POOR DOCUMENT

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SIFTON'S RESIGNATION CAUSES WARM DEBATE

Laurier Announces Rupture With Minister to House

Premier and Minister of Interior Make Short Statements About the Matter, Confirming That Separate Schools is the Only Difference Between Them---Leighton McCarthy Will Bolt on the Question---Foster, MacLean and Sam Hughes Deliver Breezy Speeches.

Ottawa, March 1.—(Special)—Sir Wilfrid Laurier announced the resignation of the Hon. Mr. Sifton when the house met today.

Laurier Announces Sifton Out.

The prime minister's statement to the house today was couched in the briefest possible form. He said:

"I have to inform the house that my colleague, Hon. Mr. Sifton, has resigned his position in the government as minister of the interior. Mr. Sifton finds himself unable to agree with the terms of the bill which has been introduced lately for the admission into the dominion of the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, his disagreement being confined altogether to the educational clause.

"After a conference with him the following correspondence has been exchanged between him and my self:

"Ottawa, Ont., Feb. 21, 1905.

"Dear Sir Wilfrid—After giving my best consideration to the matters which we discussed last evening, I have arrived at the conclusion that it is impossible for me to continue in office under present circumstances, and that it is better for all concerned that I should act at once. I therefore tender my resignation as a member of the government. I trust that the unhappy necessity which has arisen will not in the least impair the friendship with which you have been kind enough to honor me.

(Signed) "CLIFFORD SIFTON."

"Ottawa, Ont., Feb. 28, 1905.

"To my dear Sifton,—I received yesterday your letter of same date, whereby you tender me your resignation as a member of the government. There is no alternative to me but to accept it, and with much regret it will be my duty to place it in the hands of his excellency.

"After our conversation of the other day I had left you with the impression that the differences between us were more of words than of substance, and until I received your letter I had cherished the hope that it would have been possible ere this to find a comparatively easy solution. Whilst I feel more regret than I can express at this termination of our official relations, let me assure you that should our old friendship be ever impaired, the fault will not be mine.

(Signed) "WILFRID LAURIER."

"The resignation has been placed in the hands of his excellency, who has been pleased to accept it."

Sifton Tells Why.

The minister of the interior arose immediately and spoke as follows:

"The statment made by the right honorable prime minister necessitates a very short explanation on my part. When it was determined after the last session that legislation should be introduced creating new provinces out of a portion of the Northwest Territories I felt called upon, in view of the history of the education question in Canada, to give very serious consideration to the position which I should take with regard to the legislative power to be conferred upon the provinces in regard to the subject of education.

"It was necessary that conferences should take place with members of parliament representing the Northwest Territories and with representatives of the territorial government, upon the subject of education and other subjects involved in the bill. These conferences were unavoidably postponed until after the beginning of the new year by the absence of the prime minister, who, after the general election, was compelled to take a short rest and was therefore, absent from the country.

"Shortly after the time fixed for the holding of these conferences I was compelled by my own state of health to leave Ottawa and was unable to attend the conferences when they took place. Before leaving I discussed with the prime minister most of the subjects that required to be dealt with in the bill and so far as I was able to do so at that time, I communicated my views to him upon the various subjects.

Didn't Expect Bill in His Absence

"I may say that when I went away I did not anticipate that it would be considered necessary to introduce the bill creating the new provinces before I returned.

"As members of the house are aware I returned to the capital on Thursday afternoon last. I immediately took occasion to read carefully the speech which the prime minister had delivered when introducing the bill. I regretted that in that address I found some principles enunciated with which I could not agree. On Friday, the day after my return, at the earliest possible moment I procured a copy of the educational clause of the bill which my leader had introduced.

The Objectionable Clause.

"The clause is as follows:

The provisions of section 93 of the British North America act shall apply to the said province as if at the date upon which this act comes into force the territory comprised therein were already a province. The expression "the union" in the said section being taken to mean the said date, subject to the provision of said section 93 and in continuance of the principle heretofore sanctioned under the Northwest Territories act.

It is enacted that the legislature of the said province shall pass all necessary laws in respect of education and that it shall therein always be provided that a majority of the ratepayers of any district or portion of said province or of any less portion or sub-division thereof by whatever name the same is known, may establish such schools therein as they think fit and make the necessary collections of rates therefor.

B. That the minority of the ratepayers therein, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, may establish separate schools therein and make the necessary assessments and collections of rates therefor.

