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CHARLES CROSS ASKS CUSHING TO EXPLAIN

A Draft of \$4,900 Negotiated in Detroit by the Former Minister of Public Works—Cushing was Dealing With Men Interested in Government Contracts—Cushing's Famous Expense Account to Missionary Meeting—Has the Political Pharisee Been Caught With Goods on Him?

Edmonton, July 8.—The Capital organ of Hon. C. W. Cross, ex-Attorney-General has a knife for Hon. W. H. Cushing, who is at present in England, and yesterday printed the following story concerning his dealings with the public:

"Some time ago the Calgary Optimist made a statement respecting a draft of \$4,900 which Mr. Cushing negotiated in Detroit on April 10, 1910. When asked if he had any explanation to make concerning the published statement, Mr. Cushing said that he had not read the article and did not intend to make any explanation on the subject. The Optimist story may have been too brief to demand attention at the hands of Mr. Cushing and in order to give him an opportunity to set himself right in the eyes of the public, the following story of the transaction, which gives more details, is now presented. Mr. Cushing announced that on more than one occasion that his mission was to drive the grafting element in politics out of Alberta. An excellent opportunity now awaits him to fulfill his mission.

When the Legislature met on February 10th of the present year, the most earnest stricker for righteousness and truth in public affairs and probity in public men was the Hon. W. H. Cushing, who for nearly five years had held the position of Minister of Public Works in the Alberta legislature.

Not satisfied with occupying the honorable position to which he had been called by the premier of the province, he aspired to the premier's direct and sought to create public sentiment that would enable him to attain the point of vantage. For years he had posed as one of the salt of the earth, and when he opened a campaign that claimed for its object the tearing down of the tents of the wickedness in high places there were many who believed that he was actuated by an honest desire to do good to the province of his adoption.

Milton tells us that it was an ambition that the angels fell, but whether that be so or not, nobody can deny that ambition is an inordinate vanity that is the cause of the downfall of W. H. Cushing. With the aid of R. B. Bennett and a number of dissidents in the Liberal ranks, he succeeded in practically putting public business at a standstill in the legislature for a couple of months and, having resigned his portfolio, became the most ardent traducer of his former colleagues.

Eventually a commission was appointed by the legislature to investigate the allegations of Cushing and Bennett, and a long and tedious investigation ensued which has not been concluded up to the present time. With the questions that came within the jurisdiction of the commission this story has nothing to do, but as to one of the questions which the commission decided did not come within its competency, and which led to the undoing of W. H. Cushing, there is much that may be said.

Towards the close of the sitting of the commission, and prior to its adjournment in May, Mr. Cushing whose mission was declared to be to hunt down grafters was placed on the witness stand to tell what he knew about public conditions and public men in the Province of Alberta. On the afternoon of the last day that he appeared as witness he was questioned by Counsel Biggar with reference to what he knew of certain movements of one W. H. Cushing when on a trip east recently after the holding of elections in Alberta in March, 1909.

Strange to say, although he professed to have an intimate knowledge of the comings and goings of his former colleagues in the matter of the alleged undoing of the province, he was absolutely at sea when questioned concerning the doings of W. H. Cushing and took advantage of a blank memory on several occasions during his examination. At other times the watchful eye of his guide philosopher, friend and counsel, R. B. Bennett, saved him from himself.

This was exemplified in a special manner when the question of his trip to the east and visit to Detroit shortly after the elections was brought to his notice by Mr. Biggar in cross examination. In reply to the questions he swore that he was down east on private business, that while in Detroit he borrowed some money; but that the money which he borrowed was not in connection with the Alberta and Great Waterways railway, and that the fostering care of his counsel, R. B. Bennett, was thrown around and about him like the shadow of a rock in a weedy land, a shelter in a time of storm.

The commission decided unless the money obtained by Cushing was received from the Alberta and Great Waterways railway, the investigation concerning it did not come within their jurisdiction, and on the earnest plea of Counsel Bennett, the probing of Counsel Biggar was declared out of order, ultra vires, nulla bona, outside the competence of the court or words to that effect.

Mr. Cushing escaped before the commission by a technicality, but that is no reason why the public should not know the true story of the quick

trip to Detroit so soon after the March election in 1909.

