

The Colonist.

Friday March 2, 1906.

The Colonist Printing & Publishing Company, Limited Liability 27 Broad Street, Victoria, B. C. A. G. SARGISON, Managing Director.

THE SEMI-WEEKLY COLONIST

One year\$1 00 Six months 50 Three months 25 Sent postpaid to Canada, United Kingdom and United States.

A PARALLEL CASE.

We will assume for argument's sake that this was a general election, in which all Conservatives were in line on the principles professed by their party. Let us assume, too, that Sir Wilfrid Laurier should offer a monetary consideration of \$250,000 to the city or to the province, on condition that the electors would return a Liberal candidate. Would not the Conservatives to a man upon such an offer as a direct bribe?

We are now offered a minister with a portfolio, and we are asked to support him on the plea of monetary benefit to the community. Is there a Conservative in Victoria city who will admit that the Liberal government should be supported on this record as a government? Is there a Conservative in the city of Victoria who does not believe and say that the Laurier government has been untrue in every particular to its pledges and its principles prior to 1896?

Is there a Conservative in the city of Victoria who would not vote to have the Liberal government defeated? Did not Hon. William Templeman, in his speech on Tuesday night, declare that (quoting the Times) his defeat would be a serious blow to the government?

These things being so, is it not true that in voting for Mr. Templeman because of his portfolio—which we would not do otherwise either on Mr. Templeman's account or on account of the Laurier government, represented by him—we are bought with a price, that price being the material and monetary benefit to the community?

Assuming that Mr. Templeman can do more for us with a portfolio than he has been able to do as a cabinet minister without a portfolio, is there any substantial difference in principle between a lump sum of \$250,000 for our votes and an indirect financial benefit either more or less than that amount?

REACTION AGAINST BOSSISM.

Recently in many parts of the United States there has been a wave of reaction against the Boss in politics. It has swept a number of the large cities and several of the states. It is the protest of the people against the domination, by means of huge campaign funds, of the political machine, which makes and unmakes legislation and serves the interests of those who supply the sinews of war.

We are nearing the time in Canada, when a similar revulsion of feeling will take place. In Canada it is less the domination of the corporation than that of the political machine for political purposes; but the influence of the money bag is none the less felt. It has got down to this, that up to a certain point the candidate with the most money wins the fight. It one side has little or no money and the other has all the money and all the "influence," the former is considered as absurdly feeble for making the fight.

The point was reached in Ontario in 1904, when a government that had been in power for over thirty years and had latterly maintained its position purely by corruption of the electorate and the suppression by fraud of the free expression of public opinion, was swept out of existence by popular uprising.

The point has almost been reached in the new Northwest province of Alberta, where a verdict was stolen by a series of political outrages as audacious as they were immoral. Money, manipulation and official rascality all contributed to the result.

In the city of Victoria the point has been reached where, by the experience of the political regime of the past few years, the control of everything has passed into the hands of a clique, against which a large element of the Liberal party has been in open revolt.

Despite the solemn promises in respect to the construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific, there is nothing definite in regard to operations in British Columbia, although construction is well under way in the Northwest.

Yukon permits have been trafficked in. The patronage of the Quada and of the quarantine station have been peddled at great expense among political favorites. Repairs aggregating many thousands of dollars annually have been undertaken,

without competition, at the price of the contractors. The subsidizing of the Salvor at \$10,000 a year to a firm in return for the political control of the Esquimalt district is one of the most disgraceful deals on record.

With the wreck of the Cliallam two years ago, as a warning which became the official justification of the deal, absolutely no provision was made for the saving of lives on this coast.

Today there is no attempt to explain or justify these things. Mr. Templeman dared not resign his seat in the senate and accept the portfolio of inland revenue on the condition that he should go before the electors until he had the assurance of Conservative support in this city, upon which he now depends for election.

