

PARLIAMENT.

A Pitiful Exhibition on Part of the Government.

Flat Refusal to Continue the Investigation of the Ontario Election Criminalities.

Which Laurier and Cartwright Professed Ten Months Ago to Welcome With Avidity.

Overcome With Guilty Terror at the Revelations Already Made, the Ministry Calls on Its Followers to Choke Off All Further Enquiry.

OTTAWA, May 14.—The first business in the house today was a motion for accepting the report of the debates committee, recommending certain appointments of French translators for Hansard.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier suggested in amendment that in place of one of the men proposed to be appointed, a post should be given to Mr. Gellinas. He was informed Mr. Gellinas did not pass so good an examination as those selected, but he was not far behind them and was said to be competent, and had been a member of the staff.

Mr. Bergeron (conservative) said the committee had trouble with the French Hansard, which was badly done, and was far behind. The committee had decided to hold an examination and had recommended those who were most competent.

Messrs. Richardson and Somerville, liberal members of the committee, strongly opposed Laurier's programme. They declared that the appointments were recommended with impartiality, and Mr. Robertson said that Gellinas in his examination skipped all the hard sentences in the work he was called to translate.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier, after speaking twice, gave up the case, and the report of the committee was sustained.

Hon. Mr. Borden moved the first reading of his militia bill. He explained that it gave the government power to appoint colonels.

Sir Charles wanted to know what the necessity was for this bill. Hon. Mr. Borden said a number of eminent men had consented to be honorary lieutenant colonels, and he thought it would be right to lift some of them a grade higher. Besides, there were some in active service who might fairly have rank of colonel.

In reply to Sir Charles, Hon. Mr. Borden said this step had been recommended by General Hutton.

Col. Prior held of the bill and discovered that it gave power to appoint a major general, which Hon. Mr. Borden had not mentioned.

Hon. Mr. Borden explained that the government had power now to appoint colonels in time of war and lieutenant colonels in time of peace. It was proposed to go a step further and give power to make colonels in time of peace and major generals in time of war.

Sir Charles Tupper recalled the statement of Max O'Reill that the population of the United States was several millions more colonels. He hoped Mr. Borden was not going to place Canada in the same position.

Hon. Mr. Fielding moved the first reading of his civil service bill, providing for grade of junior second class, with salaries beginning at \$600 and going up to two thousand dollars. In special cases the salary was begun at \$700 and where a clerk is a graduate at \$800.

Hon. Mr. Borden read a despatch from South Africa with the casualty list already given to the press. He also read correspondence between Lord Minto, Mr. Chamberlain and the war office, respecting food and death required to recover insurance of members of the first contingent killed in Africa.

Sir Charles has been pressing strongly for this proof. The war office now states that it is making all possible speed to get the certificates ready, but fears that it may be some weeks before the official report can be completed.

Sir Richard Cartwright moved the house table committee on his bill to continue the Pacific steamship subsidies.

When this was disposed of the speaker general proposed that the house take up the criminal code.

Sir Charles Tupper said that there was an important motion already before the house concerning the West Huron and Brockville elections. It was altogether without precedent to abandon that grave question, which was an amendment to supply and to take up other orders.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier said the criminal code was held over last week at the request of Mr. Foster because Mr. Casgrain was not present.

Mr. Foster said that this action was taken before Borden's motion was made. That, of course, changed the whole aspect of the case.

The premier made no reply and the speaker left the chair.

Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper said the opposition was not going to be handled in this way. He moved that the committee rise.

This brought Sir Wilfrid Laurier to his feet. He said that the criminal code was postponed as a favor to the opposition, and the opposition should now be willing to discuss it. The house was always thin on Monday and Friday, and it was important that all the business should be done on Tuesday.

Mr. Foster reminded Laurier that the Queen's county case, where the house refused to give the seat to Mr. King,

He had asked as a favor to the opposition, but in justice to the house that the leading lawyers should be present before the criminal code was finally settled. On Friday evening before exhausting the bills on the order paper, Sir Wilfrid had brought on supply, compelling Mr. Borden to Halifax to make a speech without preparation, with only about twenty members present. Now he proposed to brush aside this important motion and go on with other things because the attendance was not large.

Mr. Foster charged that Laurier had from the beginning of the session obstructed and sought to choke off this investigation. Mr. Borden had been met with opposition every time he sought with action taken. Mr. Borden did not propose a debate. He only wanted to have the investigation concluded. But Laurier's lieutenants had openly declared in this house that too much latitude was given to this matter last year and that the same liberty would not be allowed again.

If an investigation was refused, the government would be on trial now. If it were to go to committee, it ought to be done at once.

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Mr. Bennett: The criminal code might have a good deal to do with some persons concerned in the West Huron matter.