And this is the story: For a term of years the Canadian Bridge Company, Limited, Walkerville, Ont., had been supplying the structural steel in connection with the construction of bridges and otherwise in the province of Alberta. For practically the same time the Hon. W. H. Cushing had occupied the position of minister of public works in the province and had seen to it that the interests of the Walkerville Company was not lost sight of during that period. F. C. McMath, a resident of Detroit, is the president and general manager of the Walkerville Company and took so deep an interest in the welfare of Mr. Cushing that he actually made a special trip to Calgary immediately before the election to show that his heart was in the right place and beat true to Cushing in the days of stress and turmoil. There are some who say that he was willing to assist the honorable gentleman who had stayed so faithfully with him during the fortunate period of Alberta's policy in regard to bridge building and other structural works.

Be that as it may, F. C. McMath was registered at the Yale Hotel, Calgary on March 16, 1909, six days before the provincial elections, and had conversed with W. H. Cushing on that occasion. On the following day Mr. McMath left Calgary and in due time found his way back to Detroit, Mich.

Five days after the elections took place and Mr. Cushing was triumphantly elected at the head of the polls. He and his friends claimed that he was a great personal victory for him in that his moral fibre, religious life, consistent temperance attitude in long years and probity and integrity with the contributing forces; in the light of subsequent events it looks as though a strong contributing force was F. C. McMath of Detroit, president and general manager of the Canadian Bridge Company, Limited, of Walkerville, Ont.

Five years after the election Mr. Cushing lied himself out. The men's Missionary Congress was billed to hold a series of meetings in Toronto and desired the presence of the minister of public works. In due time he arrived on the scene and was given a full opportunity to make his presence felt on the platform of the association assembled. But although every prospect appeared to please, there was a fly in the ointment, and shortly after arriving in Toronto he sent a telegram to a friend in Edmonton regretting that up to the time of writing he (Mr. Cushing) had not seen Mr. McMath.

It has been said that if the mountain will not go to Mehemet, Mehemet must go to the mountain and so it came to pass that on or about April 10, 1909, Minister of Public Works Cushing, was in Detroit and saw his friend the president and general manager of the Canadian Bridge Company, Limited, F. C. McMath, and the arrangement that was made in Calgary six days before the day for holding the provincial elections, was carried out. That such was the case was evidenced by the fact that on the day he negotiated personally a draft for \$4,900, a facsimile of which is presented herewith, for as the good Scotch proverb says: "Facts are chieftains that winna ding and daurna be disputed."

If, as Mr. Cushing swore to in his cross examination, this amount was borrowed from Mr. McMath of the company which that gentleman presented, the fact remains that a Minister of the Crown for the province of Alberta was guilty of placing himself under obligation to a company which had been doing business with the province of Alberta, which was presided over by Mr. Cushing, and placed him under an imputation which would discredit him in the eyes of every right-thinking person. If, on the other hand the money was obtained to liquidate the election expenses of the minister of public works his last state is worse than his first and lays him open to the charge of prostituting his high office to the purpose of graft of the meanest and most venal character. He has his choice as to the horns of the dilemma.

But that is not all that is to be said in reference to Mr. Cushing and his proclivities along this line, in the witness box he swore that his trip to Detroit was on purely private business. If that be so, and if no one desires to impute perjury to Mr. Cushing, for his statement on the witness stand, how comes it that on his return home he put in and certified to the statement over his own signature that he had incurred \$204 of expenses during the trip and that the said expenditure was incurred on government business. Accompanying this business is an article in a facsimile of the expenses account presented by Mr. Cushing and the first three items cover the period during which he was absent on his trip to the Toronto session of the Laymen's Missionary congress and his visit to Detroit to see his friend, F. C. McMath, the president and general manager of the Canadian Bridge Company, Limited, Walkerville, Ont.

A DISASTROUS RECORD OF GOVERNMENT SCANDALS

Since 1908 the Government Has Thrown Discretion to the Winds—Scandals in Every Department—Pugsley's Peculiar Performances—Sweet William is the Prince of Promisers—That Old Liberal Journal, The Montreal Witness Balks on the U.T.P. Outrage

A Record of Scandals.

