

TALK ABOUT SPOILS SYSTEM

Opposition Charges Are Shown To Be A Farce

Graham's Bill To Repeal Local Option Clause Is Hoisted

Toronto, April 19.—The hottest debate of the session was concluded at 10.45 in the Legislature last night, and the question of the alleged operation of the spoils system in provincial politics, and incidentally the administration of the liquor license law. A. G. MacKay moved: "That this House is of opinion that the administration of all liquor license laws should, as far as possible, be removed from the realm of party politics. This House, therefore, regrets the introduction by the present Government of what is commonly known as the spoils system in connection with the administration and enforcement of such laws, contrary to the repeatedly expressed and oft-recorded opinion of its members while in opposition."

As an amendment, Hon. W. J. Hanna moved that after the word "politics" there be inserted: "That the House takes pleasure in declaring its hearty approval of the course followed by the Government in the administration of the Liquor License Act."

The amendment was declared carried on the same division that had occurred during the afternoon, by 52 to 21, with seven pairs, except that Allan Studholme changed his vote to the Government interest, making 53 to 20.

Mr. MacKay went back to 1883 and 1885, and quoted resolutions found on the journals of the House, another in 1890, and another in 1896, introduced by the Conservative party and voted for by them, in which a non-partisan policy with regard to liquor license laws was laid down. Hon. Mr. Whitney had in his speeches stated that he would remove the appointment of political and party influences. It was a serious charge to bring that a body of men should by false pretences obtain from the people their tenure of the treasury benches.

No Spoils System. Hugh Clark was surprised that Mr. MacKay admitted that the spoils system was not acted upon with respect to the license commissioners, who were only appointed for a year. If they were to have responsible government, it was their duty to interfere with officers if they did not execute the law as it should be enforced. For years all Liberal office-holders had been active in elections, and yet most of them were still in their offices.

W. K. McNaught declared that so far as he knew, the resolution was quite contrary to the facts. It was the late Government which introduced the spoils system. He had himself been instructed to give a fair and impartial administration. What did he find when he took office? There was no minute book to show what had been done for years previous. During the whole term of his office Mr. Hastings had never administered the law according to the act.

R. R. Gamay is Hot. R. R. Gamay spoke with considerable heat, and declared the Government was not going far enough in dismissing officials. Hon. Mr. Hanna said the hour had not yet come when the Government regretted for one moment the dismissal of Mr. Hastings. The Government had promised a non-partisan administration of the liquor license law, but it had never been in their minds to go into the camp of their enemies for officials to carry it out. No one could seriously argue that any Government could remain in power and do so. He quoted the late Hon. Mr. Fraser and Sir Oliver Mowat to support this view.

Mr. Hanna produced a letter from a brewing company, written to the late Government, stating that the license commissioners and inspector in their district granted licenses on condition that no beer was bought from their brewery. They asked for an investigation, offering to prove their case, or pay the costs. The whole thing was hushed up.

He also adduced a letter from the late Mr. Lee of London to Mr. Harcourt, asking for his influence for one Garvie of Windsor, who had "moved heaven and earth to elect Lee or to go into the camp of their enemies for officials to carry it out. No one could seriously argue that any Government could remain in power and do so. He quoted the late Hon. Mr. Fraser and Sir Oliver Mowat to support this view.

Premier Whitney suggested that the member for North Grey had spoiled his own day by introducing the resolution he had. The discussion had shown only the fringe of public opinion as to the honesty with which for the first time in history the license system had been administered in the province. For 12 months past he had kept silent under constant invective from the Opposition. A predecessor of the Minister of Education had taken care to have no difficulties with his license commissioners, for he said, when there were any they had to come to him and he gave them orders as to what they were to do.

He had no doubt the Government would lose votes on account of their policy, and he welcomed the possibility. Extremists might be displeased, but no one else was. The dismissal of Hastings was his own act, as was that of every official dismissed in the province. The Liberal party had debauched and degraded the civil service. He only regretted he had allowed Hastings to remain one hour in office after the Government came into power.

Only the formal obsequies of prostration remain to be performed to end the third session of the eleventh Parliament of Canada. The red star is extinguished, the horseplay of the members indulged in, and the last motion carried. The House adjourned at 1.55, singing "God Save the King." Prorogation will be on Saturday afternoon at 2.30. A number of important matters were dealt with in the

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CATHEDRAL WAS DAMAGED.

Quake Cracked Ancient Building From Top to Bottom. Mexico City, April 19.—It has been discovered that the cathedral of Mexico City, one of the most famous churches in the world, was cracked from top to bottom by the recent earthquake. The fissure is an eighth of an inch wide. An engineer has been appointed to examine the building. The cathedral is centuries old. It is built on the old site of the Aztec Temple.

Many Prominent Victims.

City of Mexico, April 19.—Owing to the great difficulty in establishing communication with the cities situated in the region of the greatest devastation, wrought by the recent earthquake, details are coming slowly. Each succeeding intelligence magnifies the extent of the disaster. From the latest reports it is learned that the earth is now quiet in the region which was so seriously affected, but the last shock occurred as late as noon Wednesday.

Volcano In Action.

New York, April 19.—A despatch from Valparaiso, Chile, says: Puyehue, a volcano adjacent to the large lake of the same name in the Province of Valdivia, is in a violent eruption. The phenomenon is accompanied by awful subterranean rumblings, earthquakes, ink darkness, noisy electrical displays, ashes and boiling water. Torrents of lava have set fire to the surrounding forests and people and cattle are fleeing in terror.

QUEBEC MURDER TRIAL.

For Places Over 10,000—Little Hope For the Farmers. Ottawa, April 19.—Mr. Fielding and Mr. Lemieux clashed yesterday morning, but the latter had his way and the evidence taken by the insurance commission will be printed in French.

Mr. Lemieux in reply to Mr. Armstrong gave no encouragement to any hope for the rural postal delivery system. On his recent trip to Washington he found officials considering restricting, rather than extending, the system, he said. The supplementary estimates would contain provision for the extension of free delivery to cities and towns in Canada where population exceeded 10,000.

Hon. Mr. Lemieux said the whole question of civil service salaries would be reviewed in a few days. As to the postmasters, half of them did not produce more revenue than their salaries.

Mr. Fielding yesterday afternoon presented his resolution to advance money to the extent of three million dollars to the Montreal harbor commissioners upon debentures. At the evening session Mr. Gervais urged that Montreal be made a truly national port. The harbor had a wharfage 38 miles long, many things were needed, especially facilities for loading and unloading, and Parliament should appropriate money for electric cranes. He also urged the building of a dry dock and floating elevators.

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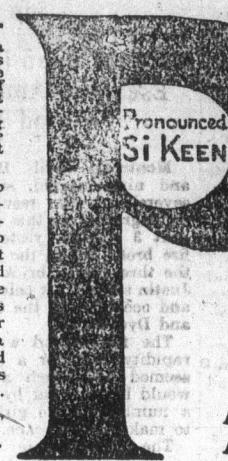
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