

THE HERALD

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We must ask those Subscribers, who are still in arrears, to be so kind as to remit with as little delay as possible. We need the money to pay our bills, and a ready response to this request would be esteemed a very great favor.

The British elections finished on Saturday, and the results set down as follows: Liberals 273; Unionists 271; Laborites 39; Nationalists 86. From this it will be seen that the two great parties are practically neck and neck. Government cannot be carried on without the assistance of the minor, independent parties.

"Citizen (Over Forty)," who writes in the Patriot regarding the Mayoralty, is a contemptible coward who delights to stab his neighbor from under cover so long as he can screen his own identity and the Patriot, by constituting itself a mask for this nondescript shows the cloven foot and makes open profession of its degraded notions of journalistic ethics.

On Monday of last week, the committee, representative of all parts of the Dominion, on preliminary arrangements for the Dominion convention of the Liberal Conservative party, met at Ottawa, pursuant to the call of Mr. R. L. Borden, leader of the Opposition. The representatives of this Province in attendance at the meeting, were Mr. John A. Mathieson, Leader of the Provincial Opposition, and Mr. A. L. Fraser, M. P. Mr. G. H. Perley of Ottawa was elected chairman and Mr. A. E. Blunt was appointed permanent Secretary.

It was decided that the convention shall meet in Ottawa on the 15th and 16th of June next. An executive committee was appointed to arrange for the election of delegates and to carry out the details incident to the convention. Mr. Mathieson is the member of the executive for this Province. A local committee of twelve citizens of Ottawa have charge of the local arrangements incident to the gathering. Fifteen delegates for each County or Riding will be entitled to participate in the deliberations. They will be chosen by the respective county or riding executives.

On Monday evening, Mr. Borden entertained the delegates and Conservative members of the Senate and Commons to a dinner in the Commons restaurant. Speeches were made by representatives from each Province. Mr. Mathieson was the speaker for this Province. He made a vigorous and able address, which was much appreciated.

More than a 100 men are believed to have been killed by a terrible explosion in Primerio Mine, Colorado. Eight bodies have been recovered, and rescue parties are making desperate efforts to reach the interior works, cut off from the outside by the caving of the main shaft. Three men were killed at the mouth of the mine slope by the force of the explosion. Both the fans which the mine is equipped were shattered, and it is impossible to enter the mine until they are repaired.

An orphanage is soon to be erected near St. Dunstan's College. It will be called "St. Vincent de Paul's Orphanage." The clergy of the diocese have subscribed liberally and it will be "a go." Plans for the new edifice are now in course of preparation and as soon as these plans are ready tenders will be called for. An advertisement setting forth the conditions and particulars of tenders will appear in the Herald as soon as the plans are approved. The inauguration of this much desired institution will certainly meet a long felt want, and the clergy of the diocese are to be commended for their generosity and to be congratulated on this important forward step.

Laurier The Meddler.

It would appear to be impossible for Sir Wilfrid Laurier in these later days to overcome a growing habit of making speeches which may cause international friction. His latest effort in this line occurred when the annual talk on Senate reform or abolition was brought up in the House by Mr. Lancaster of Lincoln who has been for years an advocate of the abolition of the Upper House. The Premier deliberately dragged in a reference to the election then waging in Great Britain. He said "At the present time an election is going on in England upon action taken by the second chamber. It is clear that the action of the House of Lords is blamed by many, perhaps the majority of the people. In fact that is the point before them. But whether the Unionists succeed or the Government succeeds, there is no doubt that the action of the Lords in renegeing the budget is resented by a very large proportion of the people of the United Kingdom. But I have never heard it suggested even by the most radical of the Radicals that the House of Lords should be done away with. The wish is expressed that there should be a reform of the House of Lords, and it is very probable that which ever party succeeds the House of Lords will in some way be reformed. I think it would be an unfortunate thing if the second chamber were abolished." It might be suggested to Sir Wilfrid Laurier that he would be much better employed in minding his own business and the business of the country than in indulging in deliberate opinions from his seat in parliament on the motives actuating the British electors in the recent fight. There has been far too much of this conceited interference in the problems affecting other nations by Sir Wilfrid Laurier of late, and it is as uncalled for as it is undignified.

This Government seems to have run wild with meddling legislation and the last bill of this character to make its appearance is that introduced by Mr. McKenzie, recently taken from the ranks of the civil service to fill the important cabinet position of Minister of Labor. The bill in question provides for the investigating of combines, monopolies, trusts and mergers which may enhance or restrict competition to the detriment of consumers. This bill is likely to provide a heated discussion when it comes up for second reading. The administration of the act will come under the dept of labor, and will largely follow the Industrial disputes act commonly known as the Lemieux Legislation which was heralded as the cure all for every labor trouble which affected mankind. Six or more persons who have reason to believe that a combination exists which is enhancing prices to the consumer, may make application to a judge of the High Court for an order to grant an investigation. The Judge will then direct an investigation under the act by issuing an order to the minister who will call the parties together to name a member on the arbitration board. This board will report to the Minister, who may if it is reported that prices are unduly enhanced, take advantage of the existing statute authorizing the Governor in council to reduce or remove altogether the duty on the particular article. Another drastic clause provides that if the corporations against whom the report is made persist in their methods they shall be guilty of an indictable offence and liable to a penalty not exceeding \$1000 a day for each day they continue to offend.

