

CARLETON COUNTY ELECTION.

Hon Mr. Jones Made a Full and Convincing Explanation of the Simms Episode.

IT WAS MERELY A PUT UP JOB AND SHERIFF WAS GUILTY OF WRONG.

The Solicitor General Making Effective Reply to Mr. Flemming's Criticisms.

Hon. Mr. Jones, speaking on the budget speech in the legislature Thursday afternoon, said: Before entering into a consideration of the financial affairs of the province in reply to the hon. member from Carleton, I would like to refer at some length to the recent election in Carleton county in respect to which I have been attacked. I feel that as this is the first opportunity that has been afforded me of dealing with this subject, it is due to myself, to the members of the government and to the members of this House that I should state fully what occurred in connection with the Carleton election so far as the facts came under my own observation. This is the more necessary as it is a matter in regard to which false reports have been published. The hon. member from Carleton who spoke yesterday was pleased to make certain references to myself personally and I thank him for them, but I understand that when the question of opposing me was referred to him his opinion was that I should be opposed if I could be defeated, but if not that there should be no opposition. In other words, to defeat me if they could do it. I may say that when my appointment as a member of the government was made known it was well received in Carleton county. I had assurances from leading members of the opposition that they would give me their support. And I would like to say here at the outset that I do not think that the hon. member who spoke yesterday had anything to do with the candidate Mr. Simms. I fear that I can't say as much for his colleague, whom I regret is not in his place. When I returned to Woodstock after my appointment he was there endeavouring to work up opposition to me. I am told that he was at a meeting of the leaders of the opposition who decided that I was not to be opposed. Then he went to McAdam Junction with two of his friends to meet the leader of the opposition and had a conference with him and he was told that I was not to be opposed. On the Tuesday night preceding the election there was a reception in honor of the marriage of a gentleman in that town. Mr. Smith was there and took occasion to congratulate me publicly on the fact that I had received the appointment of solicitor general. I have been informed that after the reception was over he retired to consult with some of his friends to see whether something could be done to oppose me.

Mr. Smith—There is no truth in that report.

Hon. Mr. Jones—Perhaps that gentleman will deny that Mr. Simms' nomination paper was handed to Mr. Boyer in the hon. gentleman's store.

Mr. Smith—I don't know about that but I know that I was asked to sign it and refused and tried to prevent Mr. Simms from running.

Hon. Mr. Jones—I am glad to receive the hon. gentleman's assurance on this point and to have my mind cleared up in regard to it. With reference to my own nomination papers I may say that they were handed into the sheriff by me the night before the nomination. Mr. Simms came down the same evening but he did not reach the court house until eleven o'clock the next day. I have been told that he was consulting with his counsel in the meantime. I have been told by a reputable citizen of Woodstock that before he went to the court house he said that there would be no election provided Mr. Jones would accept his offer.

Mr. Smith—The offer was not to use any money on either side during the election.

Hon. Mr. Jones—How could money be used when the offer was that there should be no election if I agreed to his terms. This statement has been published and Mr. Simms has not denied that he made it.

Mr. Smith—No one can say that Mr. Simms offered to let Mr. Jones go in without a contest.

Hon. Mr. Jones—You seem to be thoroughly conversant with all Mr. Simms' movements and ideas. Let me say here that election or no election, I am not asking and have never asked any favor from the opposition party. I count the fullest investigation into all the circumstances connected with this matter and if it can be shown that I was aware of any unfair methods in connection with this election, I will not only resign my seat, but my position in the government. When Mr. Simms got to the court house, he began looking at his paper and examined it three or four times. Simms has stated the names of certain persons as being the only individuals in the court room when he arrived, but there were several others present whom he has not named. I had arrived at the court house sometime before Mr. Simms, and was sitting in the barristers' room. The Bible to which reference has been made was there at the time, for I used it to swear the Deputy Sheriff to an affidavit. When Mr. Simms came into the barristers' room I left it and went into the court room and remained there. The Bible was in the barristers' room when I left it. I have it from Mr. Foster, the Deputy Sheriff, that Mr. Simms told him shortly before twelve o'clock that he did not know whether he would run or not. That statement was also published and has not been denied. I do not believe that he wanted to get his nomination papers in before twelve o'clock. It was after twelve o'clock before Mr. Simms presented himself with his nomination papers and I know that an investigation will establish that fact. But while this is true I felt that it would be best not to allow him to have a grievance, and I advised the Sheriff to accept the nomination paper. The Sheriff refused. The fact that I gave the Sheriff this advice can be easily established, and on my return home after the opening of the House an opposition man who was in the court house reminded me that I said to him at the time, "I am sorry the Sheriff has not taken his papers." Simms says that I examined his nomination papers, and that I was sitting at the clerk's desk with two others. It can be easily proved that I did not sit near the clerk's desk. I did not examine the paper and it never was in my hands. These misstatements on the part of Simms, show that he was hardly conscious of what he was doing. I never saw a man in a greater state of excitement. With regard to the Bible or what became of it, I know absolutely nothing about it. I did not know where it was then. I have been told that the Bible was afterwards found in the court house. It is believed on all sides in Carleton County, that Mr. Simms did not wish to run. I am informed that Mr. Boyer, who was the witness to Mr. Simms' nomination paper, said to the Sheriff and also to the Deputy, after that that was just what they wanted, for they did not desire any election. As to the charges that have been made against the Sheriff, the people that know him do not pay any attention to them. The Sheriff of Carleton is a respectable man and he belongs to a respectable

