

OTTAWA LETTER.

Discussion on P. E. Island Winter Mail Service.

Mr. Mulock's Action Open to Condemnation by the S. P. C. A.

Bremner's Furs and Col. Domville's Explanation of Their Disappearance from the West.

OTTAWA, May 18.—Yesterday the attention of the house was called to the common sense of the proposed mail service on the P. E. Island...

Senator Wood's company offered to provide a special train to meet the case. This train would always leave Sackville when the mails came there...

Such is the explanation given at the end of the debate by Mr. Powell. We may now return to Mr. Martin, who explained that under the contract by open stage, mails were delivered anywhere from one to four days behind time...

If the ministers would not do it, Mr. Martin believed that the people of Prince Edward Island would rather pay for it themselves than go on as the postmaster general proposed.

than they went from Halifax to Charlottetown, and the merchant was quoted as saying that the service made connections only six times during the winter.

Mr. Bell and Mr. McLellan seemed to hesitate between their desire to support the government and their wish for a better mail service.

Mr. McDonald got back to the point. It strikes him as being an altogether shameful thing that this alleged progressive government should have gone back to sleight and stage on the forty mile route, when a railroad was prepared to do business on easy terms.

Sir Louis insisted that the stage was all right, much better than the service of old times. He declared that connections had been well made, but would "candidly admit" that the island was entitled to a special train service.

Mr. Powell's statements mentioned above put a new light on the case. He said that the company would not accept Mr. Mulock's terms for a special through service, it would lose the other contract.

It is now some fourteen years since the last Riel rebellion. Mr. Davis, one of the government supporters in the Northwest, thinks it an appropriate time to bring the subject into active politics.

The discussion advanced to the stage of a dispute as to Gen. Middleton's connection with the affair. The whole matter was tried out a few

years after the rebellion by a parliamentary committee of which Mr. McNeill was chairman. Some members of that committee are still in the house, including Mr. McNeill, and a number are there who took part in the discussion which followed the report of the committee.

Mr. Davis says that Bremner was never rebellious, and that he is now a Col. Domville rose to the occasion by announcing that he was General Middleton's friend and seeing that the general was dead, he felt bound to say that Middleton got no furs. It is never established who finally wore the furs.

Mr. McInnes of British Columbia has had several ambitions. When he came here he strongly opposed the Crow's Nest policy of the government and boldly entered the lists against the railway.

Now that Mr. McInnes is back in parliament, he has forgotten the intrigues of Mr. Blair and his colleagues. He is going in for peace and wants the government to establish a mint in British Columbia.

Mr. Fielding sees objections. In the first place, he does not think there will be any demand for additional gold coins in this country. The people would rather have paper money, and if gold coins took the place of paper money, the result would be a depreciation of Dominion notes.

Clarke Wallace stuck a pin in Mr. Fielding's argument about the Dominion notes. He did not think that gold coins were really necessary. Two-dollar notes, and as the Dominion notes circulation is confined to one and two-dollar bills, there will be no interference.

OTTAWA, May 17.—If Sir James Edgar could have got away from the chair yesterday afternoon or evening, the debate would have been resumed on the Drummond Railway

bill. But just as the order for going in committee was about to be called Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper rose to make a few observations. In order to be regular he promised to close his remarks with a motion to adjourn.

It was a rather serious matter. There are two safeguards to the public against corrupt or unwarranted expenditure of public money. One is the auditor general, who does what he can to check irregularity and illegality in the expenditure.

Last year the session came to an end while two important matters were under investigation. It was decided that they should be printed and it was announced that at the earliest opportunity in this session the enquiry would be resumed.

Parliament met on the 16th March. It was on the 16th of May, two months afterwards, that Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper rose to make his protest against the delay in calling the committee.

Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper is personally concerned in this matter. Last year he brought up in the committee certain astonishing payments of money to Mr. Sifton's friends in Manitoba, and even to Mr. Sifton himself.

It was at the end of this kindly examination by Mr. Sifton and before Sir Charles Hibbert had been able to extract from the obscure by-lane of the Tupper's account the number of the count of the purposes to which these thousands of dollars were applied, that the session approached an end.