Today Mr. Templeman is not appealing to the electors on the issues of the day or his fitness for the position or the services he has rendered to the city or the province. His claim is based on the importance of having a portfolio, which he was denied as long as public decency would permit.

We are informed that there are over eighty canvassers spread out over the city distributing ballot papers and making personal solicitations from house to house and from person to person, asking the voters to endorse the way their names are marked in advance for the Liberal candidate. Their one plea to the voter is the cabinet position, as though the future of the city and British Columbia depended upon Mr. Templeman securing a salary and retiring after five years of public service with a life pension of half of his annual salary upon his retirement.

It is in the hands of the citizens of Victoria to break the money power in politics and set the example for all of Canada.

If the Liberals are to be saved from the certain destruction to which they are doomed by present methods of wholesale bribery of the people, the principle now at stake in this city must be vindicated.

If the Conservative party is to be rehabilitated in Canada it must be by adopting the policy which the Conservatives are now pursuing in appealing to the unpurchasable element of the community.

In this instance let us be frank and admit that the Conservatives are making a virtue of necessity, even if they did not believe in the principle; but if it can be demonstrated that elections can be fought and won, at tremendous odds, without unnecessary and illegitimate expenditure it will revolutionize politics and sound the death knell in the Dominion of the political boss and the political machine, which depend absolutely upon unlimited financial means for success.

WHY CONSERVATIVES WERE SUPPORTING MR. TEMPLEMAN.

Since the situation has become somewhat cleared up by the nomination of a Conservative candidate, a good deal of light has been thrown on the matter which impelled a number of Conservatives to sign Mr. Templeman's nomination paper, and it is now very evident that a trap was set for those who are just now realizing where they are at.

The trick that was played is proving to be a boomerang for those who were responsible for it. Mr. Templeman and his friends have discovered that if they had not been so hasty in endeavoring to capture unwary Conservatives and then break the backbone of opposition by garbling their spoils they might have accomplished their end by the adoption of straightforward means.

As it is explained to us by some of those who have wittingly given their support and signature to Mr. Templeman, the nomination paper was brought to them and they were asked to sign. The names of prominent Conservatives on the list was pointed out to them and they were assured that there was going to be no opposition. It was plausible and glibly represented that, in the circumstances, it would be a graceful thing in going back to Ottawa if it could be shown that Sir Wilfrid Laurier that his British Columbia minister received the support and endorsement of Conservatives and Liberals alike. They signed in the manner in which so many persons sign petitions, without considering the full import of their action. They did not realize that the names would be used against the Conservative party in case opposition was forthcoming, and to sign his nomination paper, and it was used against the possible wishes of a majority of the Conservatives of the city of Victoria, who alone in convention assembled had the right to decide what the attitude of the party should be.

So strong is the feeling on the matter that it is doubtful if Mr. Templeman will dare to publish his original nomination paper with all the signatures on it and thus expose the names of those who were thus induced to become sponsor for him to the Dominion government.

There are certain prominent Liberals in Victoria whose names we can give, if necessary, who could not be induced to sign his nomination paper, and it was on account of this serious defect in his own party that Mr. Templeman's Liberals resorted to those on the other side, some of whom he had libelled in a political way for years. Those Liberals today are not supporters of Mr. Templeman, despite his cabinet position and despite the favors he has at his disposal.

Was there any time in the history of this city that Liberals could be induced to place their names upon a Conservative nomination paper? There was a time when Liberals could have paid the same graceful tribute to a Conservative cabinet minister—the first opportunity which occurred in British Columbia, but, led by Mr. William Templeman,

they refused to do so. They worked against Col. Prior tooth and nail, and for the reason that they could not endorse the policy of the Conservative government of that day. Today the Conservatives who follow the example then set by Mr. Templeman are slandered and treated with contempt.

The friends of Mr. Beckwith in this contest must not be misled by the impression that is endeavored to be created that he cannot win, and that he will be hopelessly defeated, because of the Conservatives who are on Mr. Templeman's nomination paper. Nine-tenths of these will not support him. More than that, a large element of dissatisfied Liberals will vote for Mr. Beckwith.