Dominion Parliament.

In the Public Accounts Committee on Monday, 26th. Mr. Crockett laid bare a portion of the story of the dredging at Gasperaux River during election time, 1908, by the Maritime Dredging Company. The work was the dredging of a channel sixty feet wide and six feet deep at low water in the vicinity of Port Elgin. The water is shallow and in some places only one foot deep. Mr. John E. Moore's dredge Troquois worked there from 17th August to 24th October. Mr. Geoffrey Stead, resident engineer at Chatham, reported that no improvement in navigation had been effected, as the shoalest part of the work was untouched and that more work was needed promptly as otherwise the part which had been excavated would fill up. This work had been under consideration for some time. In 1903 Mr. Day, Mr. Stead's predecessor, reported on it and put the proper price at 20 cents a cubic yard. In 1907 Mr. Stead himself estimated the cost at 20 cents.

On 31st July, 1908, Mr. Stead telegraphed to Mr. E. D. Laflour, the chief engineer of department. "John E. Moore says he has dredge ready to work on Gasperaux River, N. B., and expects to start Monday. Am I authorized to let the dredging for him the?" Advertisements calling for tenders for the work were sent out from the department on 29th July. These tenders were to be opened on the 14th of August. On the 4th of August, 10 days before this date Mr. Laflour wrote to Mr. Stead "The work of dredging in the Gasperaux River has been

This on the face of it appears to be meddlesome legislation and it will be interesting to see how far any government can interfere in the private business affairs of any citizen or combination of citizens.

Mr. William Paterson the venerable minister of customs is the humorist of the cabinet. In his annual speech in the budget debate he gave the House one of those inimitable harangues which are classics in their way. To the intense wonderment of both sides of the House he produced a copy of the Liberal platform endorsed at the Ottawa convention of 1893 and claimed that its various planks had been lived up to and an earnest desire exhibited to carry them out. Some of these planks were reciprocity with the United States, land for the settler and not the speculator, strict economy in the administration of the country's affairs, reduction of the public debt, reduction of the tariff, or free trade as it is in England, reform of the Senate and prohibition. At the Ottawa convention Sir Wilfrid Laurier used these words "I say that the policy should be a policy of free trade such as they have in England, and from this day forward it should be the goal to which we aspire." Has there been free trade inaugurated such as they have in England? Every Canadian knows that there has not, and this was merely an anti election promise made with the deliberate intention of dropping it once power was secured. Has the debt been reduced? Have the expenditures been cut down? What of the glib promise of land for the settler and not the speculator? All these promises, solemn pledges of a party convention have been swept away like chaff before the wind. The debt has gone soaring up, the extravagance and wanton waste of the government have seriously injured Canada's credit and while the public domain has been plundered by a horde of hangers on who have too long robbed the people. The Liberal cry in 1896 was "Turn the rascals out." That cry could be taken up to day with ten fold vigor and cause by the Conservative party. The fair name of Canada is being dragged in the mire of international scorn by Laurierism and all it stands for.

On 26th October, after the work had been finished Mr Stead wrote to John E. Moore. In this letter he stated that he had received no notification of the contract and did not yet know the price, though he had asked for it on 16th October. Mr. Laflour had telegraphed to Mr. Pugsley at St. John saying that the deputy minister had informed him that he (Mr. Pugsley) had the contract in his possession and asking what the amount was. Several telegrams passed between Mr. Laflour and Mr. Stead with regard to the quantities excavated. These disclosed the fact that the inspector kept no account of material cast over. Thus this part of the account had to be estimated. The order in council authorizing the work was passed on 20th November, nearly a month after the completion of the work. The total amount was \$33,969. The witness under examination when these facts were brought out was Mr. Laflour. The case will be continued on Friday.

The intention of the Government to burke the Lumsden investigation as it burked the Hodgins' investigation, was brought clearly into the light Tuesday. That excellent point maker, Mr. W. S. Middlebro did it. Here is what happened—Mr. Middlebro explicitly and pointedly asked Sir Wilfrid Laurier if it was the intention to allow in the proceedings of the committee, any questions as to over-classification. Having put this straight question he sat down and waited for a reply. Sir Wilfrid Laurier sat obstinately silent. He refused to say a word one way or the other. Mr. Middlebro repeated his question to Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Carvell, the two great blockers.

They would not answer—merely laughed.

