

would be unfortunate as well as unseemly were any considerable number of the honourable members of this House to resurrect and expose to view the work of over-zealous political workers in each constituency during the years that have gone by, but in justice to the Liberal party in London I feel bound to declare that he who holds that party responsible for the wrong doing so much ventilated and discussed in press and on platform during the past few months is one who is not cognizant of all the facts, and whose decision has been arrived at by examination only of the surface of the subject. In the province of Ontario, from 1867 to 1896 many of the active managers of the party now in opposition brought into requisition methods of political warfare which have to this day left a stain on public life. The hon. gentleman from Calgary saw fit to hold up for admiration and adulation the present government of Ontario. On this point I desire to meet him fairly and squarely. If I mistake not he wished to convey the impression that the machinery of justice up to a few years ago—during the long period of Liberal administration in that province—was tainted with partyism. The hon. gentleman has forgotten that during all those years the judges were men appointed from the ranks of the Conservative party—as a body most honourable men, but a few never shed their political mantle. Surely this fact was a powerful lever to safeguard the right of the Conservatives in the event of their being placed in jeopardy. The party in power in Toronto at this day would not, I am sure, draw such high eulogium from the hon. member from Calgary had he had an opportunity of following the proceedings in the election trials recently held in Toronto's police court.

The police magistrate professed a desire to open the whole case as affecting both political parties. The counsel for the defence also wished to have this done, and requested that witnesses for the defence as well as those for the prosecution should have their expenses paid from London to Toronto. He challenged the Crown attorney to have this done in order that the wrong doing on both sides should be exposed to view. The Crown attorney would not consent without consulting the attorney general, but up to the present moment no

decision in this point has been announced. Perhaps it is a fortunate circumstance that the glare of public opinion has been turned upon the city which I have the honour to represent in this House. The crime laid at its doors belongs to a small percentage of its electors—men whose political action enters the mart of trade or barter—men devoid of the nobility of citizenship—men who postpone thought of the execrable course they have mapped out for themselves—men whose greed for gain has obliterated those finer instincts which make for the glory and the honour and the welfare of the commonwealth. Am I too severe. I wish it could so be claimed. He who casts to the winds his electoral franchise—that badge of Canadian manhood which is our pride and our glory—deserves to be branded with the contempt of his fellow countrymen who value rectitude and whose words of patriotism come not from the teeth outwards.

I have faith in the people of London. Half a century of my life has been spent amongst them, and I hesitate not to declare that the vast majority of them are men sensitive of their reputations, whose love of country cannot be measured as a marketable commodity. The disgrace belongs but to a few, and to the few only let the stigma of electoral gambling be attached.

It may come to pass—and I sincerely trust it will—that London in the limelight will serve to impress upon our law makers the importance—nay, even the pressing necessity—of guarding with increased vigilance that receptacle in which has been registered the convictions of Canadian freemen as to how their country shall be governed.

The punishment for offenses in this regard should be swift and sure, and in accordance with the enormity of the offence, and enormous the offence truly is, for tampering with the ballot box will sooner or later lead to political chaos, which will have a most deleterious influence on almost every feature of our social, political and commercial life.

In this connection, honourable gentlemen, I desire to register my conviction, that the hon. the Minister of Public Works was in no way—even the most remote—a party to