

United States, and has secured for us undisputed rights in territory that will be of very great value. Another plank in the Conservative platform which the hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) mentioned with a great deal of gusto was this: Appointment of public officials upon consideration of capacity and personal character and not for party services alone.

Is there any loophole in that; do you not find a loophole in the last word,—appointment of public officials upon consideration of capacity and personal character and not for party service—it does not end there, but it continues; and not for party service alone. You see, that if a man had been a worker for the Reform party, these Conservatives would dub him a party heeler, but if he had been a worker for the Conservative party and they could call him a respectable man it would be perfectly fair, even under the wording of this manifesto, to appoint him for his political service. But, did the leader of the opposition in this House ever hear of a gentleman named Whitney in the province of Ontario? Has he ever heard of any man who has been the head of any government in any province in Canada, and who has adopted the American spoils system to the extent it has been adopted by the Hon. Mr. Whitney? Does the leader of the opposition know that a little while ago Mr. R. R. Gamey, one of the champions of the Conservative party in Ontario, announced that he had only one complaint against his party in Ontario and that complaint was that there were still some appointees of the Ross government left in office whose heads had not been cut off in the guillotine which Mr. Whitney has erected and has kept so well oiled. It may be said that the Conservative party in this House are not responsible for the work of the Conservative party in any of the provinces, but I tell them that the Conservative party in Ontario is a large factor in controlling the affairs of the Conservative party in this Dominion, and I say to the leader of the opposition that if he were in power and did not satisfy the hunger of his party throughout the country as Mr. Whitney has done, he would not long continue to be leader of the Conservative party in Canada. The member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) made a bold statement when he said; the right hon. gentleman knows that he has thieves and embezzlers in the public service to-day. That may strike the hon. gentleman (Mr. Foster) as a brave charge to make and a brave thing to say. It is a thing that might be said by any loafer in any bar room; it might be said by any fish-wife; it might be said by anybody, but it has little significance if there is no proof to back it up. Another plank to which the hon. gentleman (Mr. Foster) referred was as to clean elections; and I will not read the wording because it is too long. As has been said by speakers on both sides of the

House, it is a very proper thing for anybody to desire but they make this a meaningless thing when they get up, with hypocrisy and cant, and endeavour to make the public of Canada believe that the only wrong doing in connection with elections has been on the side of one political party alone. The leader of the opposition has said that political corruption has been rampant since 1898. Sir, I claim that political corruption was more rampant before 1898 than it has ever been since, and I say that public men who make political speeches are doing an injustice to the Canadian people when they magnify the political corruption which exists in Canada at the present time. If there is any political corruption at all there is too much political corruption; if there were political corruption to-day in only one Canadian constituency it would be that much too much; but I do say—and perhaps it is not due to the effort of one party more than another but probably on account of the change in public opinion—there is less political corruption in Canada to-day than there was ten years ago and there was less political corruption in Canada ten years ago than there was twenty years ago. There has been a constant improvement in this respect. It was as morally wrong fifteen years ago to hire a man's team to carry voters to the poll in order to obtain his vote and his political support as it is morally wrong to do it to-day; but it was not legally wrong then and it is legally wrong now, and because our law has been made stricter, while there may be less political corruption there may be perhaps more offences against the law. The hon. member for North Toronto and the hon. leader of the opposition may come into my own riding of South Grey and may talk about political corruption; and when they do, the minds of the voters in that riding will go back to a little incident which took place in 1891, seven years before the date mentioned by the leader of the opposition, when after an election in which the late Dr. Landerkin was the candidate on one side and a man named Blythe on the other, eight or nine ballot boxes were broken open and the ballots marked for the Reform candidate taken out and ballots marked for the Conservative candidate put in their place.

The hon. member for Carleton has referred to the election in Colchester. I think, to twist an old quotation, that my hon. friend protested too soon. When he was so ready to say to the House at this early day that at least the Conservative party in Colchester had fought a clean election, it seems to me that his action was very like that of a man who wanted to ward off an investigation for fear that dishonesty and corruption would be discovered.

The hon. member for North Toronto spoke of the record of this government in disposing of public lands. If there is any sub-