

THE HERALD

WEDNESDAY, JULY 24, 1907.

SUBSCRIPTION—\$1.00 A YEAR.
PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY
JAMES MOISAAC
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III.

In our last issue we showed that Premier McBride, of British Columbia, had returned from London bringing with him the assurance of the Earl of Elgin, Secretary of State for the Colonies, that the bill amending the British North America Act, relative to the increase of subsidies to the Provinces, would be amended by eliminating therefrom the words "final and unalterable," thus leaving an open door for future approach to the Federal authorities on this matter. We showed, moreover, that these words had been actually dropped from the bill during its passage through the Imperial House of Commons, and we quoted the words of Winston Churchill, Under Sec'y for the Colonies and Lord Elgin's mouthpiece in the Commons, as to the justice and propriety of this changing the bill.

Mr. McBride, Premier of British Columbia, who had exerted himself to bring about this change in the amending bill, heard Winston Churchill make the announcement in the House of Commons, that the words "final and unalterable," had been dropped therefrom, and had moreover, he says, the written assurance of Lord Elgin that the bill would pass in the amended form. Having heard the declaration of the Under Secretary, and possessing the written guarantee of the Secretary of State he felt morally certain that his case was won and returned home. What further proof should he require? It would certainly be nothing less than an insult to cast any doubt on the integrity and good faith of the Secretary of State. It is surely contrary to the traditions of British Cabinets to suspect that the pledged faith of one of its members on an important question of public policy should be disregarded. It was quite natural, therefore, that Mr. McBride should accept in good faith the declarations and assurances of the British Government on this question. But the sequel proved that his confidence was misplaced and that, contrary to all precedent, the Imperial authorities have broken faith.

Mr. McBride evidently left London too soon; an unexpected move was made in the game the moment his back was turned. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who had been on the continent while the bill was passing through the House of Commons, appeared in London about the time it reached the House of Lords, and immediately the intelligence was flashed across the Atlantic that, at the solicitation of the Canadian Premier, the Secretary of State for the Colonies had agreed to change the bill when it reached the Lords, by reinserting therein the words "final and unalterable." Later intelligence intimates that the bill, with these words reinserted, has passed the upper house.

All will surely agree that this is an extraordinary proceeding. The Colonial Secretary by this remodelling the bill has stultified and turned down his colleague and representative in the Commons, Mr. Churchill. He evidently estimates it a matter of less consequence to maintain the traditions of British ministries for honor and consistency, than to assist a brother Liberal to gain a momentary advantage over a political opponent. His conduct in this matter certainly seems to be without precedent. The bill has to come back again to the House of Commons. We will see what will happen there.

It is also stated that the Colonial Secretary, Lord Elgin, introduced an additional sub-section to the bill as follows:

"In the case of the Province of British Columbia and Prince Edward Island, the amount paid on account of grant payable per head of population to provinces, under this act, shall not at any time be less than the amount of corresponding grant payable at commencement of this act; if it is found on any decennial census that the population of the province has decreased since last census the amount paid on account of the grant shall not be decreased below the amount then payable notwithstanding the decreased population."

The words of this amendment:

sound somewhat familiar. The clause is intended to secure to this Province as well as to British Columbia, the payment of the per capita allowance on the maximum population. This is one of the things which the delegates from this Province to the Ottawa conference failed to do, although armed with a resolution of our Legislature to insist upon this safeguard. When taken to task by the Opposition in the Legislature for their failure in this particular, the delegates and the Government first pretended that no harm had been done; but when driven to the wall they besought the Dominion Government to come to their rescue.

This induced Sir Wilfrid to incorporate clause D in the resolutions. That clause was supposed to meet the defect and relieve our delegates from their false position; but now we find the House of Lords coming to the rescue of the Ottawa authorities by proposing a sub-section to correct clause D which, intentionally or unintentionally, was misleading. Who ever heard of so much bungling in connection with any public question?