C. That in such cases the ratepayers establishing such Protestant or Roman Catholic schools shall be liable only to assessment of such rates as they impose upon themselves in respect thereof.

In the appropriation of public monies by the legislature in aid of education, and in the distribution of any monies paid to the government of a province arising from the school fund established by the dominion lands act, there shall be no discrimination between the public schools and the separate schools, and such monies shall be applied to the support of public and separate schools in equitable shares or proportion.

"Between Friday, when I procured a copy of the clause, and Monday morning, I gave the subject my best consideration and I had the privilege in the meantime of an interview with the prime minister on the subject. As the result of such consideration I determined that I could not endorse or support the principles of the education clause. Under these circumstances my duty became perfectly clear and on Monday morning I wrote the prime minister tendering my resignation as a member of the cabinet. Subsequently I expressed the desire that my resignation should be acted upon at once and to that wish the prime minister has now assented."

Agrees on Everything Else.

"In conclusion, not intending and not considering it proper at this time to enter into a discussion of the merits of the matter which has caused the difference between myself and my leader, I have only to add my regret that circumstances have compelled the severance of my official relations with my leader and with my colleagues, with whom my relations have always been of the most harmonious and pleasant character and with whom upon other questions I am in entire accord. The circumstances, however, in my judgment, made my duty perfectly clear and it does not seem possible for me properly to consider anything excepting the principles which are involved."

Hon. Geo. E. Foster.

Hon. George E. Foster said: "I agree that this is not the time to undertake the discussion of the principles involved in the bill. But I will briefly deal with the two statements which have been read.

"It did not come as a matter of surprise to this side of the house that the minister of the interior should at some early period read his letter of resignation and give his reasons for so doing. Nor do I think it a matter of surprise to men on the other side of the house who are in the secrets of their party.

"We all remember the peculiar circumstances under which this bill has been framed and rushed before the house. It seemed an odd thing that a bill of such importance should have been framed in the absence of two of the most responsible ministers as regards the country and the scope of the territory in which the bill was to be operative and having regard to the declaration of policy, which I think was made a year or two ago in this house, when with some new idea of the division of ministerial responsibility certain ministers were to be held more or less accountable for the particular provinces or sections from which they came, as instanced in the case of the minister of agriculture in his meddling with the militia matters of the country.

"During the last few weeks the bill has been framed and laid before the house in the absence of the minister of the interior, who is responsible for the Northwest Territories and the west generally. We were led to think that this was a second chapter of what took place when a most important railway bill was framed and presented to the house at the back of the minister of railways.

"We were later lead to suppose from the reply of the prime minister when asked if the minister of the interior would be back in the house by the time the autonomy bill was introduced, rather sharply replied that he did not know whether he would be back or not, but that he, the prime minister, would be here. Taking all this with the history of the bill the resignation did not come as a surprise to this side of the house and I doubt if it was felt as much of a surprise to the other side.

"It is still a strange thing that the minister of the interior, the most important member of the cabinet, as to the conception and arrangement of the bill, did not actually know of the educational clause until after he had returned to Ottawa, though there was telegraphic connection with the portion of the United States in which he was.

"One would think that on the theory of responsible government, of a cabinet acting unitedly, of a cabinet acting wisely, consulting with every unit of the cabinet, as I think it is in duty bound to do in order to secure the united wisdom of the whole cabinet, that the minister of the interior would have been consulted. But it seems that neither by letter nor by telegraph was he apprised of the one prominent clause in the bill which I would be supposed he was very much interested in.

"We are bound to accept the statement of the minister of the interior that he is retiring because he dissents from the principles of a single clause in the autonomy bill, but from what we have seen it would be easily inferred that there is reasonable doubt if the deliberate actions of the prime minister and the rest of the cabinet have not made it abundantly apparent that it was the intention to get rid of the hon. gentleman whether he got out on this particular clause of the bill or on some other.

Says Another Minister May Resign.

"The prime minister has not quite satisfied the curiosity of the house. There are rumors that another important minister is deliberating as to whether or not he shall follow the example of the minister of the interior who has retired, in also expressing his formal and unqualified dissent from the bill.

