

"THE PROTON OUTRAGE."

During the two or three years succeeding the third return of Mr. LAUDER, in December 1871, for South Grey, the Tory newspapers from one end of the Province to the other, teemed with articles abusive of the Government, and the writer of this *brochure*, in reference to what was designated at the time as the "Proton Outrage." The real facts of the case were, however, little known beyond the limits of the Townships of Proton, Melancthon, in the County of Grey, in the South Riding of which the terrible election outrage was said to have occurred. The charges rung throughout the land were, that the author of this small pamphlet, J. W. LEWIS, had been employed as an agent by the existing Reform Government, or Messrs. E. BLAKE and Mr. A. McKELLAR, to lead the electors of South Grey astray, to prejudice their minds against Mr. LAUDER, the Conservative candidate, and in favor of the Reform candidate Mr. DICKEY of Toronto, by false representations concerning the valuation which had been put upon their lands, and by this means defeat Mr. LAUDER's election.

Hardly had Mr. LAUDER returned to the House after his election in December, 1871, (he had been unseated after his election in March, 1871) before the "Proton Outrage" became the subject of vindictive and exciting discussion, on the floor of the House as well as in the newspaper press. The *Daily Telegraph* of Toronto, then the organ of the Conservative Opposition, was filled with affidavits and comments on the "Proton Outrage," and Messrs. BLAKE and McKELLAR as well as the writer (Mr. LEWIS) their alleged tool and agent, were all attacked in the grossest, most vituperative and bitter language upon the floor of the House, by Messrs. M. C. CAMERON, LAUDER, and other prominent Conservatives. It was clearly seen by all those who really knew the facts of the case, that the attacks upon the Government and

the writer were made, not from honest conviction or in the public interest, but as a flimsy covering to hide the real culprits, M. C. CAMERON, the leader of the Opposition, and Mr. LAUDER, the member for South Grey, from observation, and their own outrageous conduct in the South Grey election from deserved chastisement. Their real objects were to damage the reputation of the writer in public estimation by making him appear as the dishonest tool of Messrs. BLAKE and McKELLAR and to cast unjust odium upon them by a accusing them of employing, the most unworthy and despicable means to defeat Mr. LAUDER's election. They succeeded but too well, in their first object, but they signally failed in the accomplishment of the second. Had the Government of Mr. MOWAT, however acted with fairness and discretion, they would have failed in both objects, and the result would have been to establish the fact that Messrs. CAMERON and LAUDER, had resorted to the most reprehensible means, to carry Mr. LAUDER's election. But of that more anon.

Here it may be proper to state how it was that the writer became involved in the South Grey election. During the Administration of the Hon. JOHN S. MACDONALD, great complaints were made by the settlers on the Crown Lands, especially in the townships of Proton and Melancthon, in the County of Grey, because the price fixed by the Government, some years previously, at the time of settlement, was far above the actual value of the lands, which were in many cases of very inferior quality; and the consequence was the settlers were hardly able to live upon their clearing, much less to pay the instalments to the Government as they fell due. The result of all this was that many of the settlers were in arrears to the Crown Land Office. Mr. MACDONALD's Government, passed an Act for