

the fact that at the time when this arrangement is said to have been entered into, the ex-premier of the province of Ontario was practically discredited by the people of his own province. Evidence was given of that—sufficient, ample evidence—on January 25, last. I cannot understand how, in the face of that, the right hon. Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) could expect the ex-premier of the province of Ontario to carry out such an arrangement without resorting to some such means as those to which I am referring. The Prime Minister, (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) could hardly have failed to see the position in which the ex-premier of Ontario stood. No doubt he recognized the fact that the ex-premier had run many political races in that province and had been successful. But I am bound to say that in nearly all the races that the 'old war horse' as he was called, had run, he had finished the race with some blemish which very materially lessened his racing ability—such blemishes as the blemish of West Elgin, the blemish of Waterloo, the blemish of Manitoulin Island and the 'Minnie M.' and others altogether too numerous to mention. But, while the Prime Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) may have noticed these blemishes upon the 'old war horse,' no doubt he also noticed some of the perfections which he and the party he led in Ontario had attained. It is simply proven by the records of the courts that the Liberal party in the province of Ontario, in the matter of switching ballots in the matter of stealing ballots, in the matter of burning ballots, had arrived at a state of perfection. They had even gone further and had arrived at a state of perfection in the manufacture of the ballot-box itself. So while the right hon. prime minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) may have noticed the imperfections on the one hand, he may have noticed these perfections on the other. And it is to the perfection attained in the manufacture and use of bogus ballot-boxes that I desire to address my remarks this afternoon.

Now, the matters to which I have referred, to the extent that they have occurred in the province of Ontario and in regard to local parliament, more particularly concern the people of that province. But that to which I would call attention today, the actual use of the bogus ballot-box by the candidates supporting this government in the last federal election, is one which affects this parliament and this Dominion as a whole. In this matter, I speak not from surmise, not from imagination but from the sworn testimony which I hold in my hand, given in the courts of the province in the investigation of this matter. What I say, I say by the book. The evidence which I have here is not the only evidence of the perpetration of this crime, this fraud upon the electors, during the last campaign. I have here another piece of evidence—the bogus ballot-box itself. And, if the sworn testimony is not sufficient to

remove all doubt, I think an inspection of this article will be enough to take the wrinkles out of the skin of the most hide-bound Grit alive.

Just prior to the last federal general elections—about three days before polling day—came to my attention that a conspiracy had been formed between certain Liberal candidates at the then approaching election to steal, by means of this bogus ballot-box, certain of the ridings of the province of Ontario. When that information came to me, naturally I felt more or less alarmed, for I was told that the riding I had the honour to represent, the riding of West Hastings was one of those selected to be plundered by means of this machine. I am not at all surprised that West Hastings was one of those selected for plunder. It would be perfectly useless to depend upon the operation of such a machine as this in a riding that was known to be Liberal. It could only work to its fullest advantage in such a riding as West Hastings or the riding of my hon. friend from Frontenac (Mr. Avery) which had always—or at least for many years—consistently returned a Liberal-Conservative to this House. Such ridings would be particularly suitable for the use of a machine of this kind. Upon being informed that this fraud would be attempted, I put myself in communication with the different persons and employed every means I could to ascertain the facts; with the result, that two days before the election I succeeded in having divulged to another gentleman and myself the whole scheme. The information was given to me, I may say, by an official of this government. Perhaps I should explain exactly what I mean when I speak of this gentleman as an 'official.' The government, of course, have the right to provide the machinery by which elections should be carried on. The man who divulged this conspiracy was one of the deputy returning officers of that election—part of this election machinery. Now, I think, I may, in fairness, give the House the statement of that gentleman showing the scheme as divulged to me, inasmuch, as it is all repeated and sworn to in the evidence I have given.

The facts brought out in the evidence and by this official of this government are these: The Liberal candidate in West Hastings, one Byron O. Lott, and the Liberal candidate in Frontenac, one W. J. Shibley, with others had entered into a conspiracy by which certain ridings—for it was not confined to these two—were to be stolen in the way I have intimated. The whole scheme had been divulged to this deputy returning officer by Byron O. Lott, himself. The names had been given to him of certain deputy returning officers throughout the ridings who were to manipulate these bogus ballot-boxes. Our informant further stated, and I know it to be a fact, that his brother—for the deputy returning officer who divulged this scheme