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RICHIBUCTO, N. B., JULY 13, 1899

POLITICAL PECKSNIFFS.

The exposure of the frauds committed in connection with the West Elgin election campaign has given rise to hypocritical expressions on the part of some of our contemporaries which are calculated to disgust the student of politics. The election referred to was an Ontario Provincial contest and had no connection in the world with federal politics, and the exposure of the wrong-doing in connection with it was deplored as sincerely by the Liberal press and people of that Province, and indeed of the Dominion, as it could be by Conservatives. The very fact that it has been imported into the federal arena would seem conclusive evidence that the Conservative party managers of Elgin were perhaps not far behind their opponents in fraudulent practices at the very election to which reference is made. We have every sympathy with the honest desire for a free ballot and have nothing but contempt for those who have openly defied the law and by open fraud set at naught the expression of opinion of the electorate by tampering with the ballots. But we cannot see that it is a desire for political purity which actuates the attempt that is being made to implicate the Laurier Administration in a local by-election. When the attention of the Government was called last week to alleged frauds in the federal contests in Brockville and West Huron, the Premier without discussion or comment acceded to the request for a thorough investigation, expressing himself determined that so far as the government could reach the offenders so far would they be punished. No demand was made by the Premier in these cases for anything more than a statement of a private member that wrongs had been perpetrated to get the investigation ordered. But neither Sir Wilfred Laurier or his combined government can order an investigation of an election fraud perpetrated in a local government contest although to judge from the Conservative press comments one would think he and they were shielding the guilty ones.

Another thing that shows the unreality of the hysteria shown over these Elgin election frauds is the fact that where similar or worse frauds were committed in federal elections by the Conservative party, the very same men who now deplore such political intrigue in Ontario were zealous in shielding the guilty ones. Take for instance the Manitoba election frauds where the Conservative party managers employed sleight of hand men to act as returning officers at different polls and when action was taken against the offenders every effort was made by their employers to defeat the ends of justice. More than that the Tupper's in particular have made

it a point in the last three years to hound continually the men who in the public interest endeavoured to right a public wrong by bringing the offenders to punishment.

But lest it may be charged against us that we are wandering too far afield for examples, let us take an instance or two of political debauchery and chicanery right in our own Province committed by Conservatives, the offenders shielded after the crime had been committed and innocent men condemned to suffer for being bold enough to speak their mind in a country when speech is supposed to be perfectly free. We refer to the notorious Queens County elections of 1887, 1889 and 1891 where not only was every device known to campaign managers employed to defeat Mr. G. G. King, but when ordinary villainy failed a returning officer was found in one election equal to the occasion to return as elected the candidate receiving the lowest number of votes and in another of these contests frauds were perpetrated equal to those of the Elgin election. Did our St. John contemporary, the Sun, at that time express the righteous horror that (judging from its expressions over Ontario election frauds) it must have felt over these well known election frauds at its very door. If we remember correctly a review of the Sun files will show that its zeal for political purity was at that time devoted to the successful effort of getting the editor of the St. John Globe incarcerated in prison for daring to criticise Conservative election methods. The same editor sits in the Sun's sanctum today boiling with indignation over frauds in a local by-election in Ontario who aforesaid defended the political infamies in the federal contests in Queens; the only difference is that it was the Conservatives in Queens and it is the Liberals in Elgin. Nor must it be forgotten that the Daily Sun displayed a nice sense of honor in defrauding Judge Steadman out of his \$2000 judgment for libel arising out of these very election frauds by a clever little arrangement which resulted in the Sun being sold to itself for the enormous sum of \$55. From that day the St. John Sun has had the weight that is properly due a \$55 journal.

