts committee the other day it was shown that payments of some half a million dollars were made in that district and no human being in Ottawa had the slightest control over them. The accounts are returned to the auditor general after they are paid, but the department of the interior, which was supposed to control the Yukon, seems to have no authority either over the collection of the district revenues or their disbursements in the territory. The collection of royalty and the customs duties is, of course, under the authority of officers here, as is the federal expenditure for the Mounted Police and partly in public works. For the rest there is a government which seems to be responsible to nobody, whose expenditures are subject to no vote, and which seems to have no check whatever on its way of doing business.

Even that part of the business which is under the control of the minister of the interior is at present unchecked by parliament and practically beyond the reach of parliamentary investigation. Mr. Sifton gathered in authority from all sources. The premier handed over to him the control of the Mounted Police in the district. He seems to have absorbed from Sir Louis Davies part of his functions, and from Mr. Tarte part of his. It is well known that it was he who made Mr. Blair's contract with Mackenzie and Mann, under which the contractors are now claiming a third of a million dollars,

because parliament declined to ratify the bargain. Well, Mr. Sifton is away. Mr. Sutherland can only say in answer to questions, that though he is acting minister now, he has not been acting and has had no responsibility and no knowledge of what has been done. Col. McGregor, a horse trader, who was sent up in the Yukon by Mr. Sifton as inspector of mines, and who is now inspector of licenses, was here a few weeks ago. He knew, and the minister knew that he was wanted by the public accounts committee to give evidence. He hurried off to the Yukon notwithstanding, and more likely in consequence of that demand, and the minister sent despatches after him with such accidental accuracy that they reached various points just after Col. McGregor left there. So there is a branch of revenue amounting to over \$100,000, which Col. McGregor has under his control, and nobody can find out a word about it.

In truth, it is pretty hard to get much light on anything from this ministry. Mr. Hale has been struggling for three months to find out what hay was bought in New Brunswick for the imperial government by the department of agriculture, and from whom it was purchased and at what price. Mr. Fisher began by stating that it was an imperial matter and the information was not available. Yet the accounts and vouchers were in his own department and are there yet, though Mr. Hale cannot get them, two months after his motion was made. Perhaps it is not convenient to have the country people who raised the hay and sold it to the men who sold it to Prof. Robertson know all the facts. Prof. Robertson was supposed to buy the hay for the home government at the lowest price, but it would appear that he was compelled to buy from certain friends of the government, who arranged an intermediate profit out of the arrangement. It may be of interest, however, to the farmers who sold the hay in the first instance to Mr. McCain, or Mr. Purdy, or other dealers, to know that the government paid \$9 per ton at local points. Mr. McCain seems to have sold at the station in Carleton county some 6,000 or 7,000 dollars worth of hay at that price. Mr. Purdy of St. John turned his over at the same figure. Lieut. Governor McClellan seems to have obtained the same prices for 200 tons of hay delivered in Albert county. Who the other persons are with whom the department of agriculture dealt may be ascertained if the papers can be got.

Sir Henry Joly has succeeded in detailing his weights and measures bill to the longer in committee. The apple barrel for export will now contain 96 quarts, or three bushels, which is a good deal less than the barrel which has been used in Nova Scotia heretofore, and which will be the same as the New Brunswick barrel. The barrel of apples for the domestic trade is not affected by the bill as it now stands. But then Sir Henry Joly has still another chance to get back at it. No barrel is safe until the bill gets out of his reach.

Mr. McMillan has succeeded in getting his egg clause adopted in such a way that it may apply to stock exported. He tried to provide that eggs should always be sold by weight and that a dozen should weigh a pound and a half. As the clause stands amended, it provides that when eggs are described as sold by the standard dozen, a dozen shall mean one pound and a half. The farmer and the dealer need not be alarmed over this, however, because they can resist the temptation to describe the eggs as sold by the standard dozen.

