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OPPOSITION CONVENTION WAS A REAL BEAR GARDEN

Very Funny Display of Political Fireworks at St. John—
Leader Murray Again Chosen After an Unsuccessful Effort, Had Been Made to Pass the Buck—Colonel Baxter, Dr. Campbell and E. A. Reilly Declined the Honor.

St. John Nov. 6—The provincial opposition at the close of their all-day convention here yesterday decided to do business under the same old leader Hon. J. A. Murray. Although Hon. Mr. Murray resigns as leader and said he would not be a candidate for the office influence was brought to bear after several unsuccessful attempts had been made to secure some one else and he was found to be the only one of whom the convention approved who would accept.

The meeting first attempted to have J. B. M. Baxter M.P.P. take over the leadership but he refused in no uncertain terms. The name of A. E. Reilly, of Moncton was suggested only to be received with another refusal. J. Roy Campbell, M.P.P. was next in line but he was more emphatic than the others in his refusal.

L.P.D. Tilley was on the floor and contributed somewhat to the proceedings, but the delegates were not taking any hints and he was not offered the dubious honor of the leadership. Finally Hon. Mr. Murray's name was put up and after certain preliminaries he agreed to continue in the position. The evening meeting was a secret one and the reporters were excluded. When the assembly adjourned it was announced that another secret session would be held in the Standard office and from there an official statement would be issued.

Many of the delegates left in disgust long before the convention adjourned at 1:30 a.m. Several who left early announced, to those waiting outside for news of the proceedings, that the convention had decided to adopt the new name recommended by the organization committee—that of "The People's Progressive Party." In the official statement which was handed out after adjournment no mention was made of this and the gentleman to whom the task had been entrusted when asked about the matter, denied that the new title had been adopted. This discrepancy in statements, it was felt in some quarters might lead the suspicious to wonder whether the change had been made but had been rescinded after it was found necessary to continue under the same old leadership.

Tempestuous weather conditions marked the convention of the provincial opposition party in the Seaman's Institute yesterday. Nature showed her disfavor with one of the worst storms of the season. While the elements raged without the building, the progress of the meeting within, was stormy.

Even the party name suggested did not meet with favor and the proposal to change the cognomen to the "Progressive Party" brought forth much heated argument. Although the new name was submitted during the afternoon there was no decision registered and the convention went into secret session during the evening in order to consider the proposition.

J. Y. Mersereau of Chatham summed up the situation and put it straight to the delegates when he said:

"The Conservative party is as dead as Julius Caesar and it was killed from the inside. The sooner we throw over the old conceptions and adopt new ones, the sooner will the party meet with success."

Old time Conservatives were opposed to a new name but the majority of the delegates saw the trend of modern affairs and they were anxious to adopt any expedient that might give the party a chance to weather the storm of adversity.

Resolutions, pleasing to the ear but of little practical value were adopted. There was a strategic move to secure the support of the farmers and the labor people. With this idea in view there were recommendations that the party have farmer candidates in as many constituencies as possible and that a farmer be made minister of agriculture, no mention being made of the fact that at present a very practical and very successful farmer holds that post. It was also proposed if the party ever got back in power to have a minister of labor, without increasing the number of ministers. Of course there were questions as to how this was to be arranged but there was no definite answer. The meeting, however, made the recommendation as a plank in the party platform.

In case the party ever gets in power gain it was urged that the government should be asked to take over the water powers of the province and de-

velop them. This is what is being done by the present government. Free school books, it was said, should be provided for all pupils in the public schools and returned soldiers should be given the preference in provincial appointments, as is now being done.

In resigning Hon. J. A. Murray said that he would not be a candidate for the position again but hoped that some good man would be selected. In his valedictory he affirmed that he had never defrauded a widow or an orphan of one cent while the province had never been defrauded of five cents by him.

While the convention was a fairly large one, it was noticeably that women delegates were extremely in the minority, only four being present. Dr. James Manning deplored the fact that more women were not in attendance at the convention and suggested that some effort should be made to get them in line when there was an election.

Morning Session

On the arrival of the delegates the meeting was called to order by L. P. D. Tilley, who asked the gathering to elect a chairman. John E. McAuley was the selection and he took charge.