Sir Louis Davies insisted that the bills on the order paper had been deferred at the request of the opposition and should be taken up now. He pretended that it was a breach of faith and courtesy to insist on the West Huron debate.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier claimed that members were absent who wanted to take part in the discussion.

Sir Charles said these excuses were evidently mere pretences. If the premier would abandon them and say frankly that he wanted another day to decide what course to take, he would be willing to allow the time, for it was a matter involving the honor of the country and the reputation of the ministers.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier said the government had already decided, but was deferring the discussion should take place on another day than Monday.

Sir Charles asked if Laurier would promise to make it the first order for Tuesday?

The premier said that was the intention and he would undertake to do it.

The discussion of the criminal code was then taken up.

Progress was made with the criminal code and the house adjourned at 11.40 p. m.

Sir Charles Tupper has accepted the invitation of the Toronto public school board to address the school children on Empire Day.

Col. Tyrwhitt, M. P., is steadily improving.

It was learned at the militia department today that Pte. G. Leonard of the 2nd Buffs Rifles is dangerously wounded; Pte. A. R. McLean of the 38th Dufferin Rifles severely wounded, and Pte. E. Armstrong of the R. C. A., Quebec, only slightly wounded. These names were included in the list received late Saturday night. Brown, the Toronto Mail and Empire's correspondent, was wounded in the thigh, but he writes that it is not serious.

OTTAWA, May 15.—As soon as routine was over, Sir Louis Davies rose to announce the decision of the government in respect to the West Huron and Brockville investigation. He had not spoken long before he was made silent by the government, intending to shut off further inquiry into the operation of the machine.

Sir Louis began by admitting the gravity of the case and by admitting that any officer or individual who interfered to prevent the expression of public opinion at the polls, or after the ballots were cast, should be punished. It was important, he said, to deal with the matter properly, and so as to establish proper precedents. He thought the house acted somewhat hastily last year in opening up the case. The privileges and elections committee was a poor court to try questions of fact, though it was a very good tribunal to try matters of law. The British parliament had divested itself of the practice of inquiring into election cases and this custom was followed in Canada. Sir Louis entertained the house by arguing that Mr. Borden was responsible for the delay in bringing the matter before the house, and that the premier, Mr. Borden was quite wrong in saying that Sir Wilfrid Laurier was the only member who asked that his resolution should stand as an unopposed motion.

Mr. Borden, interrupting, I said, and stay, that the only member who called out for the motion to stand was the premier himself. I also said that the premier should have had enough regard for the honor of the country and of parliament to have himself on the first possible occasion proposed that the inquiry should be resumed. (Opposition cheers.)

Sir Louis Davies: The premier has no control of the order of business. (Opposition laughter.) Sir Louis went on to say that Mr. Borden's amendment had been described as a want of confidence motion and that the government supporters, if they preferred to go on with supply, were bound to vote against it.

Mr. Borden: Was the amendment moved by Mr. Russell in amendment to supply and supported by the government? A want of confidence motion? (Laughter.)

Sir Louis Davies said that amendment did not require to be amended, but in this case the government supporters were obliged to take the whole of it or none, though they might be willing to accept the West Huron inquiry and not the Brockville part.

Sir Charles Tupper: Is Mr. Borden's motion more objectionable in this respect than when exactly the same resolution was accepted by the premier last year?

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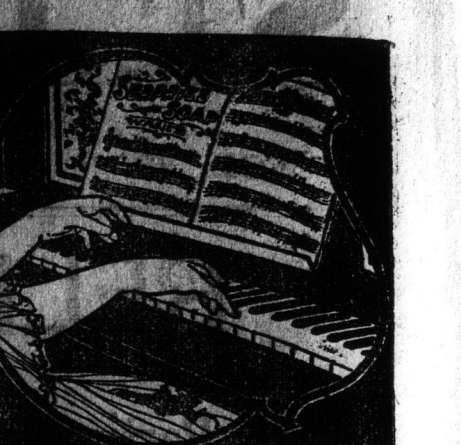
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report which should have been sought on this subject. Instead of that Mr. Borden of Halifax had taken his appeal to the committee, and the result was that after the examination of 100 witnesses and filing 500 pages of evidence the committee reported the case still incomplete. What evidence has the prosecution that was not produced? Only that of Pritchett, who had been interviewed in Detroit by two lawyers, promising not to prosecute him if he would come back to Canada and would make a statement. The conservatives had sent their organizers over to Detroit to make this corrupt bargain, a bargain which brought the whole conservative party within the law. (Conservative laughter.)

Sir Charles Tupper: Does not the speaker general know that no conservative could promise that Pritchett would not be prosecuted?

Hon. Mr. Fitzpatrick said Mr. Powell of Westmorland had told the house yesterday that such promise was made.

