

the Hobbs Hardware Co. at an average price of \$4.64 per hundred pounds, notwithstanding the fact that the Government had then in their possession offers from reliable persons outside of the combine who were willing to negotiate for a part or the whole of the twine. The combine was then made complete, and the manipulators had in their possession three and a half million pounds of binder twine that belonged to the people, which they secured at less than an average price of 4½c per lb. and for which the farmers had the consolation of paying from 11c to 13c a pound.

Coming now to the year 1898, the output of binder twine at the Kingston Penitentiary was the same as in 1897, namely, one million pounds, which was produced at an average cost of \$4.72 per hundred pounds including raw material and manufacture. This time another patriot and political friend was patiently awaiting to give the crank another turn and a somewhat different plan had to be adopted to conceal from the public the real nature of the job. Mr. H. N. Bate, of H. N. Bate & Sons, grocers of the City of Ottawa, and a well-known contributor to the Liberal Campaign funds, had to be rewarded, and this time at the expense of the farmers. As shown by the correspondence, Mr. Bate of course called upon Mr. Mills to talk over binder twine matters, and as might be expected, a few days later, Mr. Mills informed H. N. Bate & Sons that he was prepared to receive their confidential offer for the binder twine at the Kingston Penitentiary. Bate & Sons at once put in their confidential offer for the twine, the average price offered being \$4.60 per hundred pounds, or 12½c per hundred pounds less than the twine cost. But even this generous offer to take one million pounds of binder twine at less than cost and without competition might not look well, and some plan had to be adopted to make it perfectly certain that Bate & Sons would get the twine and at the same time give the appearance that they had competed for it. It would not do therefore to send out a public advertisement inviting tenders, because Bate & Sons' chances might be greatly endangered. But a circular was sent out inviting tenders to a few trusted friends who were not likely to disturb Bate & Sons' peace of mind. The following is a full list of that select and chosen few.

THE CHOSEN FEW.

Wood, Vellance & Co, hardware merchants of which A. T. Wood the Liberal M.P. for Hamilton is the head.

The Hobbs Hardware Co., of which T. S. Hobbs, the Liberal M.P.P. for London is the head, one of the manipulators of the combine in 1897.

J. H. Ashdown & Co., hardware merchants of Winnipeg, of which J. H. Ashdown, who was the Liberal candidate in Marquette at the last election is the head.

The Farmers' Binder Twine & Agricultural Manufacturing Co., who do not want to purchase twine but make twine to sell, and who were not ashamed to boast in a public circular sent out that in this very year 1898 they made 100 p.c. out of the farmers on their own twine.

Coll Bros., soap manufacturers of St. John, N.B., and members of the combine with the Hobbs Hardware Co. in 1897.

John Hallam of Toronto, dealer in wool, hides and leather, and a very ardent and active supporter of the Laurier Government.

H. Mowers, grain dealer of the City of Kingston, a prominent and active Liberal, who is said to have been entrusted by his leaders with the use of the most scientific methods for carrying elections.

Rice, Lewis & Co., hardware merchants of Toronto, a firm whose more active members are known to be ardent Liberals.

Charles Braithwaite of Portage la Prairie, Man., an active Liberal and Noxious Weed inspector under the Greenway Government.

James Elder, of Verden, Manitoba, a farmer and a supporter of the Laurier Government who might require 200 or 300 lbs. of binder twine for his own use.

Dalton & Strange, hardware merchants of Kingston, members of the Liberal-Conservative Party, who could do nothing but despair of the slightest hope of success in a contest with such eminent gentlemen as had been selected in this case, and who have no recollection of having seen such a circular.

And last but certainly not the least to complete the chosen dozen, the modest H. N. Bate & Sons whose confidential offer was already in the hands of Mr. Mills. It was not intended that any tenders should be put in and of course there were none, and this miserable farce was now closed. H. N. Bate & Sons got a million pounds of binder twine that belonged to the people, without tender, without competition, and at their own price, namely, \$4.60 per hundred pounds. For

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