Dr. James W. Robertson, Principal of the McDonald College at St. Anne de Bellevue, P. Q., arrived here on Wednesday evening last, accompanied by his wife and little daughter. Professor Robertson is well known to the people of this Province, particularly in connection with the cheese industry at its inception here. On Friday he delivered an address at the closing exercises of the McDonald Consolidated School at Hillsborough, and on Saturday afternoon spoke in the Kindergarten Hall, Charlottetown. His subject was "Education for the improvement of rural conditions."

Dr. Robertson is, as all who have ever heard him know, a most interesting speaker and invariably holds the closest attention of his audience. More doing than talking should prevail in the rural schools in his opinion. Pupils should be taught to work and think rather than to repeat words. Pupils should love their work and surroundings and a bond of sympathy should exist between teachers and pupils. The improvements in rural schools should come from the people themselves. He maintains that teachers must be paid higher salaries before much improvement can be made. He outlined the plan of the work to be pursued at the College of St. Anne, of which he is the head, and announced that forty teachers from all parts of Canada would be given free board and tuition for one term in that College. Of these forty, five would be from Prince Edward Island. This endowment for teachers is to be known as the "Jenny Robertson Scholarship," and is provided for and endowed by Dr. Robertson's wife. It will thus be seen that the Dr. by his talents and his wife by her wealth are doing a great educational work.

Ottawa Weekly Letter.

Ottawa, July 13, 1907.

The speech from the Throne at the opening of Parliament in 1906 informed the two Chambers that they would "be invited to consider among other subjects" a bill to amend the Dominion's Elections Act. This seemed to promise legislation for the prevention of election frauds and kindred offences which have been a scandal and a disgrace to the country. The Session passed however without any Government legislation to this effect.

THE SECOND PROMISE.

Before the opening of the last Session the London Election conspiracy and a few other incidents of the kind were partially exposed. When the House met the address from the Throne repeated the promise of legislation "amending the election act." Speaking on the address Sir Wilfrid said that the law must be made more severe.

THE PREMIER TALKED WELL.

Two Premier went on to say "to make wrong doing as difficult as it is possible to make it, in order to have pure elections. Bribery is bad, but ballot switching is ten times worse, and although it is impossible to have any sympathy with bribery or the briber, still there is not for them the same contempt that there is for the ballot switcher, and if the law is to be made effective it must be absolutely severe and provide the severest penalty possible for anyone attempting to tamper with the ballot. That is the view that I think ought to be taken when we come to deal with the matter."

BUT HE DID NOTHING.

Sir Wilfrid's opinion as to how the House should deal with the matter proved to have no great value, for he never asked the House to deal with it at all. Parliament was in Session five months after he spoke

and the Government introducing no bill to amend the election law either for the punishment of bribery or of ballot switching.

In the previous session Mr. Borden and several other opposition Members had introduced bills for the prevention and punishment of election offences and these at the request of the Government went to a special committee since they were not taken up as government measures. They were crowded out by government legislation as a result happens with public bills introduced by private members.

MR BORDEN ON ELECTION
FRAUDS.

In the Session of 1907 Mr. Borden offered a motion setting forth very clearly what in his opinion ought to be done. The following is the motion:

This House deplores the existence of corrupt and fraudulent practices at elections as evidenced by the disclosures during recent years of bribery, personation, ballot switching and other similar frauds carried on by organized methods and upon a very extensive scale.

This House strongly condemns the organized system of corrupt practices by which the election of a minister of the Crown as a member for the city of London was secured in 1905.

This House is of opinion that the existing electoral laws should be amended forthwith, and that provision should be made:

(a) for the more effective suppression and punishment of bribery;

(b) to prevent the fraudulent marking, counting or substituting of ballots and other similar frauds;

(c) for the better regulation of the conduct of elections on the part of both officials and candidates;

(d) to prevent the accumulation of huge campaign funds and to prohibit contributions thereto by corporations, contractors and promoters;

(e) to expedite the hearing of election petitions, to prevent collusive arrangements for the discontinuance thereof, to provide for thorough investigation of corrupt practices and to simplify the procedure therefor.

