

STILL UNDETERMINED

(Special to The Daily News.)

OTTAWA, May 18.—At the opening of the house today, Bergeron, Beauharnois, rose to a question of privilege, denying, as stated in the Regina Leader, that he had in any way assisted the provincial rights candidate against Turgeon. He and the opposition leader had scrupulously kept out of provincial politics.

Hon. Frank Oliver introduced a bill to amend the Yukon act, explaining that its objects were (1) To provide for the election of all members of the Yukon council, (at present half are appointed); (2) To establish an auditor's office; (3) To establish an office for the public administration of estates.

Hon. G. P. Graham said that the report that part of the Transcontinental line at La Tuque was under water, owing to the engineers placing the line below the high water level, had not been drawn to his attention. He would make enquiries. He also informed Mr. Borden that the Transcontinental commission was considering the advisability of purchasing rails from the Algoma Steel company which would otherwise close for lack of orders. The Intercolonial was not buying at present.

Houghton, Ont., said that of a dozen delayed bills the G.T.R. branch bills, which stood over, were responsible for two.

Hon. G. P. Graham hoped the bill would go through this week. The finance minister informed J. L. Armstrong that the Canadian mine had come \$313,000 in silver of which \$28,000 had been sent to the assistant receivers general. The amount collected would be regulated by the demand.

E. Bristol, Toronto, informed that the French treaty date could not be fixed until the treaty is ratified by the two French chambers. It had been passed by one.

W. A. Gallihur, Kootenay, resumed the debate on the Aylesworth election bill, arguing that although the Dominion had delegated the franchise authority to Manitoba in '98 they had not divested themselves of the right, under certain conditions, to resume control and he was convinced that they were justified in so doing. He thought the premier's offer disposed of the objection that the bill was unfair to the conservatives.

Mr. Borden—What was the offer? Mr. Gallihur—That was an offer, including the revising judges, connected with the preparation of the federal lists, should be absolutely beyond the control of party politics.

Mr. Gallihur declared that the singling out of Manitoba was justified by existing conditions. He declared that if the North Winnipeg Galician affidavits were true, it mattered little if they were paid for, and that the only of proceeding with those remaining, if untrue, was on the Manitoba government, if some of the parties had skipped out. Complete lists should be made in B.C. every two years.

J. B. Armstrong, East Lambton, followed in praise of the Manitoba election law, and condemning the attempt at interference, with irregularities, and arguments advanced of the government's side of the question. He deprecated the term "obstructionists," claiming that the stand of the opposition was patriotic. The government threatened dissolution; let it come; it will be welcome. It was high time we should have dissolution and let the government go into the dry dock of public opinion. He referred to the speech of Hon. Sydney Fisher, he said it was strange that a government with such a large, obedient majority, should be held up unless their cause was hopelessly wrong, was the opinion of the Hon. Clifford Sifton was responsible for the measure, without which the west could not be carried by the government. He advised the opposition to stand by their guns and refuse supply if necessary.

Hon. Frank Oliver argued that the chief defects of the Manitoba act were the revision provisions, the briefness of the registration period and the placing of names on the lists without personal application or affidavit. If it could be fairly claimed that the law was satisfactory, its administration was not. W. D. Staples, Macdonald, intervened on a point of order as the minister of the interior was reading his speech.

The speaker was obliged to declare the minister out of order. Mr. Oliver said his remarks were written and said the objection raised was a sample of the opposition's methods of carrying on the debate. He asked if the liberals were given fair play by the registration clerks appointed by the Manitoba government.

Some cross firing then took place, Mr. Borden having been understood to say that the registration clerks were appointed by the judges.

Mr. Frank Oliver dealt with naturalization papers extensively, concluding that there should be prosecutions for perjury and either Rudenski or Walton should go to jail. If the Manitoba law was fair then there should be no objection in placing it under the judges. He was surprised at the opposition refusing to take their own medicine.

Bergeron said the bill was only a dodge to retain power. He objected to the clause relating to marking ballots and put in a plea for having the elections all on the same day. He did not think they were really illustrating the government does not do it.

The premier—Why? Bergeron—Because your record is too bad.

He appealed to the premier to withdraw the objectionable clause. Dr. Roche, Halifax, objected to the statement of Bergeron that there had been a partisan revision in Nova Scotia. A Johnston, Cape Breton, said the opposition could show no impropriety in the Nova Scotia lists. On the contrary he could produce evidence that the opposition party had been guilty of improper conduct.

An Opposition Member—Where?

Johnston—in Colchester. Dr. Miller moved adjournment at 11:30.

OTTAWA, May 18.—The conference between the two party leaders in reference to the bill is being continued. A caucus of the opposition has been called for tomorrow morning to consider the amendments to the bill that air Wilfrid Laurier is willing to make in order to meet the wishes of the opposition.

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OTTAWA, May 19.—This afternoon in the commons J. G. Turfitt took exception to a speech by H. B. Ames, in Halifax, as reported by the Evening Mail of that city, to the effect that the Saskatchewan Land company had taken over the lands of the Qu'Appelle and Long Lake Railway and Steamship company, the area from which the lands were to be taken would be enlarged. He explained with reference to the original grant in 1884 that after selecting 3,000,000 acres, Oleser Hammond and Nanton said that the more good land was available in the area from which selection was permitted. Two years before the land sale was granted correspondence passed between Hon. Clifford Sifton, then minister of the interior, and A. B. Creelman, K.C., on behalf of the company, regarding a larger area to make selection from.

Turfitt quoted a letter of Sifton's enclosing a map of the lands granted to other companies to the effect that they might select any available quarter section. Subsequently other Col. Worthington, talling 12,000,000 acres from which selection might be made, were thrown open. When the Saskatchewan Land company was formed they urged that the amount of land to be selected from similar blocks but instead they were only allowed to choose from 4,500,000 acres. Out of the original land grants 1,000,000 acres were selected along the C.N.R.