But the Queens County election frauds were not the single instances of Conservative infamy in this Province. The Kings County election frauds of 1891, where in addition to the other political pleasantries three of the ballot boxes were spirited away all together so as to allow that apostle of purity, Mr. George Eulas Foster, to be returned as elected. It is not recorded that any effort was made by the aforesaid apostle to remedy the wrong or even that he refused to profit by it, but on the contrary the wrongdoers were rewarded and held in high regard for their political iniquity. It has even been our unfortunate experience in New Brunswick to find some of our Supreme Court Judges showing a partisanship in the administration of election law that was as regrettable as any action of the party managers or their confederates.

Political purity will never be elevated by one party attempting to make political capital out of election frauds, especially when the acts complained of happen to be outside of the federal arena. Each party is composed largely of decent people who have no desire but for the advancement of the best interests of the country and neither party has a monopoly on the honest methods in elections. In such matters comparisons are odious, but if our friend the enemy is determined to cast the first stone, the breaking of glass resulting from the return volley will speedily convince him of the wis-

dom of the proverb, "People who live in glass houses should never throw stones." As Sir Richard Cartwright said in the House the other day no Liberal had any cause to blush from a comparison of the election methods of the two political parties since confederation.

A CLEVER GAME.

No person who has watched public affairs in the past decade will deny the ability of the Canadian Pacific Railway to successfully work politics in Canada for their own selfish gain. Whether it was in civic, municipal or federal matters the politics of this giant corporation is simply what is most profitable for the C. P. R. Whatever the company has desired it has usually managed to get, whether it was a lake frontage, a right of way, wharves, terminal facilities or merely the control of the profitable section of the government railway with a system built by the people's money and land enough to make its promoters wealthy thrown in, this corporation has religiously believed in the scriptural saying, "to him who hath shall be given," and has never shown any false delicacy in asking for too little. Granted a monopoly of trade in Western Canada the name has been until very recently a byword for excessive freight rates to the people of our western country. No better, certainly, and perhaps no worse than any other giant monopoly, this corporation differs from others in the fact that it labours under the delusion that it has made Canada when the truth is that the pluck and freehandedness of the Canadian people made the C. P. R.

When in 1897 the Minister of Railways questioned the wisdom of the existing contract held by this corporation with the government permitting them the use of that portion of the I. C. R. between St. John and Halifax, the trouble commenced. When the Crows Nest Pass Railway subsidy was reduced from \$20,000 as promised by the Conservatives to \$11,000 a mile before the government would give the C. P. R. the contract, and the government moreover insisted on a control of the freight rates, the Laurier Administration became decidedly unpopular with the railway magnates who for 20 years had been used to having their own way with the government of Canada. When a proposition for a competing line into the Kootenay country received support from some members of the government in the Railway Committee and narrowly escaped going through, the C. P. R. understood their domination of the government was threatened. When the freight agreement was made between the I. C. Ry. and Grand Trunk Ry., open war was declared by the magnates controlling the C. P. R.

And they have handled their case very cleverly for knowing they had practically no case against the government. The C. P. R. people were too wise to fight the I. C. R. extension in the House of Commons where the members are responsible to the people of Canada, but held back the full force of their influence and power for a supreme effort in the Senate. The claim they put forward was almost too ridiculous however, that the terms of the traffic agreement between the I. C. R. and Grand Trunk had not been known or fully understood while the Bill was under discussion in the House of Commons. The Debates of the House will show that Mr Geo. E. Foster spoke at some length on that portion of the Bill, and while commending the traffic arrangement, condemned the giving to the Minister of Railways power to abrogate it. This view was acceded

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to by the Government and the Bill amended accordingly.

But where the C. P. R. people have been doing even more valiant work is with the merchants and Boards of Trade in the different localities interested, and in some cases their work has been effective in provoking a consternation at the ruin which must befall local interests if the Government dared to be independent instead of meekly submitting to C. P. R. dictation. In St. John for example a panic on a small scale was produced by the C. P. R. threat to withdraw their terminus from St. John and make Boston their Atlantic terminus. To any mortal of ordinary common sense such a threat was the mere idle bluff of a beaten bully, and we are happy to know that while it scared a few timid people who happened to be members of the Board of Trade, its only effect with the people in general was to effectually convince them that the government was in the right.