The government record since the election of 1908 is about as follows:

1. Mr. Pugsley has had registered against him the sawdust wharf transaction; giving of \$4,425 rake-off to an Ottawa middleman in connection with the renting of buildings for the government, and every one of the numerous New Brunswick dredging contracts investigated has proved to be a scandal.
2. The Department of the Interior has been caught with the goods in the sale of the St. Peter's Indian reserve for the benefit of Liberal speculators.
3. The Department of Justice showed up very badly in regard to the strange and suspicious escape of Bill Miner from the New Westminister Penitentiary.
4. The Department of Railways and Canals has hawtered in regard to the soldier who acted for and against the government simultaneously in adjusting damage claims.
5. The Transcontinental Railway Commission has had its own chief engineer resign on the ground that stealing was going on.
6. It has turned out that the Quebec Bridge Company mismanaged the contract with the Great Bridge Company which handled the structure which fell down so that the contract with a dummy company from which nothing could be recovered.
7. And now there have been heavy stealings at the Printing Bureau, which would have been nipped long ago had the Conservative demand for a general investigation been granted.

The Printing Bureau Scandal.

The Printing Bureau scandals show that the Conservatives were wholly justified in moving in 1908 and again in 1909 for a general investigation of the Government. Had such an investigation would have been saved. It is probable that the stealing has been going on for years; in that event the investigation had one or two years' of theft would have been averted. It may be that all the stealing has taken place recently; in that event the examination, with the uprooting of carelessness it would have entailed the alarm it would have caused to the thieves eyes, the tightening methods would have had a sanitary effect would have removed the breeding places of corruption and so would have saved all the stealing. But the government would not allow the investigation. It sat on the lid. We see the result.

On April 30th 1909, Mr. R. L. Borden moved that Mr. Justice Casel should be commissioned to investigate the whole service. "The public interest imperatively demands," his resolution ran, "the appointment of an investigation committee with full power to make a thorough and searching investigation into the several departments of the public service." The Government caused the House of Commons to vote this down.

On April 1, 1909, Mr. Doherty moved a resolution which in part was as follows: "That in order to lift the cloud of suspicion that rests upon the administration of the various departments, to satisfy the country for honest and business-like methods, and to purge the public service of inefficiency, reckless waste and corrupt practice, it is advisable and necessary in the public interest, that a thorough and untrammelled investigation be conducted by a competent business commission into the workings of all the great spending departments of the government." This the Liberals voted down.

Now, Mr. Murphy became a Minister several months before this resolution was offered. He himself had said that his suspicions were aroused soon after he became a Minister. What does this mean except that Mr. Murphy, knowing that his own spending department was in bad condition, voted against the resolution in 1909?

Mr. Pugsley's Performances.

Mr. Borden at his ingrossal meeting treated with full and convincing detail two very bad performances of Mr. Pugsley:

1. The Conservative minority in the Public Accounts Committee investigated last session the payment of some \$78,600 to a real estate company which rents two buildings in Ottawa to the Government. One item was \$3,465 for lighting the two buildings. The Conservatives proved that if the government had bought the electric lighting in the ordinary way of business it would have paid only \$600. Thus there was a rake-off of \$4425. The case was so clear that they unanimously passed a resolution condemning the transaction.
2. The famous Sawdust Wharf case. Mr. Borden explained fully how Mr. Pugsley paid \$5000 for a ruinous wharf in a decaying village which he

heelers had just bought for \$700. After explaining that the sale was effected in the heat of the election and was concealed, he continued: "The purchase money was drawn by Mr. Murray in five and ten dollar bills. Assuming that they were equally divided, that means 750 bills which this active business man received and carried to his home. He failed to give any satisfactory or reasonable explanation as to his disposal of these. He says that he paid a certain sum, the amount of which he cannot remember to Mr. Robertson on account of a debt, the particulars of which he cannot recall. He declared that he used the balance to pay other debts but he was unable to name a single person to whom he paid any portion of the same. The engineer, Mr. Stead, did not disclose to the Department the important circumstance that the property had been purchased for not more than one thousand dollars. Mr. Pugsley considered this a very serious omission and punished him by increasing his salary \$100 and giving him a bonus of \$200 in addition. The transaction is so glaring and so flagrant that it requires little comment. More than \$4000 was abstracted from the public treasury for the purposes which may be imagined and up to the present time the government have not attempted to pit the property to any use whatever.

Sweet William.

The Saint Ste. Marie Star, a brightly written paper recently dealt effectively with Honorable William Pugsley, late of the Central Railway, and in or of the Sawdust Wharf. A correspondent asked the editor if he did not consider Hon. William Pugsley one of the best and most promising men in public life in Canada to-day.