The truth is that if Mr. Templeman, plain William Templeman, had to depend upon those who would vote for him and not from his title and influence as cabinet minister he would never for the term of his natural life reach the seat of Commons, Ottawa.

WHERE THE PROGRAMME FAILED.

On the 20th of January, 1906, the organ of Mr. Templeman, in referring to the charges of the Colonist against the Dominion government, stated that there is no prospect of a Dominion election, and that long before an appeal can be taken to the people the actions of the government will have been so completely justified in the eyes of the people.

At the very time that the above was being written, Senator Templeman was in Ottawa pleading his claims before Sir Wilfrid Laurier for a portfolio. He was in Ottawa for the purpose of being named in order to be made minister of the crown with a responsible department he must resign his seat and be elected by the people of Victoria.

Mr. Templeman dared not take chances of his position in the Senate until he had some assurance that there would be no opposition. Hence the machinery for attaining this desirable end was set, and in the meantime other things that are within recent knowledge. Mr. Templeman did not leave Ottawa—did not get his portfolio—did not take the oath of office—did not take the title that the constituency and all that was in it would be handed over to him as a free gift.

At the time the Times announced that there would be no election, Mr. Templeman was "guessing." At the time the government was apparently sure he really was in it would be handed over to him as a free gift.

There was one thing, however, which was overlooked in the calculation. It was "the rump of Conservatives" in Victoria that the government considered of sufficient importance to consult. Another portion of the Times' confident prediction has failed. The actions of the government and of its representatives in this constituency have not been justified in the eyes of the people; and this has been made manifest to guess and accepted the conditions which Sir Wilfrid Laurier imposed. The date of election was announced.

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THE REASONS WHY.

We have been asked to state the reasons why the Liberal-Conservatives are opposing the election of a cabinet minister. If there were not very good reasons the Liberal-Conservatives could not make extracts from it, though it is not deemed necessary to publish it in its original form.

In referring to the campaign of slander and innuendo that was set on foot, especially in the Vancouver area, "Kalen" remarks: "To any fair-minded man who has followed the course of the Kalen Island investigation, the attitude of the opposition press is a disgrace to journalism in this province. Garbled reports, false rumors and discreditable attacks on the government are used with the utmost recklessness, in the hope of misleading the public mind and bringing the administration into disrepute. Especially are these onslaughts aimed at the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, the intention apparently being to hide the real issue. Witness for example the story first circulated by the Vancouver World to the effect that a round robin had been signed by the Conservative members of the House demanding that Hon. R. F. Green be forced to resign from the cabinet. That story was used freely until it was worn thread-bare, and now even the Victoria Standard, whose vituperation instead of convincing has disgusted decent people, has been forced reluctantly to admit its falsity."

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"It is well," our correspondent states, "for the people to bear in mind the fact that the more valuable this land becomes the better does the bargain prove for the province. Therefore, instead of decrying the deal because the land may increase greatly in value when the railway terminus is established, it is a source of congratulation that the government were so far-sighted as to make such an excellent bargain. But this is not all. It adds 'Kalen,' 'for the stipulation that the company must within a limited time erect their terminal buildings on the spot means that a vast indirect benefit will be reaped by the business men and farmers of the coast in supplying material, farm produce and goods of various kinds to the railway company so soon as the work at Kalen Island begins assuring to us a benefit which Hon. William Templeman and his colleagues at Ottawa'—and here is the crux—'through design or stupidity failed to secure when the Grand Trunk Pacific contract was entered into at Ottawa—the beginning of operations by the railway on the Pacific Coast.'"

"For my part," "Kalen" concludes, "I believe that the real reason for the initiation of the attacks on the government was the disappointment of speculators who had got control of land at other points on the coast, hoping to secure the establishment of the terminus on their holdings and for their individual benefit."

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