Thus the position is that the Government will not allow any questions on the basic question of the whole inquiry. Sir Wilfrid Laurier does not care to affirm his intention in advance; but it would have been so complete a reply to Mr. Middlebro to reply that such questions will be allowed that he surely would not have allowed it to pass if he could have made the promise. He could not make the promise; therefore, it is his intention to suppress investigation into the way in which the road is being built. This exposure was the event in a day of rather technical debating. Mr. Carvell admitted that when Mr. Fielding said that the cost of the line would be \$58,000,000 he was not acting on engineers estimates. A good deal of his speech was devoted to the question of estimate; he related at some length instances or errors made by engineers as to the proportion of rock and earth in construction work. He discussed the definition of "solid rock" which falls under no less than six headings, and expressed his surprise in view of the difficulty of the subject, at the small amount of difference, only \$2,789,000. He further urged that the Grand Trunk Pacific has objected to expenditures aggregating only one million out of a total of fifty-one million, or less than two per cent. That was a very small margin of difference.

It was shown that the work began on 17th August. The department at Ottawa, however, did not notify the local officials until 29th Sept., six months later.

On that date Mr. Laflour wrote to W. J. McCordock, superintendent of dredging at St. John in his letter he said: "At the time the tender was received, I thought that this price was considerably more than for which the contract should be awarded. However, it has been represented to the department that the condition is such as to make this price fair and reasonable." Mr. McCordock did not reply until 9th October, in it he said: "I immediately set about seeing where the Gasperaux river was located, to find one in Nova Scotia, one at the Grand Lake N. B. and one on the C. P. R. in Sunbury county, N. B., but no others shown on the charts. I asked Mr. Shewen and Mr. Scammell if they knew of any other Gasperaux river and they both looked over the charts with me and said they knew of no other. On inquiring of the minister, I found the work proposed was at Port Elgin in Westmoreland county, N. B."

In another paragraph of this letter Mr. McCordock said: "In many places in the river there is but two feet of water at low water and to move the scows ahead so that the spoil from the bucket may be deposited into the scow, first the dredge requires to dredge a trench 25 feet wide to 8 feet depth at low water, throwing the spoil to one side, then when this trench is dredged a distance the dredge is moved back to take out the remaining width 35 feet and the scow is floated in the trench just made." This means according to the admission made by Mr. Laflour today, that the material was handled twice, the charge being 60 cents a cubic yard for the second, of \$150 a cubic yard in all. On 3rd October Mr. Pugsley wired from St. John to Mr. Laflour to wire instructions to J. K. Scammell of St. John "to visit Gasperaux as arranged." In response Mr. Laflour telegraphed to Scammell that "certain difficulties have arisen in connection with dredging in Gasperaux River. Please see Maritime Dredging and Construction Company at St. John who have the contract and report."

Mr. Meighen traversed Mr. Carvell's argument as to the small percentage affected, noting the determined and persistent manner in which the commissioners had restricted the points of dispute. He pointed out with great force how the premier's resolution omitted Mr. Lumsden's charges of over-classification. It was not the whole truth, but the seeming truth.

Mr. W. S. Middlebro began by asking: 1—What should be the object of this investigation? 2—What is the apparent object? The object should be to ascertain whether Mr. Lumsden was justified in making his charges that on account of over-classification he had lost confidence in some of his engineers. Inasmuch as the gravamen of the charge was that there had been over-classification he asked the Premier if he would allow questions respecting over-classification to be put in the committee. Having put the question Mr. Middlebro sat down. Mr. Middlebro then addressed his question to Mr. McDonald and Mr. Carvell.

Mr. Middlebro took this silence to be an admission that such question would not be allowed. The Government was afraid to allow such questions to be put. This was not a committee of investigation, it was to be a whitewashing committee, a strangled committee. Mr. Middlebro then turned to the Hodgins case. Major Hodgins had been dismissed because he was keeping the classification low to suit the contractors and the commissioners. The contractors complained of his classification. The commissioners sent Mr. Gordon Grant to the scene to see if Major Hodgins was giving as liberal estimates on classification as he should. Mr. Grant said that the classification was absurdly low, and that the resident engineers were too timid to give the contractors what they were entitled to. In two months Major Hodgins walked the plank. Now it appears that since Major Hodgins left there had been on a \$12,000,000 contract, an over-classification of \$2,798,000. Then Mr. Lumsden resigned because of over-classification on that same District F. Indeed Mr. Grant himself cut down over-classification by \$360,000. These things showed that Major Hodgins had been justified.

On Friday Mr. Borden rose to a point of order, calling attention to the facts that a resolution of Mr. Guthrie's was still on the order paper, not having been disposed of, and that until it was called in its proper turn the minister King could not discuss it on the motion that the House go into committee of supply. Mr. Borden objected to matters being laid before parliament against the rules of procedure which matters might provoke discussion. Hon. Sydney Fisher who was leading the House agreed with Mr. Borden and said Mr. King could only discuss the question with the unanimous consent of the House. If this was granted Mr. King could go on. Mr. King began his explanation, again stating that he had sent (Continued on third page.)

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