"Indeed we do," replies the Star, "and not only one of the best, but as a promoter, he is laps and laps ahead of any man in Canada."

Why, Lord love you, when the occasion seems to require it, Mr. Pugsley will promise anything from a railroad to the moon, to a refrigerated plant in a warm climate, and as for dry docks and great ocean ports, he would as soon promise these to the Yukon, as to any of the great sea ports of Alberta, and it must be kept in mind that Mr. Pugsley is always 'serious.'

A Prince of Sinners

(Continued from Page 2)

And finally there was a long packet, marked as having been delivered by hand, and inside—without a word of any sort, or a single cue as to its sender—a bank note for one thousand pounds.

Brooks passed it over to his companion, who saw the amount with a little start.

"A thousand pounds—not even registered—in a plain envelope. And you have no idea from whom it came?"

"None whatever," Brooks answered.

The pressman folded it up silently, and passed it back. He looked at the huge pile of correspondence and at Brooks—his dark thoughtful face suddenly lit up with a rare gleam of which his editor loved. He wished Brooks good night.

"I'm much obliged for all you've told me," he said. "If you don't mind excitement in his own mind he was making a thumb-nail sketch of these things. There was material for one of those broad, suggestive articles I'd like to drop in now and again down at Stepey." "I believe that this is going to be rather a big thing for you."

Brooks smiled.

"So do I," he answered. "Come whenever you like."

Brooks sank into an easy chair, conscious no more, at last, than ordinary exhaustion. He looked at the pile of newspapers at his feet, the sea of correspondence on the table—his thoughts travelled back to the bare, dusty room in Stepey, with its patient, white-faced crowd of men and women and children. Perhaps after all, then he had found his life's work here. If so he need surely regret no longer his lost political opportunities. Yet in his heart he knew that it was from the House of Commons he had meant to force home his schemes. To work outside has always seemed to him to be labouring under a disadvantage, to be missing the true and best opportunity of impressing upon the law-makers of the country their true responsibilities. But of that there was no longer any hope. It was the House of Lords he thought only with a cold shiver. No, political life was denied to him. He must do his best for the furtherance of his work outside.

He fell asleep to awake in the cold

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grey of the morning, stiff and cramped, and cold to the bone. Stamping up and down the room in a vigorous attempt to restore his lost circulation, he noticed as he passed the corner of the table a still unopened letter addressed to him. He took it over to the window, and glancing at the faintly sketched coronet on the back turned it over and broke the seal.

"St. James's House, London Thursday.

"My dear Brooks,

"I have read with an amusement which I am sure you will not fail to share, the shower of commendation approval, and remonstrance which by your doings in Stepey you appear to have brought down upon your head. The religious element especially you seem to have set by the ears. I sat last night at dinner, and his speculations with regard to you and your ultimate aims were so amusing that I passed without noticing my favorite entries.

"You will have observed that it is your anonymity which is the weapon of which your antagonists make most use. Why not dissipate it and confound them? A Mr. Brooks of unknown antecedents might well be presented capable of starting a philanthropic work for his own good; the same suspicion could never fall on Lord Kingston Ross, a future marquis. You might notice that I made no appeal to you from any personal motive. I should suggest that we preserve our present relations without alteration. But if you care to accept my suggestion I will propose that you nominate me trustee of your society, and I will give, as a contribution to its funds, the sum of five thousand pounds."

Brooks looked down the long street, quiet and strangely unfamiliar in the dawn light. The letter he held in his hand crushed up in a shapeless ball. It would make things very easy. And then—a rush of memories. He swung around and sat down at his desk, drawing paper a dink towards him.

"Dear Lord Arramours," he wrote "I'm much obliged to you for the suggestion contained in your letter. But I regret that its acceptance would involve the carrying out on my part of certain obligations which I am not at present prepared to undertake. We will, therefore, if you please, allow matters to remain on their footing."

Yours sincerely,
Kingston Brooks.

Bareheaded he stole out into the street and breathed freely only when he heard it drop into the pillar-box.

For only he himself knew what other that offer.

Crept upstairs to lie down for a while and on the way he laughed softly to himself.

"What a fool she would think me!" he muttered. "What a fool I am!"

(To be Continued.)

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