(f) to carry out more effectively the law so amended.

This House regrets that notwithstanding the pledge of the government contained in the speech from the Throne, and notwithstanding the declarations of members of the government from time to time during the past four years, no such measure has been submitted to Parliament at the present session and no effective steps have been taken by the administration either to amend the laws or to punish the violators.

THE HURON AND BROCK
VILLE FRAUDS.

The discussion upon this motion dealt with many recent incidents besides the London Conspiracy Case. Mr. Borden reminded Sir Wilfrid Laurier of the pledge made at the beginning of the Session nearly five months before and recalled the Premier's own promise a few years ago in shielding a notorious gang of ballot switchers. "An inquiry had been begun into the frauds by which the seats for West Huron and Brockville had been stolen for Government supporters. This investigation by a committee of the Commons went so far as to probe beyond question that bogus ballots had been used. These were marked for Liberal candidates and substituted for the Conservative ballots which had been regularly voted. The fraud was shown by a comparison of the pole books with the ballots and by comparing the bogus ballots with the genuine ones which were printed on thicker paper."

AN INQUIRY OBSTRUCTED.

Government supporters in the Commons obstructed the inquiry at every stage so that it lingered on to the last days of the Session when by a vote of the majority it was postponed to the next year. Among the witnesses summoned was a deputy returning officer named Farr at whose poll some of the ballots switching occurred. Mr. Borden as a member of the committee asked for a summons for Farr and made arrangements to have it served.

But the word was conveyed quickly to the machine headquarters at Toronto, and as Farr afterwards swore the party organizer called upon him and paid his way out of the country. SIR WILFRID HEADS IT OFF.

Next session Mr. Borden took up the matter at the first stage possible and moved another reference to the Committee. Meanwhile he had obtained a confession of J. G. Pritchett, who had instructed the deputy returning officers of Brockville and Huron in the ballot switching art. This affidavit was read in the house. Here was Sir Wilfrid's opportunity to bring a group of ballot switchers to justice. The Premier rose magnificently to the occasion by calling upon the majority of the house to vote down Mr. Borden's motion, thus barking the inquiry altogether. Sir Wilfrid proceeded to appoint a commission to investigate the whole matter, but no inquiry ever took place and no further exposure was then accomplished and no one was punished. The members for whom the seats were stolen remain in possession.

FARR CONFESSES.

But the years have brought exposure in another way. Last autumn James Farr returned from exile made a sworn declaration of his share in the West Huron ballot switching enterprise. The following are the essential portions of his confession.

I, James Farr, of the town of Goderich, in the county of Huron, and province of Ontario, carpenter, make oath and say as follows:

That I was deputy returning officer at the polling station number three in the said town of Goderich at the election held there on February 21, 1899, for the West Huron constituency of the county of Huron.

That I had been deputy returning officer in former elections at the said polling subdivision.

A SMARTER MAN WANTED.

That on the day preceding the election one, James Yales, Division Court clerk for Goderich town, came to my house and asked for the ballot-box and papers and ballots which I had received from the returning officer. He wished me to resign my position in his favor and asked me to do so. I concluded that if he thought that I could not manipulate the false ballots as it was intended should, W. L. Horton, of Goderich town, had previously asked me to resign.

After the said James Yales had interviewed me and had left my house after I had refused to grant request, I went down to the neighbourhood of John Martin's hotel and I there met the said W. L. Horton, who again requested me to resign in favour of James Yales, which I refused to do.

FARR UNDER INSTRUCTION.

After the last mentioned refusal to give up my ballot-box and papers, the said W. L. Horton asked me to go with him to Craig's hotel in Goderich town, which I did. Both the said Horton and I went upstairs in Craig's hotel together and I was then introduced to a man by the name of Garrett and also to a man named O'Gorman. These two latter persons were introduced to me by the said W. L. Horton.

After I had been introduced by the said Horton to the said Garrett and O'Gorman, the said Horton and O'Gorman left room and Garrett and I remained alone.