OTTAWA, June 11.—It is now four days since the episode of the address to the Queen, and it is still an important topic of conversation. Mr. Bourassa is not a great issue personally, but his remarkable speech has made something of an issue out of the conduct of more prominent men than he. One notices in some of the government papers all sorts of apologies for the premier, three of his ministers and several supporters who refused to join in the cheers for her majesty or the singing of God Save the Queen, but sat silent and sulky in their seats during the demonstration. It is remembered now that Mr. Campbell of Kent, who had just got his railway charter through by the help of the government, not only kept his seat, but kept his hat on, as did one or two other members. The Toronto Star is the one paper in Canada which I have seen that ventures to say that the premier and the finance minister rose during any part of the demonstration. Some say that the premier did not rise at all, and that is the testimony of his

own organ. It struck me that he partially rose at the beginning and then sat down. The finance minister, however, took his seat before the cheers were given. If one wants to know how the thing appeared from the point of view of a Laurier organ in his own province, the account given by Mr. Tarte's La Patrie will meet the bill. Here is the story:

"Rarely has parliament given a spectacle so palpitating and emotional as that of which we were witness yesterday." So begins the report which follows Sir Wilfrid's speech, passed Sir Charles Tupper with a word, and then goes on:

"The member for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa) raised a frightful storm when he said that the war in South Africa would not augment by an ounce the glory of England. There was a shout of opposition side a veritable explosion. Sir Charles Tupper, Clarke Wallace, Mr. Prior and Mr. Montague bounded from their seats with fury and shouted 'shame, shame, shame.' This description is not strictly accurate in regard to Sir Charles Tupper who sat perfectly still and uttered only one exclamation of dissent. But the story goes on:

"Mr. Foster, above all, lost control of himself. He became in a few moments successively green, red, white and yellow. His eyes sprang from his head and with his hands he nervously clenched. He shouted each second 'shame, shame, shame on him! Shame on you!' Others cried 'put him out,' 'put him out,' and for many minutes he placed his hands on the desks such a tumult that Mr. Bourassa had great trouble in continuing his speech. A little later, when the member for Labelle denounced Chamberlain as the author of the war, and said that the conflict was occasioned by the secretary of the colonies, a new outburst of ferocious indignation at the words of the opposition. Mr. Bourassa was hissed, hooted, derided, and, judging by the threatening attitude with which many members on the left showed at the moment, it would not have been prudent for the member for Labelle to place himself within reach of their fists. Their anger became purely and simply delirious, and Mr. Bourassa would surely have come out much the worse from the chamber if he had been within reach of their blows.

"Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who remained calm through this in the midst of this most violent storm, restored by a few words the assembly to calmness. After the last remark of the first minister, the chamber resumed its habitual calm and the address was voted."

This is a sort of introductory to the report and is followed by these comments:

"Mr. Bourassa perhaps might have chosen a more opportune moment to voice his opinion on what he called an unjust and unbecoming war. When he thought it right to speak he had a right to do so as he pleased. We are in a free country, where British institutions guarantee to all citizens a right to think and speak as seems good. The Tory party holds its narrow and intolerant attitude against Mr. Bourassa yesterday the right to speak. The British institutions accord to all subjects the right to say what they think, and only people like the Wallaces, the Priors, the Posters, and the Tarts, deny the existence of that right."

Turning to another part of the paper we have still another account of the demonstration. There La Patrie says:

"Mr. Charlton had risen to reply to the member for Labelle and had commenced his speech, when Mr. Montague arose, interrupting him violently, and declaring that the best response to give to Mr. Bourassa's discourse would be three vigorous cheers for her majesty.

"With these words he jumped upon his seat, swung his hat with fury, and his movement was followed by all the opposition, who shouted the hurrahs proposed by Montague. Mr. Foster was so excited that he sent his hat spinning towards the ceiling. There was a veritable delirium, an indescribable fury, on the part of the opposition. A large number of the English ministerial members joined in the demonstration, which closed with singing God Save the Queen."

All this was clearly against the rules. Mr. Montague had no right to get up when Mr. Charlton had begun to speak. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, to maintain a decorum of the chamber, and to bring the members back to their senses, raised his voice and called for order. Mr. Fisher, Mr. Carro and some other government supporters during the whole time of the hysterical hurrahs of Montague and Foster and the singing of 'God Save the Queen.'

This account seems to be sufficiently graphic, and perhaps shows the feeling of the premier and his Quebec followers. But when it says that Sir Wilfrid called the house back to its habitual calm, it overlooks the fact that the speech of Sir Wilfrid Laurier was not made until after Mr. Charlton had delivered a rather long address, the effect of which was exceedingly pacifying. Mr. Charlton is not the kind of man to keep the house in a state of intense excitement or even to allow it to remain so. It may be remarked that there were not so many people in the chamber when the premier rose as there were when Mr. Charlton began his speech.