He was here as he agreed. He had his lists of witnesses. He was prepared for the calling of the committee. Once only since the session began was he called away, and then he left the names of his witnesses and

the motions he wished to present, in the hands of Mr. Borden, so that there should be no delay on his account. But the government, which was so much concerned last year lest the matter should drop and so anxious for a committee report on the evidence of Mr. Sifton's associates in Mr. Sifton's bogus prosecution, has become singularly apathetic.

The member for Pictou went over the facts mentioned above, and proceeded to a discussion of the subject matter of the enquiry, quoting largely from the evidence taken last year. He showed that \$10,000 expended on this miserable business was taken from the treasury with no warrant of law, without authority of parliament, without a vote of any kind, and for purposes never undertaken before by the Canadian ministry.

At the time of the election of 1896 Mr. Sifton was attorney general of Manitoba. His party expected to carry some seats in the province which they lost. Then it was determined to protest the election. But it seems to have occurred to Mr. Sifton that the chances of an election protest might be conveniently transferred to the dominion treasury.

The premier did not bring the matter before his newly formed government. He called what in the evidence was designed a sub-committee of the executive, and this meeting decided to advance the money. The sub-committee included Sir Oliver Mowat, Sir Louis Davies and the premier.

It was proved afterwards that Mr. Sifton had no evidence at all when he got this credit at Ottawa. He used the money to bring detectives from the United States, and to employ all sorts of rascals in Manitoba to go around disguised as picture sellers and horse traders to fish for evidence.

As was remarked, Sir Wilfrid Laurier himself gave Mr. Sifton authority to carry on this prosecution at the expense of Ottawa though Mr. Sifton afterwards became minister of the interior and passed over his job to Howill. Howill, as Sir Charles Tupper points out, passed over the prosecution to a horde of Sifton's relatives and friends over the province.



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ministers remained perfectly at ease in Zion.

In Brockville there are cases of crime and tampering with ballots. Sir Wilfrid does nothing about it. Prosecutions are going on, but private parties originate them and are paying the expenses. The dominion treasury, so open to the raids of the Howill, Wades and the Siftons of Manitoba, is hermetically sealed against the prosecutors of the frauds in Brockville.

"I feel confident that you will unearth a most odious conspiracy and we will willingly advance the money," said Sir Wilfrid to Mr. Sifton before he knew what evidence Mr. Sifton had. But there is no conspiracy so odious that Sir Wilfrid can even see it when the conspirators are supporters of his own. There was money enough wasted in Manitoba to prosecute all the election frauds that are likely to occur in Canada for the next ten years.

Jorden at the St. Louis had been in the city for some time, but had not yet had a chance to go to the office. He was in the city for some time, but had not yet had a chance to go to the office.

Another \$4,000 was paid under the guise of "unforeseen expenses," though these identical expenses had been foreseen and promised eleven months before by Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

When Mr. Howill did finally produce a kind of report of the Howill disbursements, he subsequently explained that it was made up by his bookkeeper months after the transaction, and that the account, as presented, "represented the ingenuity of his clerk."

"There is not to reason why, there is but to vote or die," said Sir Charles as the government members tried to howl him down while he presented these facts and charges in a manner that was decidedly uncomfortable for the ministers concerned.

"I propose," he said, "as one member of the house, that if the government will not allow this investigation to go on, and if ministers will not bring down communications connected with this case, which their own evidence shows to be in their possession, that the government shall not get supply for this session if I can stop it." Sir Charles Hibbert denies the right of the government to testify about papers in their possession, to assert that they have documents to justify their actions, and yet to keep this evidence back as "private and confidential communications."

A discursive discussion followed. Mr. McMullen, who was last chairman of the public accounts committee last year, followed Sir Charles Hibbert with a brief defence of the committee and the government. Mr. McMullen rather put his foot in it by asserting that the failure of Mr. Howill to produce his accounts was not his fault, as he was not asked to bring them. Dr. Sproule met this statement by producing from the committee's rec-

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