Sir Hibbert Tupper, reading Mr. Powell's speech, showed that what Mr. Powell said was that "Pritchett told the conservative organizer, I am not afraid to come to Canada. The government did not prosecute me, I know too much about them."

Hon. Mr. Fitzpatrick turned aside to remark that the conservative party when in power never prosecuted any public offender.

Sir Charles brought to his attention the prosecution of McCreery, who was expelled from the house, and subsequently prosecuted successfully, and other cases.

After further discussion, Hon. Mr. Fitzpatrick got back to the subject, declaring that nothing was proved last year, and probably nothing more would come on a renewal of the investigation. The only new evidence was that of Pritchett, and it was a question for the government whether that man should be allowed to go at large, parading his own crimes and deceiving the government to prosecute him. Mr. Fitzpatrick went on to boast of the success of the government in the by-elections. The only accusations of fraud were in two constituencies, and in some provincial contests in Ontario, with which the federal government had nothing to do.

Sir Hibbert Tupper: The same machine works for both governments. Mr. Fitzpatrick said that the conservatives had tried to prosecute persons in Brockville and had failed.

Mr. Powell: Because the witnesses escaped to the States, though they had been examined? As to the question of jurisdiction, the fact still remained unquestioned that the reference proposed by Mr. Borden was one the house had power to adopt. Neither Sir John Thompson nor Mr. Blake nor Sir John A. Macdonald, nor any other jurist ever at any time questioned the right, nor did Sir Louis Davies nor Dr. Russell. The question whether election officers were officers of the house was interesting, but not essential, and was only confusing the case. It was said that the ballot box was the citadel of the people's liberties, but it was also asserted that the government was itself the citadel for the shelter of one class of scoundrels and that a rougher class of criminals occupied the outside trenches. It might be necessary for the government to defend the trenches, because if they were carried the citadel itself would go. There was a suspicion that two ministers, Mulock and Sutherland, were so mixed up with these allegations, that they dare not allow the investigation to go on. In the history of the country only three investigations once begun had been broken. One was Ogilvie's inquiry into the Yukon scandal, which was broken off at a certain point. Another was an enquiry into the retirement of Major Walsh from the public service, which Sir Charles Hibbert was allowed to carry on himself by examination of the records. In that matter the premier had recalled the permission to inquire in public officials. The third was this case. All were under this government, and all were broken off at the moment when the evidence began to be damaging and dangerous. After comparing the course of the ministers in heading off the enquiry with the zeal displayed by some of them in making investigations in the Manitoba elections of 1896, Sir Charles Hibbert pointed out that the contemptuous reflections of Sir Louis Davies on the attitude of the opposition members were equally an attack on the attitude of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Sir Richard Cartwright last year. He warned the government that the country was growing anxious about these scandals, and that if the ministers did not show their power to protect the criminals the people would hold them to strict and severe account.

Solicitor General Fitzpatrick said that in his opinion the house had not divested itself of the right to try election cases, but a more effective method had been provided in the form of the election petition, and it was this

MR. CASGRAIN, conservative, of Montmorency, said Hon. Mr. Fitzpatrick was an able criminal lawyer and had saved many rascals from the public gallows. He never had a harder case or more unsatisfactory clients than in the present case. The government took ample time to consider and consult, and had had apparently decided that it was safer to stop the inquiry than to allow it to go on, though they had decided otherwise last year. Mr. Casgrain charged that the crimes now charged were not isolated cases, to be dealt with by ordinary legal process. It was an organized conspiracy operated in all by-elections all over Canada. Respecting Pritchett's affidavit, his opinion was that it had the stamp of truth, in that it was definite as to time, place and names. In any case the statements were such that Pritchett ought to be brought here to tell his story, and to face the persons whom he accused. In closing, Mr. Casgrain pointed out that the situation now was about the same as in the last years of the Mackenzie government, when the trap door trick was devised. The government of the day now felt their power going, and resort was had to these devices. He had reason to believe that the same expedients which prevailed in Huron had been attempted in Sherbrooke, but had failed there. The scandals under discussion were such that he was surprised that Messrs. Holmes and Constock did not demand this inquiry or resign their seats. It was due to the honor of the country that these accusations should be proved true or false, and that the guilty persons, whatever their station, should be punished.

MR. BELL OF P. E. I. followed, and Mr. Osler, conservative, of Toronto, was the last speaker.

Mr. McCure moved the adjournment of the debate.

OTTAWA

The Laurier the Law

Some Pointed Premier Negotiation

Only the Premier

Horizon—The by—The

OTTAWA, printed by the government printing office, Brockville, Ontario. The premier can query to be of last year by Mr. Borden call the large premier brought up, clearing that t

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