Again it can hardly be said that Sir Wilfrid Laurier kept his seat as a protest against the interruption of Mr. Charlton's address. The speaker had not recognized Mr. Charlton, and he was not on his feet before Dr. Montague. In fact the doctor called for order, and the speaker, Mr. Carro, raised himself down. Moreover, Sir Wilfrid Laurier himself interrupted another member. For Mr. Casey rose immediately after Mr. Charlton closed and the premier interrupted him with the suggestion that the address had been passed without further discussion, except such discourse as the premier himself went on to make. As to the decorum of the chamber, it is not forgotten that the whole government party interrupted the proceedings to

sing 'God Save the Queen' after Mr. Fielding had delivered his budget speech of 1897, in which he made the erroneous statement that a preference was given to England by the tariff of that year. It turned out afterwards that twenty other countries all foreign had the same preference. Again the proceedings were interrupted to sing 'God Save the Queen' this very session after the adoption of Dr. Russell's motion commending the Fielding tariff. On both occasions the conservatives rose to their feet to the last man.

It seems to be quite in accord with the view of the premier and the finance minister that a demonstration of this kind shall be used to make capital for Mr. Fielding. It is another story where the demonstration comes as an opportunity to tribute to her majesty and the empire and to cry out a protest against a disloyal speech from the government side. Then Mr. Fielding and his leader become solemnly impressed with the necessity of maintaining decorum, and perpetrate the scenes of renegade assiduity and silent when cheers are called for her majesty, and when the house sings 'God Save the Queen.' Many supporters of the government have been surprised and annoyed at this incident.

It will be seen that La Patrie attributes the demonstration entirely to the Tory fanatics, especially to the Wallaces, the Posters and the Montagues. It may be interesting to reprint from the same paper an editorial occasioned by a speech delivered in Toronto last week by Mr. Bergeron. Mr. Bergeron is a French Canadian member of first-class ability, who is already very well known in New Brunswick, though perhaps less familiar in Nova Scotia. He is thoroughly loyal to the empire and is not afraid to say so to a French audience. He has been called a coward, and a traitor to his race, by the government organs in Montreal, because he refused to denounce Sir Charles Tupper last October, when the opposition leader was demanding the offer of a corps to Africa, and when the premier was making the ministers from Quebec and the Ontario Tories do their best to stir up a race feeling against Mr. Bergeron, and so defeat him in Beauharnois, where he committed the crime of being Mr. Tarte's in the general elections. They represent that Bergeron is popular with the Orangemen and the Tories, and that he is also among the best people in Quebec. But this is what La Patrie has to say about him in its editorial columns:

"Mr. Clarke Wallace, Mr. Bergeron and some other Tories of the same order spoke together Wednesday at the foot of the monument of Sir John A. Macdonald at Toronto.

"Mr. Bergeron loves to show himself in company with Mr. Wallace, hoping thus to make himself popular with the fanatics. He succeeded, for the Mail and Empire published on Thursday a very complimentary article about the speaker for Beauharnois. So that poor Bergeron, who is only a second class in this province an inferior man, without authority, without intelligence or culture, and without worth, has been raised to the level of Sir Wilfrid Laurier."

The Mail and Empire is a fanatical journal, an enemy of our race and our province. One remembers yet with what effrontery and what mischief it flung outrage against the French-Canadians on the affair of the contingent. It is the same sheet which today places Mr. Bergeron on a pedestal.

"The Mail and Empire thinks that it serves its cause in praising a nullity like Mr. Bergeron and depreciating the merits, the political genius and the high qualities of soul of Mr. Laurier, but the difference between the two men is too crushing for the English journal to efface it by dithyrambs of the Mail and Empire about Mr. Bergeron."

OTTAWA, June 12.—"If we only could be sure of him," was the remark in this letter the other day after Sir Wilfrid Laurier made his solemn promise about the commission. There was a general feeling of uncertainty at the time whether the premier would not find some way of escape before the investigation came to an end, or even to a beginning.