The said Garrett then instructed me to switch ballots and I practised the method of doing this with him for a short while.

The said Garrett gave me thirteen ballots marked for Robert Holmes, and I placed them in my pocket. However, before doing so, the said Garrett placed my initials on all the thirteen ballots. These ballots had no counterfoils.

HOW HE DID THE TRICK.

The said Garrett's instructions to me as to the method of switching was as follows:

I was told to keep these thirteen bogus marked ballots in my pocket so that I could readily have access to them, and I was further instructed to always put all counterfoils in my pocket so that I could take out a bogus ballot when I desired to do so, without raising suspicion. When a person came in to vote, whose ballot I desired to switch, I would take from my pocket a bogus ballot, which the said Garrett had provided me with and would keep this ballot hidden under my left hand which would be resting on the table. When the voter would tender to me his ballot paper with the counterfoil properly attached thereto, I would place this good ballot under the left hand, fingers as if for the purpose of tearing off the counterfoil and with a sudden movement of the right hand the genuine ballot and counterfoil would be quickly removed together and placed in my pocket and the bogus ballot marked for Robert Holmes would be quickly deposited in the ballot-box.

SWITCHED THE WHOLE.

During the hours of the polling on said election day, I was present in the polling booth as deputy returning officer and succeeded in switching the thirteen ballots which Garrett had given me, marked for Robert Holmes, and placed in my pocket thirteen ballots marked by voters for Robert McLean, instead of depositing the last mentioned ballots in the ballot-box.

About April 10, 1899, after the said election, I went to Toronto city and worked there in the employ of the D. W. Thompson Company until July 12 of the same year.

July prior to quitting the employ of the said D. W. Thompson Company, James Vance, the Liberal organizer, came to see me at my boarding-house on Church street, in the city of Toronto, and there interviewed me as to my going to the city of Ottawa to give evidence before the Committee on Privileges and Elections as to the West Huron election inquiry.

EXILED UNDER PAY.

I knew that certain parties were attempting to serve me with a subpoena issued by the said committee to give evidence before them, but I did not attend, having for a considerable length of time, evaded service.

The said James Vance provided me with a single ticket for Hamilton, North Dakota, United States of America, which was the place I told the said Vance I wished to go to, if I left the country. He, the said Vance, also gave me some money, but I have forgotten the exact amount.

(Sgd.) JAMES

Sworn before me in the city of Tor.

onto, in the county of York, this 8th day of December, 1906, after the same had been read over to the said deponent and explained to him and read by him (Sgd.) ARTHUR D. GEORGE.
A notary public in and for the province of Ontario.

PRITCHETT CONFIRMS THE
STORY.

The man Garrett mentioned by Farr in paragraph 5, and in subsequent clauses was J. G. Pritchett who seems to have been introduced to the returning office under a false name. Pritchett himself in the confession read by Mr. Borden gave an account of the ballot switching operation which agreed with that of James Farr. Pritchett has since given testimony in the Toronto Police Court in the London Conspiracy Case and his statement covers not only West Huron but Brockville, West Elgin, South Ontario, North Grey, Hastings and other ridings in which similar operations were carried on. Pritchett explains three different methods of switching. Here is one of them.

AN EASY METHOD.

I think I can explain the thing. I am acting as deputy returning officer of course, one a Conservative and one a Liberal, and I am working in the interests of the Liberal, why I empty the ballot box, we see they are all labelled and then I drop the ballots into the box and it is for Mr. Deane, I call out somebody else.

Pritchett acted as a returning officer under a false name in one of West Elgin polls whereby this simple method he changed the Conservative majority 111 to a Government majority of 27. Here is his own statement of the case.

