

CONTENTS OF THIS NUMBER.

"Borden Backs Britain." (Cartoon).....	73
Turning Tide in British Columbia—The Answer from Peel....	74
Questions and Answers in Parliament.....	75
Shell Contracts in Canada (Extracts from Speech of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, House of Commons, March 7th.....)	76-77
Government Finance.....	78
Hay Contracts in New Brunswick.....	79
Purchase of Revolvers and Pistols.....	80-81
Notes of the Month.....	82
Soldiers' Ballots (Cartoon)—Padding the Estimates—The Davidson Commission—Diary of the Month.....	83
The Month in Parliament.....	84

TURNING TIDE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

That the days of the Bowser Conservative Government in British Columbia are very definitely numbered is indicated in the result of three by-elections held a few days ago. Vancouver, the chief city of the Province, rejected Hon. C. E. Tisdall, the new Minister of Public Works, by a vote so overwhelming that there could be no doubt of the weight of public sentiment behind it. Mr. M. A. Macdonald, the Liberal candidate, was elected with a majority of 4,116. A third candidate, L. D. Taylor, Independent, secured only 194 votes. On the same day, February 26th, Hon. Lorne Campbell, the new Minister of Mines, managed to secure election in Rossland with a bare majority of 9 over Mayor Wilson. Here the Minister undoubtedly owed his success to the third candidate, W. W. Lefaux (Socialist), who polled 49 votes. It is reported that a protest against the election of Hon. Mr. Campbell is to be entered by the Liberals. A week later the Bowser government suffered another staggering blow when Victoria, the second city of the Province and also the Capital, elected Mr. H. C. Brewster, the Liberal Leader, with a majority of 2,397 over Hon. A. C. Flummerfelt, the newly appointed Minister of Finance.

Reconstruction a Poor Plea.

The elections were caused by the reconstruction of the cabinet following the retirement of Sir Richard McBride and the accession to the premiership of Hon. W. J. Bowser, for many years Attorney General and the virtual dictator of the Government. In reconstructing his cabinet and sending his three new ministers to their constituents for endorsement, Premier Bowser tried hard to make the electors of British Columbia believe that they were to have an altogether "new deal," that the government was really a new government and not responsible for its doings under the Premiership of Sir Richard McBride. How signally Mr. Bowser has failed is plain. The votes in Vancouver, Victoria and in Rossland as well, have demonstrated that the people of British Columbia are impatient for the day of general election, which must come early in the coming summer, probably in June, that they may rid themselves forever of an administration that has disgraced the Province and all but ruined it.

THE ANSWER FROM PEEL.

The provincial by-election in the County of Peel, Ontario, on February 24th, resulting in the signal defeat of J. R. Fallis, the former Conservative member, is very properly regarded as one of the most important and significant political events since the outbreak of the War. Fallis resigned his seat because evidence given before the Davidson Commission showed that he had succeeded in erecting for his own benefit a "toll gate" between the Dominion Government and the farmers of his county in the purchase by the government of horses for war purposes. In the face of the storm of public opinion, Fallis turned over to the funds of a local regiment some \$1,800 of his questionable profits and resigned from the Legislature. The Liberals of Peel offered to let the by-election go unopposed if the Conservative candidate was any other than Fallis. In spite of this, he had little trouble in securing re-nomination, a fact which bears enlightening evidence of the typical Tory attitude towards the typical Tory patronage and middleman system under which it was possible for Fallis to have made his profits. He was opposed by W. J. Lowe, Liberal, and the sole and only issue of the election was the action of Fallis in using his influence with the Borden Government to make himself a middleman, exacting profit for himself by coming between the Government and the farmers with whom the Government purchasers might as well have dealt direct. The result of the election was that Mr. Lowe was elected by a majority of 329 in spite of the fact that in the last Provincial elections Fallis had a majority of 627.

Federal Member was Active.

In his strenuous election campaign, Fallis had the assistance of Mr. Richard Blain, Dominion member for Peel, who campaigned day and night and used the whole weight of the Federal government in an effort to force the free electors of Peel to "vindicate" Fallis and his methods. The activity of Mr. Blain is of more than usual interest, because he went into the fight fresh from receiving at Ottawa, the appointment as Chairman of the Railway Committee, one of the most important parliamentary positions outside the Cabinet, in the gift of the party.

The by-election in Peel was the first to take place in Canada since the first revelations of war graft and the workings of the Tory system of middlemen were made before the Public Accounts Committee last year, in which the matter was in any way an issue. The result therefore has quite naturally been construed by the press generally as the "handwriting on the wall" for all politicians who can not go before their constituents with clean hands, whether they may be active sinners themselves or have only used their influence and position to manipulate war contracts for the profit of their "friends" or their own political benefit. The Toronto Telegram (Conservative) reads such a lesson when it declares that "Peel County Conservatives serve notice on Sir Robert Borden that he had better investigate the Shell Committee publicly and thoroughly. . . . The suppression of enquiry will immediately hurt Sir Robert Borden and ultimately wreck Sir Robert Borden's party."