"I could hardly reconcile myself to the idea of a prime minister and cabinet undertaking to frame and put before the country so important a bill as this, involving no trivial financial burdens and continuous and growing financial burthens in the absence of the minister of finance who is responsible for the financial interests of this country. Was he also altogether and entirely in the dark in reference to this bill? Did he know the clauses, financial and otherwise, before he came back to Ottawa and secured a copy of the bill? Was there such urgent necessity for the introduction of the bill that at least two or three days could not be given until both the minister of the interior and the minister of finance should have an opportunity to meet their colleagues and by word of mouth and interchange of ideas to see if an amicable and united conclusion could not be had?

Foster Loath to Lose Fielding.

"We would be very loath to lose the minister of finance. His pleasant countenance is always an inspiration to us when it is not the opposite and that is not often. So we would like to have this report set at rest as well as the rest if the prime minister will do it and state whether there is truth in the rumor that he is not altogether at one with the rest of the cabinet with regard to this bill.

"We must bid adieu to the minister of the interior with varied feelings. We do it with some sympathy; some will say he has fought the fight and has finished the course. I am not going to say how good a course that was—and has entered into his reward. Probably he has his reward before him. Possibly as in the case of the late minister of raliways there is some glorious future awaiting him in some of the larger official charges of the country. Anyway if he leaves us as minister of the interior he has not stated that he is going to leave as a member and we will still have him with us to remonstrate with and to counsel, and as far as we can, to have good will and perfect friendship towards him.

W. F. MacLean.

W. F. MacLean—"I would like to ask the prime minister who lives in the ramshackle house now and who is the Sampson who has pushed down the pillars and has the roof upon him and his co-ministers in the government? The other day he said that I was quixotic. Well, there is at least this to be said about Don Quixote, he was a country gentleman of high honor and died with a good Christian burial. What is the reason for all this?

"The autocratic prime minister who eight years ago, using the words of Bismarck, said, 'we shall not go to Canossa,' has been to Three Rivers. He has made a treaty and in pursuance of that treaty he has chosen, in his autocratic way, to bring down a bill dealing with the great questions that are at issue without consulting his colleagues.

"It is said that in the preparation of this bill he consulted only three ministers, of whom two came from his own province of Quebec.

"There is a good old phrase in the Bible which says that 'all they who take to the sword shall perish by the sword,' and I say that all those who take to provincial rights and school questions will die by provincial rights and school questions. The hand writing is on the wall.

"I call the attention of the former premier of Manitoba, Mr. Greenway, to the statement by the right hon. gentleman's chief organ that it was the intention to punish Manitoba because she had vindicated provincial rights in educational matters. The province of Manitoba has an area of 74,000 square miles while the proposed provinces are to have an area of nearly 300,000 square miles each. But the province happened to be in favor of public education and she is to be punished.

"If the limits of the province of Manitoba were to be extended to the west, that portion of what is now the territories would have the right to manage its own school affairs while the other portion of the same territory would be shackled. That is why Manitoba is now being punished.

MacLean Congratulates Sifton.

"I congratulate the minister of the interior upon having had the courage to come out. He has justified that mission which he made several years ago into my province, into the county of Haldimand, to say that he came to the province of Ontario to ask for our sympathy because it was proposed to put shackles upon his province, because, he said, if the province of Manitoba is shackled today the time will come when the greater provinces to the west will be treated in the same way. It turns out now that the treatment is being metered out by the czar of the Liberal party without consulting his colleagues.

"The right hon. gentleman is in this house today a champion of an alliance between the church and state. I say to him that he is on dangerous ground.

Leighton McCarthy Will Bolt.

Leighton McCarthy, Liberal member for Simcoe, said the member for York has referred to matters on which perhaps silence on his part might be misconstrued. He referred to a campaign of some ten years ago in the county of Halton when Mr. Sifton and himself stood upon the same platform and were fighting the men who are now calling the question the actions which have taken place and have caused Mr. Sifton's retirement.

"Therefore, for the last ten years my position on the school question has been confirmed. I also fought on the school question in 1895 in the county of Cardwell and again in June, 1896, was the school question fought in my riding. From that day to this I have remained free so far as my constituency was concerned upon this question and I have been twice endorsed upon it. Therefore I rise to announce to the house, as I have previously announced to my constituents, that I am with the minister of the interior, absolutely opposed to the clause submitted in this bill. I will oppose it unalterably.

Dr. Sproule's Position.

