

into the main part of the box and by turning it the other way it would go into a small compartment between the hole in the cover and the end of the box nearest thereto.

I went and examined the box and saw that it was not any of the boxes issued by me, and shortly afterwards saw Mr. Porter on the street, who told me that five such boxes had been seized in the hands of a deputy returning officer whose name he declined to disclose to me.

That does not look as if the hon. gentleman was very anxious to proceed with the matter. The letter goes on:

I told him that I thought it was his duty then and there to declare from whom he had got the ballot box, so that proper proceedings might be taken if any sufficient evidence were forthcoming, and he informed me in reply that all things would be done in good time, but for the present he declined to give any information in regard to the place from which the ballot box had been seized or in whose possession it had been found.

And now he stands up in the House and denounces the government for not proceeding in the matter.

Mr. PORTER. If the minister will permit me. The statement as to the conversation between the returning officer and myself is quite correct. But half an hour or three-quarters of an hour later, after consultation with my friends and considering of the matter, I thought it would be best to give the facts, and I announced from the platform publicly the name of the gentleman who had given me the information.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. But the conversation as given here is correctly reported, as I understand?

Mr. PORTER. Yes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. We have another little bit of evidence that my hon. friend (Mr. Porter) will have occasion to explain. The hon. gentleman said that this occurred on the 4th of November. On the 7th of November, without any suggestion from the hon. member or any attempt on his part to draw the attention of the Department of Justice to it or to begin proceedings in prosecution of the people connected with this infamous fraud, the Department of Justice sent an officer of the Dominion police, Inspector Chamberlain, to Belleville. That officer attempted to find the hon. member (Mr. Porter), but he was absent. Not content with sending the inspector, I sent the Commissioner of the Dominion Police himself, who went to Belleville on the 10th of November. I also thought it necessary to instruct Mr. Shepley, K.C., of Toronto, to prosecute everybody engaged in the fraud. Both these gentlemen went to Belleville on the 11th, and there met the hon. member for West Hastings; and here is a report from Colonel Sherwood, Commissioner of Police:

That evening, the 11th, I went to Belleville, and the following day met Mr. Shepley and with him saw Messrs. Porter and Corby, and from

Mr. FITZPATRICK.

them heard some of the particulars. But Mr. Porter said there was more in possession of the solicitors who were looking after the matter for him, Messrs. Blackstock and DuVernet.

Again declining to give the information he had. So here again we do not appear to have had very much assistance from the hon. member for West Hastings.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. He referred them to his solicitors.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Yes; but in a criminal matter of this kind, where speed may be a matter of the utmost importance, it is not usual for one to rest satisfied by referring the officers of the law to his solicitors in a distant city. These parties were in or near Belleville, and it was in Belleville that these proceedings must be initiated; and they ought to have been proceeded with at once. I am dealing with the charge that the government were to blame for delay in this matter.

Mr. PORTER. Perhaps the minister will permit me to say a word in answer to that. He, perhaps, has overlooked the fact that my action for criminal libel was then pending, and it was in the hands of my solicitors. I think I took a perfectly proper way of dealing with the matter.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. But the important matter here was not the hon. gentleman's case of criminal libel; the important matter was to find the guilty parties and put them in jail. The matter of criminal libel was only secondary. I must confess that I have always been at a loss to understand why he was so taken up with his criminal libel case and so little interested in finding the persons guilty of this fraud.

Let me show just what the government did in connection with this matter. I have already told of the instructions given to the Inspector of the Dominion Police, the Commissioner of Police, Colonel Sherwood, and Mr. Shepley, to prosecute this matter vigorously. The result was that warrants were issued for Lott, Shibley, Reilly, Thomas Woodland. Lott was the defeated candidate in West Hastings, Shibley the defeated candidate in Frontenac, Reilly, a school teacher and Woodland an excise officer of the Inland Revenue Department in Wiser's distillery. Lott was arrested on Monday morning and gave bail. Ruttan, one of Shibley's workers—he was the one who received the ballot box at Kingston—was also arrested. So was Hawkey, the deputy returning officer at Clarendon and Miller. All these men, with the exception of Shibley, Lott and Hawkey, were proceeded against. So that every man connected with the transaction, so far as we know, has been arrested and committed for trial. These others escaped the country, notwithstanding that they were under bail—all but Shibley.

Mr. PORTER. Shibley was not arrested.