B. Frank Smith of Carleton County moved that a committee of one man from each county and from each city in the province be appointed to take up the matter of organization and report this afternoon. At this point Mr. Mersereau arose and declared that before a committee on organization was appointed the meeting should go into the matter of the policy of the party. He thought that a general discussion of the platform should be indulged in. "This was greeted with applause. Mr. Tilley said that he agreed with Mr. Mersereau that a platform should be adopted first."

All Ready in Advance

The appointment of a committee on resolutions brought out some candid and acrid criticism of the chairman's method of appointing the committee. J.B.M. Baxter moved that a committee of seven be appointed by the chair to deal with resolutions handed in and present them to the meeting in the order of their importance. The motion carried and the chairman picking a slip of paper from the table, read the names of seven men, as follows: J. L. Stewart, Dr. Landry, George Gilbert, W. S. Sutton, Ralph St. J. Freeze, E. A. Riley and T. A. Goggin. The chairman read incorrectly the name of Mr. Freeze and immediately there was a stir on one side of the house.

F. L. Potts raised a point of order, saying that the motion called for the appointment of a committee by the chair. "Reading the names off a slip of paper is not appointment from the chair," Mr. Potts remarked, adding, "Where did you get that slip?"

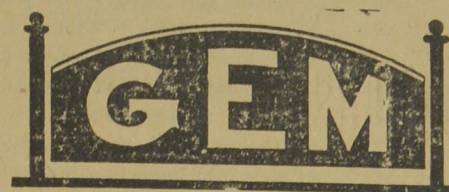
Mr. McAuley replied that, not knowing the whole personnel of the province, he conferred with three men before the meeting and they selected the names. This was greeted with a general uproar in which F. A. Dykeman asked the chairman to name the men with whom he had conferred. Clamor followed in which cries of "Name the men," could be heard above the general din. Order was finally restored with out the names of the triumvirate being disclosed, and the meeting was adjourned until 2:30 o'clock.

Before the meeting broke up, however, A. R. Slipp, addressing the chair said that he hoped at this afternoon's session the meeting would get down to real business. During the recess both the organization and the resolutions committees met.

At the afternoon session Mr. J. L. Stewart of Chatham moved a resolution to the effect that as far as possible only farmers be chosen as candidates in rural constituencies. This created quite a storm and the following amendment was finally adopted:

"In the opinion of the convention it is neither necessary or desirable that the government of the province should be entrusted to any single class of the population, but we recognize that in the past the important agricultural interests of the province have not been adequately represented, either in the house or the government; we therefore recommend the conventions of the party for the selection of candidates in each rural constituency to choose as representatives as large a number as possible of practical farmers."

There was a lot of hot air about
(Continued on page 4)

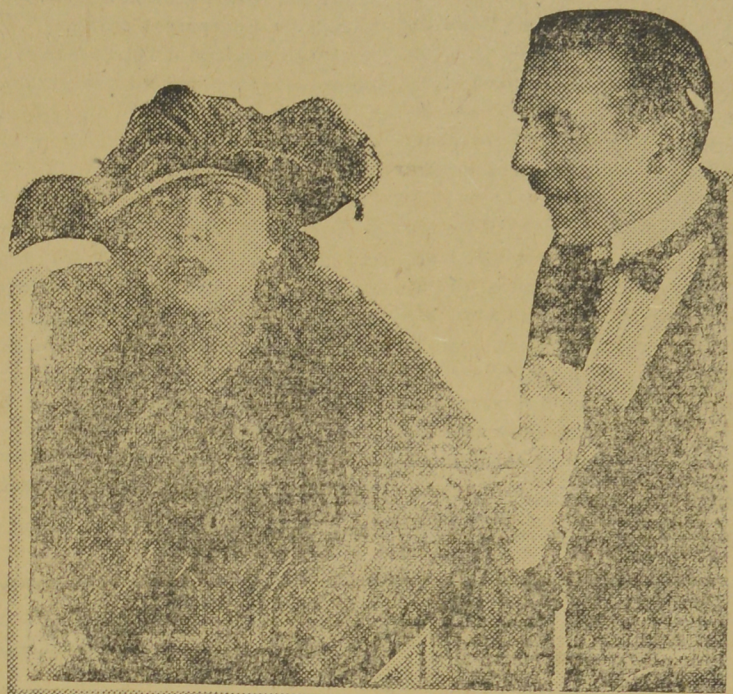


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Evening, 7.15, 8.45 p.m.



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