Dr. Sproule, Conservative, of East Simcoe and grand master for Canada of the Loyal Orange order, said:

"I think my position on the bill is pretty well known. So far as the prime minister has given the house his confidence in the explanations he has made, well and good. Some of us thought that he might have gone a little farther and have told us who is to succeed to the place just vacated. I wish to say that in view of the loss from this cabinet of the minister of the interior, a man who was regarded by many as one of the ablest members of the government, does not the prime minister think it would be well to tell this house that he is prepared to drop that clause of the bill."

Sam Hughes Predicts Disaster.

Col. Sam Hughes—"I take this opportunity of stating that since the bill was introduced, knowing the action the late minister of the interior had taken in 1895 and 1896 when the Manitoba school question was under discussion, though I had no consultation with him I had absolute faith that he would take the course that he has taken today.

"I ask the prime minister, I appeal to his patriotism, and he pretends to be patriotic, I appeal to him, in view of the fact that the minister of the interior has retired, and that other ministers hang their heads when the bill is mentioned; in view of the fact that many members behind him will not dare to support him and in the interests of the great west, to pause in this bill. He cannot but know that the great tide of immigration now flowing towards that country once checked will not easily resume its course.

"I predict if he goes on with this bill there will be dire disaster to the country. It will check the tide of immigration and produce a crisis in the financial and business affairs of the dominion.

Hugh Guthrie, Liberal for South Wellington—I say on my own behalf, speaking for myself only, that I am unalterable in favor of that clause 16 and of the whole of the two bills for provincial autonomy.

Laurier's Reply.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier—"I have no observation of any kind to offer to the house on this occasion, because it does not call for any observations beyond the statement which has been made by myself and by my late colleague, the present member for Brandon. On such occasions ministerial explanations are to be given when a gentleman withdraws from the administration and it is left for the premier and for the minister withdrawing to make such explanations as they deem fit.

"I rise to answer one question and that is all, because everything aside from the withdrawal of the minister is aside altogether from the issue. The hon. gentleman (Foster) has questioned me with regard to a pamphlet which has been issued purporting to be certain collations from the debates of this house on a former occasion on the question of separate schools. I was not aware until this moment that this pamphlet had been distributed, and I shall make enquiries and ascertain who is responsible for it. Beyond that, I have no information to give to this house on this occasion.

"I do not mean any discourtesy to the house, on the contrary, the house is entitled to the amplest information and that it shall have at all times and I hope before this matter is settled. But many of the matters which have been introduced today are absolutely foreign to the question which I was forced to bring before the house, that is the resignation of my hon friend from Brandon.

"The other question will come up at a later date. Some observations have been made for instance, by the hon. member for South Wellington, Mr. Guthrie, when he said that this bill has been before the house for two sessions. That was evidently a slip of the tongue and was easily answered. My hon. friend ment only to say that the question of autonomy had been discussed for two sessions. Everybody knows, especially the members who were in the old parliament that the matter was discussed in the house.

"The only object I had in rising was to refer to a statement, not a statement, but an insinuation made by the member for South York. The hon. gentleman insinuated that in bringing this measure before the house there was an intention on my part in some way to get rid of the minister of the interior. I simply notice the statement to give the most emphatic denial that I can. Whatever may be the difference of opinion between myself and my late colleague, I am sure he will acquit me of having had any idea of acting deceitfully toward him. I am sure that no one knows better than himself that it is with extreme regret that I have to lose his reliable services and if I could have retained them I would have done so with great pleasure.

"The hon. member for South York insinuates that in some way or other, I was conspiring to get rid of my hon. friend, the member for Brandon, a statement which is absolutely without the shadow of foundation.

Dr. Sproule—"We are entitled to some information showing why we cannot get copies of the bill.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier—"My hon. friend is very persistent on the question. The printing is in the hands of the state department, who have many things to attend to."

The matter then dropped.

Sifton's Organ Advises Compromise.

Winnipeg, March 1—(Special)—Sifton's resignation as a protest against the school and land proposals in the autonomy bill created great excitement here. The crisis is the sole topic of conversation.

The Free Press says: "By varying the new educational legislation from the old the government brought into the political arena the naked question of separate schools—the one issue above all others calculated to shake Canada to its foundations and open political deeps.

"Canada is face to face with a devastating agitation that may do incalculable harm unless wise councils prevail.

"This is the time for careful thought and prudent speech. Nothing could be worse for Canada west in a material sense than another five or ten years turmoil over the school question.