Hon. G. E. Foster complained of Turfitt's discourtesy in bringing up the matter without notice, saying, "I do not complain," he got a Roland for his Oliver. He cited Section 29.6.2, originally a school section, now developed as a coal mine. The applications were received from G. Gilmore in 1900, J. F. Howard in 1901 and S. F. Griffin in 1902. These applicants were told that the lands were not available for lease. In 1902 an order in council was passed, notwithstanding the fact that the land was not available for lease. In November, none of the applications having been renewed, Gilmore was dissatisfied and forwarded \$98 for three months' rent which was returned, and he then brought suit. Turfitt produced all the correspondence as directed from these three applicants. Among these letters was one from Gilmore to Sifton, his claim provided a lease was granted to Griffin, and four letters, similar in tenor, desiring to know when the lease would be granted, and urging haste. Turfitt referred to John F. Howard, October 26, 1902: "Form of lease before department of justice. Am hastening matter up much as possible."

Following this Turfitt made an examination that this was all the correspondence which passed in regard to the lease. Foster, however, produced three more letters marked "private." The last of these was from Turfitt to Mr. Howard on Sept. 15, 1902, and was as follows: "The way the matter stands Gilmore might be considered aggrieved, although after orders in council providing for leasing were passed, your application and his are on even dates. It will, however, be more satisfactory to Griffin and he can do as he pleases, get a settlement or withdraw from Gilmore and we will issue a lease to him for the whole section. I trust that you can arrange this satisfactorily. If not, let me know and I will see if I can right it my way. But worthy I prefer to have Gilmore withdraw."

Two days later Mr. Turfitt telegraphed Mr. Howard: "Do not act on my letter of the 15th, have written you today." His letter was as follows: "Just wired you today my act on my letter of the 15th until you saw Griffin. Have just seen a friend of mine who tells me possibly Gilmore will hold you up for a quarter or a third interest in the land, and I do not want to put you in that position. And unless Griffin can get Gilmore's withdrawal for a very trifling amount, it would be better not to go near it at all, and we will issue the lease to Griffin."

Mr. Foster in commented in these terms: "What right had the commission of lands, Mr. Turfitt, who could not claim to be interested in himself as between Howard and Gilmore or Griffin? No more right than a judge would have to write one litigant discussing how to get the other litigant out of the case. It is right had he to interfere to save Griffin from being held up for a fair price by Gilmore for his rights of concession? Turfitt admitted the facts as stated. He said he scarcely knew Gilmore, but had met him once. Howard was a friend of his who failed in business and wanted to start in coal mining. The question as to whether the application were prior to the order in council would stand. At any rate two of them were withdrawn. He had not the slightest doubt but that they formed a coalition between themselves. He had no interest in the concession. His dealings had been absolutely only in an official capacity."

Then turning to Foster, Turfitt said: "A man told me he was planning the Gilmore had two compromised letters of mine which he would publish if he did not get the concessions. I replied: Tell Gilmore to go plumb—"

On going into the commons Ames said that within three and a half years more than three thousand square miles of select timber, or more than half the area under lease, had passed into the hands of speculators. Of this a half or a quarter of the entire area fell into the hands of what he characterized as the Burrows-Fraser combination. According to returns from the Dominion Lands office, the timber in the three provinces: The combination only lost one bid in 190. The Imperial pulp company never lost a bid. It was wholly unnecessary to suppose that the cutting limits for the country's needs. The people's property had been stolen and steps should be taken to regain it.

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Burrows replied, saying that the enclosing of two checks was customary, and the fact that they were dated before the date of the opening of the tenders, was a sufficient guarantee. He compared the two successful bids totaling \$909 to the \$48,750 of the next bidder, to show he had given a margin of 21 per cent over his competitors. His holdings had been exaggerated. He had obtained only 17 berths from the government and of these he had only a half share in six, aggregating 534 miles, in addition to his half interest in the Imperial company. In answer to Ames, he said he was not counting 571A, as this was acquired from business rivals who had secured it from the conservatives. Two berths had no timber on them and these were returned to the government after paying \$5500 for nothing. He pointed out that the timber business was highly speculative, and subject to fires and other very heavy losses. He claimed his holdings cost him \$112.50 per mile, while the average of other limits bought while he was dealing, was only \$60. These Imperial Pulp company paid \$114. He cited figures from the Dominion Lands office, showing that the timber business was not a great deal more than his, which could not hold up Farmer's in prices and quoted many figures to show that the timber business was not at all profitable. He declared the figures quoted by his opponent were absurd and after an argument with Ames on the price, said Shaw Bros. (Ames said \$100,000). Burrows declared the figures quoted by his opponent were not paid yet. He declared Ames' authority knew as little about it as Ames himself.

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WAS TERRIBLE

(Special to The Daily News.)

ANTWERP, May 21.—The worst railway catastrophe ever recorded in Belgium took place near Contich, six miles south of Antwerp, this morning when, because of a misplaced switch, the express rushed at 50 miles an hour crashed into with train loaded with pilgrims on a siding. Every car in the pilgrims' train, excepting the foremost one, was telescoped. The cars were literally ground to pieces and practically all the passengers were either killed or badly injured. About 50 dead people have already been removed from the wreckage and succor is being extended to more than a hundred injured. Surgeons, nurses and doctors arrived early from Antwerp at the scene of the wreck. Shrieking and helpless wounded persons were still pinned under the debris and the scene is one of horror that beggars description.

The station at Contich has been converted into a temporary morgue and hospital and is rapidly filling up with the dead and wounded.