

The majority vote is sufficient because the enforcement of local option does not depend upon a three-fifths majority, but upon the sincerity and efficiency of the officials appointed for the enforcement of the act, and upon the ability of the whole department from the Minister down.

Experience is against the contention of the Government that a three-fifths majority is necessary to insure enforcement. In nearly all of the many municipalities in which the act was carried by a majority vote it is now in force. In these municipalities the Government have been able to enforce the law.

When the repeal of the act is considered, it is seen how illogical is the reasoning of the Government. If a three-fifths majority is necessary when local option is being carried it should be necessary in order to retain the act, when the repeal is being tried. Then a minority of votes may retain local option in force. When local option is being carried the law requires sixty votes as against forty in every one hundred; when the repeal is being taken forty-one votes for local option will defeat fifty-nine against it, and retain the act when a large preponderance of public opinion is against it.

The \$130,000 Gift

On account of the circumstances under which the Government came into power they were expected to avoid methods which have been employed by politicians struggling to maintain difficult positions. Many have been disappointed to discover that the Government are not only not as superior as they thought, but of a very ordinary brand.

The Larose mining interests received during the closing hours of the session \$130,000. There was no time for investigation. The explanation of the transaction was extraordinary. The members of the Government were not obliged to decide this case; the courts could have done that. Having constituted themselves judges, the members of the Cabinet should have exercised that sense of honor and of the fitness of things which usually characterizes our Judges. A Judge only a few days ago declined to hear a case in which his son-in-law was a witness. In the Larose case the brother-in-law of one of the Ministers was a claimant, and \$130,000 was given to him and his associates. The explanation is that the recipients of this large sum furnished valuable information to the Government. What was the information? The people paid for it and should know what it is. If the Ministers are to act as Judges their transactions should be public as are courts of law.

Niagara Power

The principles which should govern the distribution of Niagara power are not complex. The benefits to be derived from a gift of nature such as Niagara Falls should never become a private monopoly. It was with hopeful interest the people viewed Mr. Beck's efforts to secure this boon for them. It has been a matter for deep chagrin, however, to observe that his energy has been required to overcome not the enemies without, but the more than passive resistance of his colleagues in the Cabinet. When Mr. St. Aubyn came to the door of the Cabinet virtually looking for a purchaser for

the plant of the Electrical Development Co., why was not Mr. Beck consulted? Did Mr. Whitney fear that Mr. Beck would insist on the Province availing itself of this unrivalled opportunity? Or, if Mr. Whitney felt that the Province was under an obligation not to compete with the people to whom it had granted concessions, the city of Toronto was under no such obligations, and the Premier should have called the attention of the Mayor and Council to the occasion that so fortunately presented itself. But no; the sinister figures whose lobbyists have been seen leading members into committees to vote up what he wants up and vote down what he wants down—the same compelling personage to whose need of \$2,500,000 the Legislature so readily yielded appears at this juncture and snaps up what Mr. Whitney would not take for the Province nor give the city the chance of acquiring. These incidents are not in harmony with the main Cabinet and the Legislature which the people clothed with such ample power for good less than four years ago.

Guaranteeing Mr. Mackenzie's Bonds.

Perhaps the most conspicuous act of the recent session was the guarantee of \$2,500,000 securities for Mackenzie & Mann. That this occurred during the closing hours was suspicious. Mr. Whitney had on former occasions strenuously objected to bringing down railway subsidies at the close of the session. It is said that the explanation of this suspicious affair is a campaign fund. But with forty majority why should a campaign fund be required? It is useless for Mr. Whitney to try to justify the guarantee by saying that the Opposition did not oppose it. He is the man whom the people chose to manage their affairs and guard their interests. He is responsible to the people rather than the Opposition. The people are the source of his power and also his judges. It is difficult to imagine any friend of public ownership or of people's rights voting for such a guarantee. The people's money should be retained for their own projects and not given to an enterprise which is of a peculiarly private character.

What is the situation? An election is approaching. It is said that an election cannot be won by prayers. What is to be done? A fine chance to control the Niagara situation by obtaining control of the Electrical Development Company's rights and plant offers. Mr. Whitney shuts his eyes. Mr. Mackenzie acts. Mr. Mackenzie profits. The railway bonds are guaranteed. Again Mr. Mackenzie profits. What is the relation between the Government and Mr. Mackenzie? One is reminded of the receipt given by the somewhat illiterate partner—"We have received our money," signed "Me and Bill." It is a hopeful sign and worthy of notice that some of the Conservative members were opposed to this transaction.

There are several matters which the public will consider in passing judgment upon the course of the Government, but space does not permit a discussion of them.

The Growth of Expenditures

The annual expenditure of the Province has increased rapidly and materially. In the last three years there has been an increase of per capita ex-