"The situation is not yet hopeless, but is growing worse day by day. We look with some degree of confidence to Sir Wilfrid Laurier to meet the occasion with competent wisdom. The first thing for the government to do is certainly to get on a firmer ground by recasting the educational clauses."

Bourassa's Comment.

Montreal, March 1—(Special)—Henri Bourassa, M. P. for Labelle, when seen today in Montreal, asked whether he had anything to say anent the resignation of Hon. Clifford Sifton, asked: "Has he then resigned? I know there was a question of it yesterday." "Well," replied Mr. Baurassa, "he will go out and some one will take his place and that will be the end of it."

"The Conservatives ought to be satisfied," quizzically added the member for Labelle. "The three 'wicked partners' in the government, Messrs. Tarte, Blair and Sifton, are all out now. This is seemingly a process of purification."

Sifton's Old Opponent Praises Him.

R.L.Richardson, ex-M.P., who opposed Hon. Clifford Sifton in the last general election, was in Montreal today and said that the resignation of Mr. Sifton would be most popular in the West. I may say that outside of the minority nine-tenths of the people of the west are opposed to the principle of separate schools and Mr. Sifton thas certainly acted in a way to strengthen himpself greatly among the people he represents, should he at any future time desire to re-enter politics.

"Do you think Greenway will succeed Sifton?"

"I do not believe he will, nor do I see how he could. He, like Mr. Sifton, has always been opposed to the principle of separate schools and I cannot see how he can accept office under the present conditions. If it were at any other time I would think it was an arrangement between Mr. Sifton and Mr. Greenway. Under the present circumstances, however, it is impossible to credit such an arrangement for it must damage the government in the west."

"How about Frank Oliver, M. P.?"

"It is quite possible that Mr. Oliver would accept office and support the separate school proposals. He would no elected in his constituency for he has a great number of the Galacians whom he denounced in his constituency and they are favorable to separate schools, as they form a part of the minority."

LAURIER WILL MODIFY BILL

Ottawa, March 1.—(Special)—There was a conference this evening between Hon. Charles Fitzpatrick and Hon. Thomas Greenway, J. G. Turiff, Walter Scott, and Frank Oliver in reference to the educational clause of the Northwest autonomy bill. The conference was arranged for by the minister of justice, who wanted to know what modifications the western members desired. It is understood that the interview was a very satisfactory one.

There is reason to believe tonight that the clause will be so amended to permit all Liberals voting for it.

The minister of justice is said to be now favorable to insert only the clause of the Northwest Territories act dealing with the schools, so that there will be no doubt as to the position of the new provinces on the question of education. But on account of the firm stand taken by the minister of the interior the western Liberal members desired that the government should go a little further than this. Indeed it may be so cut down as to permit even the minister of the interior voting for it.

Two or three different propositions are in the hands of the minister of justice who will report the matter to Sir Wilfrid and his colleagues.

One thing is certain, that the west will now get all that it asked for in the first instance, and perhaps a little more.

Such is the closing work of the day. The political air was somewhat hot this morning, and tonight it is more normal and the outlook for tomorrow is for a calm.

WHEAT HIGHER IN THE WEST THAN AT FORT WILLIAM

Lake of the Woods Milling Company Shipping Grain Back to Keewatin Mills.

Montreal, Feb. 28—(Special)—Some unusual features have developed in the wheat situation this season but none more so than the announcement today that the Lake of the Woods Milling Company was now sending wheat back from Fort William to its mills at Keewatin, a distance of 300 miles.

Asked if this was actually taking place: Robert Meighen, president of the company, said: "Yes it is true that wheat is going back west again. We loaded fifty cars at Fort William today and the shipment will probably be increased later on to 350 cars and possibly more.

"This means that we can purchase wheat lower at Fort William just now than we can through our system of elevators at country points in Manitoba. It is like carrying coals to Newcastle. There has been keen competition in the west this year and the millers as a rule have kept the markets in Manitoba and the Territories above an export basis."

NORTHUMBERLAND BYE-ELECTION MARCH 18.

Newcastle, N. B., Feb. 28—Writs were issued yesterday for the by-election in this county. Polling day will be on March 18. It is said there is not likely to be any opposition to Robert Murray.

BOWELL'S FIERCE ATTACK ON FOSTER AND HAGGART

Gives Senate His Version of 1896 Cabinet Rupture

Declares That Ex-Minister of Finance Made an Untruthful Statement About the Affair in Parliament Recently---Scores Haggart Unmercifully for His Speech Backing Up Hon. George E.---Reads Letter He Wrote During North Ontario Election.