Q. And you did that in the West Elgin election yourself?—A. Yes.

Q. With the Conservative scrutineer watching you?—A. They were there to watch me.

Q. They knew about you?—A. I don't know.

Q. You switched how many?—A. I think twenty-seven. I think it was twenty-seven difference.

Q. You switched twenty-seven. That would be, I suppose, twenty-seven of a difference you make?—A. No, nineteen. Twice nineteen is thirty-eight. The majority was usually from twelve to seventeen the other way and I put it twenty-seven the way I wanted it.

THIS WAS FARR'S WAY.

A second method, which was the one that Pritchett taught to some half a dozen selected deputies at each poll, is thus described by the witness:

"He (the deputy returning officer) would have them (the bogus ballots) in his pocket, keep it in the palm of his hand and when you tear the counterfoil off, you will leave the substituted ballot there, pretend to take the counterfoil and take the whole thing, the elector thinks he sees his ballot and it is dropped in the box."

Q. How did you get these ballots, the ones you had ready?

A. I would usually find them in a convenient place for my use.

At a later stage Pritchett said that he sometimes found his bundle of bogus ballots ready for him under the bed in his room. The custom was to pay the ballot switching returning officer \$5 for each genuine ballot marked for Conservatives which he produced to show that he had substituted that number. These were his vouchers.

THUMB NAIL TRICK.

A third method described by Pritchett was for the officer to put a bit of lead under his thumb nail and mark with it a certain number of Conservative ballots which would make them bad. This was done in counting at the close of the poll. The returning officer was paid \$5 for each ballot so destroyed.

LOCAL AND OTHER ITEMS.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier arrived at Quebec from Europe on Thursday evening last, on the Empress of Britain.

The Canadian Locomotive Works Co. at Kingston, Ont., has been awarded a contract to build twenty-five big engines for the Intercolonial Railway. The work will be completed by the end of 1908.

The C. P. R. steamer Empress of Britain arrived at Rimouski on Thursday last, after the fastest passage ever made between Europe and any American port. The time from Montreal was five days and three hours. The former record for quickest passage was held by the Canadian Locomotive, five days and eight hours from Queenstown to New York.

On Thursday last, in the city of Pittsburgh, Pa., ten deaths from heat were reported up to seven o'clock in the evening. A score of prostrations were also reported. The people were dropping in the streets, and mill men were compelled to desert furnaces.

For alleged libelous statements, the Montreal Wireless Telegraph Company of Canada, has entered an action for \$5,000 damages against Mr. Cecil Dwyer, of Ottawa, who is employed by the Dominion Government, as superintendent of wireless telegraph.

Plans for the new Grand Trunk station and million dollar hotel at Ottawa have been filed with the Railway committee of the Privy Council. The plans contemplate a terminal station on the site of the present Central Station to cost one quarter of a million. The station will be oblong in shape and surmounted by a large dome.

Announcement was made in New York, this day that the Sovereign Bank of Canada will close its local office in the near future, and that the Bank's New York business will be transacted through J. P. Morgan & Company hereafter. The bank's officials indicate that the local office will be closed in pursuance of the policy of retrenchment recently adopted.

The Dominion Government has extended the lobster fishing season on the Cape Breton coast to the 10th of August. Delay at the commencement of the fishing season, in consequence of the presence of drift ice is given as the reason for the extension. The same cause delayed the lobster fishing on the north shore of this island for nearly a month, but no extension of time was given.

At a convention held Saturday afternoon in Summerside, H. D. Dobie, Lot 14, son of Rev. R. T. Dobie, and A. E. Arsenault, son of the late Senator Arsenault, were unanimously chosen to contest the third district of Prince in the interest of the Liberal-Conservative party at the next election.

DIED.

At Centreville, Washington, on July 30th, William J. Hadley, aged 35 years, formerly of Albury Plains, in this Province. Deceased was nursed during his illness, at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. A. Campbell by his cousin Miss Elsie McDonald of Vernon River Bridge. He died strengthened and consoled by the last Sacrament and after Requiem Service in the Church was laid to rest in the Catholic Cemetery near by. May his soul rest in peace.

A Vernon River on the 18th inst. May H. McDonald, Gloucester. May her soul rest in peace.

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