The time has come in Canada when the government fighting the people's battle is a good deal bigger than the biggest corporation, and the sooner the C. P. R. learn that simple little lesson the better for them. The day has passed if it ever existed when the fortunes of this country are dependent on the action of any private concern. We have no desire to belittle the enterprise, courage and ability which placed to completion the transcontinental road, but neither should it be forgotten that the people of Canada paid for every dollar of the cost of the roadbed and rolling stock, and made a present of it to the private individuals who own it. Such threats as have been made by its management in the past few weeks are sufficient to stir the blood of Canadians who remember the latter fact, and who are determined to maintain the proposition that the C. P. R. was built for Canadians, not Canada for the C. P. R.

POLITICAL NO ES.

The warra weather prevailing at Ottawa seems to have had the effect of cooling off the superfluous talk of the opposition which has been so much in evidence since

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the beginning of the session. Some-day a phonograph system will be introduced to the great relief of the country.

Just think, 9 hours taken by Sir Hibbert to say what it took Mr. Sifton half an hour to knock into a cocked hat. Assuredly brevity is the soul of wit especially if the other fellow is lying. Wouldn't wonder if the younger Tupper is sorry now that he spoke.

The only hope for Canada is the dog days. If the hot weather and fear of hydrophobia does not drive the members of parliament home we can count on the opposition talking all year. Fortunately the House of Commons bar was abolished two years ago, so there's no hope of keeping cool on anything but icewater unless you happen to be a Senator.

One result of the long session has been at least two really great speeches, that of the Hon. Mr. Blair on the extension of the I. C. R. to Montreal and that delivered by the Hon Mr. Sifton in answer to the Yukon Charges. If it is true that a man only makes one really great speech in his life, then the present session is an epoch in the lives of the two ministers from the east and west.

The Senate's proposal to amend the 99 year clause of the agreement between the government and the Grand Trunk Ry. by providing for its termination by either party on one year's notice will meet with no great commotion unless it have the effect of preventing the agreement coming into effect. The people know a good thing when they see it and if this freight arrangement is loaded its in the government's favour.

Sir Charles Tupper working himself into a fit of righteous indignation over election frauds has been one of the funniest incidents of the session. The old gentleman lacks a proper sense of humour. Of course, as Sir Richard Cartwright observed, it might be a case of real repentance, in which case the country would expect the aged baronet to be a shining light in the ranks of political purity if his zeal for his new doctrine were to equal that which he showed all his life in the opposite direction.

There have been some striking inconsistencies shown by our federal legislators over the bill for the extension of the I. C. R. to Montreal but none more glaring than the bitter opposition to the scheme by H. A. Powell, M. P., and Senator Wood. Both these gentlemen represent the County of Westmorland whose interests are so largely identical with the future of the I. C. R. that the action of these gentlemen in doing their utmost to prevent the enlargement of the railway system must be bitterly resented by their constituents. The position of the M. P. for Kent is just as peculiar and our people are grimly waiting the day of reckoning when they will have their turn to speak.

CHURCH SERVICES.

ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—Rev. D. Fraser, Pastor. Kingston every Sunday, 11 o'clock a. m.; Richibucto every Sunday, 7 o'clock p. m. Christian Endeavour Society meets at Kingston every Monday at 7.30, and at Richibucto every Thursday at 7.30. ST. MARY'S, (ANGLICAN).—Rev. H. A. MEEK, Rector.—Sunday, July 16th, 7th Sunday after Trinity—Divine Service—Richibucto, 11; Bible Class, 3; Kingston 7. METHODIST SERVICES.—Rev. Wm. Lawson, Pastor. Preaching Sabbath:—West Branch 10.30 a. m.; Kingston 3 p. m.; Richibucto 7 p. m.