Ottawa, March 1—(Special)—Sir Mackenzie Bowell made a remarkable speech in the senate today. He said in opening that it was with extreme reluctance that he referred once more to what was known as the ministerial crisis of 1896. He would not have opened his mouth on the subject were it not for the statements that had been made reflecting upon his honor as a public man. In view of the circumstances he craved to be excused if he spoke in a plain and unvarnished manner.

He would have spoken sooner but that he intended awaiting the arrival of his former colleague, Hon. Mr. Ferguson, who however, was not able to break through the snow and ice blockade that had cut Prince Edward Island off from communication.

After referring to the version of the cabinet bolt that was given to the house of commons in a debate two weeks ago by Hon. George E. Foster and Hon. John Haggart, the ex-premier said he intended showing that not one word of their story was correct or in plainer terms true.

"It is difficult, he added, to understand why such statements were made after a lapse of nine years unless believing that the events of 1895-6 were forgotten, therefore their hearers could be the more easily misled and deceived. Had Mr. Foster confined his explanation of why he and his fellow bolters left the government, to that given in the house of commons on the 16th January, 1896, and I should never have considered it worthy of further notice. But when he gave other and incorrect reasons it becomes my duty not only to call attention to them but to prove out of his own mouth and from his own utterances that he had little regard, when making his last explanation, for the facts, as they appear upon the record.

"When he told the people of Toronto at the last general election that he left the government on account of differences of opinion on questions of policy and that his excellency, the governor general, knowing the facts, called them back into the government he knew he was telling what was not correct."

Sir Mackenzie went back to the statement that Mr. Foster read in the house of commons in January, 1896, by permission of the governor general, giving the reasons why he and his six companions had left the cabinet. There was, he pointed out, not a single word in that document about divergences of opinion on questions of policy. On the contrary Mr. Foster had said that there was no difference of opinion whatever on matters of policy. The reasons for their withdrawal from the government were entirely of a personal character.

Bowell Reads His Opinion of Foster.

"He, Sir Mackenzie Bowell, had been appealed to at the time of the North Ontario by-election two years ago by his fellow Conservatives to say what he could in favor of Mr. Foster's candidature, on account of the difficulty that the party was experiencing in getting its friends out to the polls. Sir Mackenzie gave to the senate the answer he had given to this appeal. The letter said in part:

"If you will take the trouble to read the reports of Foster's speeches as they appear in the Globe, News and Mail, I do not think you will ask me to write any such letter as suggested by you. His answers to questions are absolutely untrue. He told the audience that there were differences of opinion in the cabinet upon questions of policy which led to his and his colleagues' resignation. This is not the fact. The reasons given by him in the commons in justification of his action make no mention of differences of opinion upon questions of policy, the best evidence of which and of the untruthfulness of his statement is found in the fact that he and his fellow conspirators were to come back into the fold without any stipulation as to change of policy.

"His dragging the governor general's name into the discussion is most unwarrantable. I humiliated myself quite enough by taking them back. It was done in what I considered the interest of the party then and have regretted it ever since. I do not propose to repeat it by writing such a letter as you suggest. I may be all that he and his chums say I am, but I have not yet lost my self-respect.

"I am content to let him alone to fight his own battles, but decline to further demean myself by asking my friends to put confidence in him which I do not entertain myself.

"You will pardon my writing this plainly. I do so believing it best to be frank with my friends.

"Yours sincerely,

(Signed) "MACKENZIE BOWELL."

Calls Foster as a Witness.

"Not satisfied with excusing his resignation on the grounds of policy in Toronto Mr. Foster had become bolder when replying to charges hurled at him by Sir William Mulock in the house recently as being a "traitor." Mr. Foster had spoken of his resignation as being caused by difference with the premier on points of policy 'and principles.'

"How far," asked Sir Mackenzie, "is this latest assertion true? Let Mr. Foster be put in the witness box to answer his own questions. In his statement to the house of commons in January, 1896, Mr. Foster had said: 'There is no disagreement between ourselves and the premier upon any question of public policy, trade or constitutional, with regard to which action has already been taken or in respect to which an attitude has been assumed by the government under the present premier. I beg also to say that we retain our firm belief in the principles and policy of the Liberal-Conservative party with which we are in entire accord.'"