Yesterday it was found that the hedging had already begun. All the suggestions made by Sir Charles Tupper for the purpose of giving greater precision and larger powers to the commission are rejected. The government has not adopted the imperial act or Mr. Blake's act to give the witnesses absolute immunity. This program has been found necessary in England and was thought necessary here for serious cases of this kind. Mr. Mills when asked to go this far thought the ground was sufficiently covered by the usual conditions of an investigation into a fraud against the public. It was pointed out by Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper that in a matter of ordinary frauds where there might be only one or two culprits it might be sufficient to provide that a witness should not be criminated by his own evidence. But in a case where the offences are far-reaching, involving great numbers of people, it may be necessary in order to get witnesses to come from abroad or to tell the truth when they are got, that they should not only be exempt from convictions on their own testimony, but on other testimony obtained by the knowledge of which their evidence would supply the imperial statute and Blake's act were evidently overlooked entirely by Mr. Mills.

But the government absolutely refuses to provide that one of the two counsel shall be the selection of the liberal conservative party. The government interferes to the extent of providing that they shall be Queen's counsel, but absolutely refuses to allow the opposition to make any suggestions as to the persons. In the Ontario commission the counsel chosen by government to prosecute was the man who had been acting as lawyer for the parties prosecuting.

Again the government refuses to provide that the Huron and Brockville cases shall be taken up first. That

is to be left with the commissioners. One would have supposed that as these are the cases which originated the enquiry, and as the two elections have already been partially investigated, and as the premier took them forcibly out of the hands of the committee, under the pretence that this commission would perform the work better, his first care would be that these two elections should be taken up first and dealt with promptly.

Lastly, the premier and minister of justice absolutely refuse to provide that electors may testify how they voted. On this point the commissioners will have no liberty. They must proceed according to the existing law which, according to the Ontario decisions, does not allow such testimony to be given. It may be that these decisions are not final, but if the commissioners believe them to be so they must act accordingly. It would have been easy to provide that whatever the law now is, the law for this enquiry should permit men whose votes have been stolen to swear how they voted. The premier and Mr. Mills appear to be greatly worried that electors who went to the polls believing that they were casting a secret ballot should be asked by ex post facto legislation to make it public. This is kind and considerate, and very much in the interests of the robbers, but it does not meet the case. The premier seems to forget already that this is something more serious than an ordinary election enquiry to determine who was elected. It is a charge of conspiracy of great magnitude, carried through by a criminal organization to steal the liberties of the people. It is no question of compelling men to testify if they voted. The persons whose rights are stolen are anxious to testify. The government is not protecting them from exposure, but is refusing protection from thieves.

Here are, say, a score of men who voted for McLean at a certain poll. They know that their votes have been stolen. They come forward to demand redress. They do not ask to be prevented from telling what they have lost, they ask the privilege of telling. They ask that the property should be traced to the criminals who stole it. The government calmly assures them that it would like to protect them from these criminals, but above all it will protect from the necessity or even the liberty of identifying the stolen goods.

"But Sir Wilfrid, we do not want to be protected from publicity. It is publicity we want. We want protection from the thieves," plead the electors.

When John Smith loses his purse and finds it in the hands of pickpockets, he asks the law to give him back his purse and protect him from the thief hereafter. It is not much comfort to him to be told that the purse cannot be identified without his testimony and that he will be protected from going into court and saying it is his. Even if he is reminded that when he bought the purse he did not understand that he would be asked to go into court and swear to it, he will not be comforted. What he wants is protection from telling what he knows and describing what he has lost.

Lastly, the government refuses to allow the evidence taken by the privileges committee to be used in this enquiry. If it could be used the testimony of the men whose votes were stolen would be available. The various other testimony of men who cannot now be reached is in that book. It cost the country ten thousand dollars to hold that enquiry and a large sum to print the evidence. All this will now be thrown away, because the premier has simply closed the enquiry before the committee breaking it off in the middle and refusing to allow the evidence to be used in the other court.

One of the funniest speeches ever heard in the house was Mr. Blair's defence of the government's action. Mr. Blair shouted and scolded, but the substance of his statement was that the government yielded to Sir Charles Tupper's wishes. He boasted that the ministry had been forced to give way. This frivolous appeal, showing as it did with how little sincerity one minister approached the matter, provoked derisive laughter. The speaker repeated when Mr. Blair said that the majority in the committee had admitted the evidence of electors in order to escape criticism, though they knew it was wrong to take this testimony.