Sir Mackenzie went on to say that Mr. Foster's expressed reason for resiging in January, 1896, from the cabinet was because he and those with him had no confidence in his (Sir Mackenzie's) ability as leader. Hon. John Haggart, another of the bolters had said at Smith's Falls in November, 1895, that "the government was united on its different lines, a policy without a shred of disunion."

The Mail on the occasion of this meeting at Smith's Falls had credited Mr. Haggart with a warm eulogy upon Sir Mackenzie Bowell, whose character, after seventeen years' administration of one of the greatest departments of the government, had not shown one trace of dishonesty or incapacity.

Again in the Cardwell by-election shortly after Hon. Dr. Montague, another member of the cabinet, had praised Sir Mackenzie as an administrator, declaring also that he favored the broadest policy and that he favored also plans for Canadian progress and development.

Leaves the Public toJudge.

"Again," said the ex-premier, "I leave the public to judge between us."

"Now," continued the ex-premier, "let me devote a short time to that exemplary statesman, Hon. John Haggart, who rushed to the defence of his leader, Mr. Foster, with a reckless valor worthy of a much better cause. Their position was desperate and required, therefore, a desperate defence. In his bold recklessness he made charges and drew largely on his imagination. Mr. Haggart had said that a 'correct statement has never been made of the affair but very likely it will be made shortly.' If so, it will never emanate from a historian of the Munchausen type of John Haggart."

Continuing, Sir Mackenzie recalled Mr. Haggart's allusions to the resignations of Hon. Clarke Wallace, Hon. A. R. Angers, Hon. Mr. Ouimet and Sir Adolph Caron and made it plain that they each retired for a reason very different in its character from those that inspired Mr. Foster and his six fellow bolters. Mr. Wallace had resigned because he was not prepared to support the government's remedial legislation in the matter of the Manitoba schools. Messrs. Angers and Ouimet and Sir Adolphe Caron resigned because they favored the immediate introduction of remedial legislation whilst he (Sir Mackenzie) was determined on the other hand to first exhaust every means to try and get the Manitoba government to itself redress the grievance of the minority in educational matters.

"Mr. Angers' reward was defeat at the hands of those for whom he had sacrificed position and honor, whilst Sir Adolphe was left out of the Tupper cabinet through the machinations of the Foster-Haggart combination."

Mr. Haggart's attempt, pursued Sir Mackenzie, to place the conduct of Caron, Angers, Ouimet and Wallace on a par with their own had neither reason nor foundation to support it.

Why Tupper Came to Canada.

Mr. Haggart had also referred to Sir Charles Tupper's return to Canada in 1896 and with apparent innocence had said, "I cannot tell how he came out here. My own idea is that he came at the request of Sir Mackenzie Bowell and of some of his colleagues in the government."

"Here," said the ex-premier, "is another instance in which Mr. Haggart finds it convenient to forget. He knows that he and the other cabinet ministers were consulted and that both he and Mr. Foster objected to Sir Charles' return at that time to Canada. In the light of subsequent events their reasons can be divined.

"At that time negotiations were pending between Canada and the imperial government on the question of a fast line of steamers between Canada and England. The correspondence was being conducted by cablegram and Sir Charles suggested that if he were in Canada a more satisfactory understanding of the case could be reached than by cable communication. I concurred in that view and laid it before my colleagues, all agreeing except the two gentlemen to whom I have already referred. I acted on my own view of the case and wired Sir Charles to come to Canada. As to the reasons why these gentlemen opposed Sir Charles' return to Canada, the whole facts, as Mr. Haggart says, may be told at some date in the not distant future.

"I cannot but express the profound surprise I felt on reading the next sentence in Mr. Haggart's defence of his leader, Foster, in which in the dulcet tones, child like and bland that ever distinguished the meek and enchanting voice of that honorable gentleman, said in referring to myself, 'I have no objections to that honorable gentleman. I have the kindliest feelings for him.' Who would not sleep after such a declaration coming from such a source? That is if he were not reminded of one of Aesop's fables in which it is related that the kindness of the rustic who took the torpid viper into his bosom to warm it back into life had in return for the kindness the poisonous fangs of the reptile plunged into his bosom."

Hard Words for Haggart.

Sir Mackenzie again quoted his former colleague, Mr. Haggart, as follows:—

(Continued on page 7, second column.)