Nothing quite so good as this has been heard since Mr. Tarte explained why he lied to the house about Mr. Greenshields's payments of money for La Patrie newspaper. If I had told the truth, said Mr. Tarte on his oath a year later, I knew that the Tory newspapers would have lied about me.

The anxiety of the minister of railways that the government should not back down before the demands of the opposition may perhaps be explained. The thing has been overdone. Sir Wilfrid refused to offer a contingent for Africa and then backed down. Mr. Tarte caused it to be declared by order of council that the first offer would not be a precedent, and he backed down. The government brought in a bill to disfranchise the soldiers and mounted police in the country, and then backed down. Two of Sir Wilfrid's colleagues declared in the house that there was no occasion for further investigation in the election frauds. They had to back down. The government has backed down on the policy of protection, on the policy of railway subsidies, and on the question of reciprocity. Mr. Blair has reached the conclusion that it is time to put on the brakes.

The order in council appointing the commission was analysed by Mr. Powell, a quarter of a million dollars has gone, and the show has hardly commenced yet. As near as could be learned yesterday, Mr. Tarte has twenty-five to thirty officials from Canada with him. Mr. Fisher struggled piteously, but vainly, in the attempt to explain what they were all doing. We know what Mr. Tarte is doing. He is making speeches, holding receptions, and telling France how great personages he and the premier



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This sentence is quoted as a fine example for use in the public schools as a style of writing to be avoided. When the student has succeeded in construing the words "in respect of" with those that come before it, and has managed to find the application of the words "or by reason of" he will find various other interesting questions. From this minister of justice's English his attention was directed to a somewhat analogous expression of a departed judge in Nova Scotia. "Prisoner at the bar, you are the son of honest parents and were brought up in the fear of the Lord, instead of which you go about the country 'stealing geese.'"

There seems to be no good reason why the government should not have got this larger sum, and there was abundant reason why Mr. Wade should not have had control of the transaction on behalf of the government. For Mr. Wade next appeared as counsel for the hon. member, Macdonald. At the Odette commission one Mr. George swore that he gathered from Mr. Wade that his retainer was \$10,000. Mr. Wade himself testified and did not contradict this. He admitted that he was retained by the firm and that the fee would be a very large one in the east, but testified that he did not get his retainer until all the transaction with the government was completed.

But according to the statement made by the acting minister yesterday the transaction was never completed. Mr. Sutherland made a great deal of the fact that the government retained the power to cancel Morrison and Macdonald's contracts. We have therefore this situation, that Morrison and Macdonald have a lease from the government which brings them in \$7,500 a month net, that the government have power to cancel that lease any day, that Mr. Wade has been an officer in the government, in charge of this branch of the business, and that he has received \$10,000 more or less, or as he himself admits a very large fee, as the lawyer for the contractors. Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper does not say that a crime has been committed; he only asks for an investigation into that matter. His request was voted down last night at the request of the government by the straight party majority. Mr. Wade, it may be remarked again, is a particular friend of Mr. Sifton's and was one of his campaign managers and the writer of a hand book on the Manitoba school question.

Speaking of the minister of the interior there was passed last night a vote of \$100,000 for immigration services. This was a supplementary vote for the year which ends this month, and is of course an addition to the sum asked for last session, and then thought to be sufficient. A member inquired how the government was going to spend all this money in a fortnight, and was calmly informed by the minister that it had been spent already. It seems to be hardly necessary to vote money in this parliament when a minister can go on spending \$100,000 beyond the vote, while parliament is in session, and without asking for authority until the money is gone.

Two interesting hours were spent around midnight voting money for Mr. Tarte at Paris. The cost of the Canadian share of the exhibition is climbing up at a prodigious rate, since our spectacular minister struck that festive city. Already it is admitted that a quarter of a million dollars has gone, and the show has hardly commenced yet. As near as could be learned yesterday, Mr. Tarte has twenty-five to thirty officials from Canada with him. Mr. Fisher struggled piteously, but vainly, in the attempt to explain what they were all doing. We know what Mr. Tarte is doing. He is making speeches, holding receptions, and telling France how great personages he and the premier

are. He is France that way subjected nominally a piece. He never sent a note, but Mr. Marsailles, "Long live fine for Mr. personage no the imperial any Parisian England, am front put an onial repre

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