family, and he has many friends who believe in him. The people who know the Sheriff and know Mr. Simms, pay no attention to Mr. Simms' charges.

Mr. Flemming—Is the Sheriff's family any more respectable than that of Mr. Simms?

Hon. Mr. Jones—I am saying nothing against Mr. Simms' family. So far as I know they are perfectly respectable. But perhaps if either of the hon. gentlemen are of opinion that this affair is creating any excitement in the county of Carleton, where all the parties are known, one of them may be inclined to resign with me now or at any time when we can each take a colleague and test the opinion of the county upon this question and upon the policy of the government. When I found that Mr. Simms was not allowed to run on account of being some minutes late in offering his paper to the sheriff I think that had I been free from responsibility as a member of the government I would have at once resigned, because I did not feel that if he really wanted to run I would like to deprive him of the opportunity just on account of his being a few minutes late.

I never believed he wanted to run, however, and at any rate I decided not to do anything until I had first consulted the other members of the government. This I was not able to do until just before the opening of the House because of their absence from home. And when I did consult them it was decided that the whole matter should be fully investigated by the committee on privileges. I may say that I urged this course upon the government because I felt that after the mis-statements that had been made it was very desirable that the matter should be cleared up. The fact that Mr. Simms appealed to the courts of course prevented the matter coming before a committee as it otherwise would have done.

REPLY TO MR. FLEMMING.

Recurring to other matters I may say that the gentleman opposite made a very good speech last evening, and considering the weakness of his case showed great ability. They say that the great secret of eloquence is to speak as if you really believed what you are saying, and there were times last evening when it almost seemed as if he was in earnest and believed what he said. Of course, being the financial critic of the opposition it was necessary that he should find some fault with the government. The criticisms he made were mostly on questions of book-keeping. It may be that the present government, like all other human institutions, is not absolutely perfect in matters of judgment, but nothing has yet been shown against them that is dishonorable. The hon. gentleman made a point of the fact that the sum of \$10,000, the deposit for the Grand Falls water power, was placed among the receipts for the year in the Auditor General's report. Where else could it have been placed? It was placed among the receipts in accordance with the practice which prevails as to such items in the accounts of the Dominion government and all other provincial governments. But it was kept apart from the current revenue of the year and did not interfere with the balance on the right side of the account which showed a surplus of upwards of \$5,000. If the hon. gentleman had looked at the other side of the page he would have seen \$13,000 of similar items representing money which the government had paid out, but which did not come within the ordinary expenditure.

Mr. Flemming—As soon as this was pointed out to me I acknowledged my mistake.

Hon. Mr. Jones—Still, it was a strange error for a financial critic who had given so much time to studying the accounts to make. The hon. gentleman has complained that agriculture and education have not received proper attention during the past year. I fail to see why these services should be considered of more benefit to the public than many others. The administration of justice is a matter that is certainly not second in importance to either of these services. The public health, the prevention of smallpox, the provincial hospital and public works are all matters of equal importance and demand the attention of the government. All these services as well as agriculture and education are for the public benefit, and we cannot afford to have them neglected. The hon. gentleman complains that only \$2,196 was paid to butter and cheese factories last year. Does he not know that that is a matter that is settled by law? He criticises the agricultural department because our dairy products have not increased over the figures of 1902. But it must be remembered that last year was a very unfavorable one for agriculture. There was a deficiency in all the crops and the pastures were poor during the whole summer, still there was an increase in the amount of factory butter produced in 1904 over the figures of 1903. There was a slight decline in the amount of these made as compared with the previous year, but this was not confined to New Brunswick. The price of cheese in England was low, and the making of butter was found to be more profitable. But instead of taking one year and comparing it with the previous one, why did not the hon. gentleman go back a few years for the purpose of ascertaining what had really been the effect of the agricultural policy with regard to dairying. In 1897 we had seven butter factories and skimming stations which produced 21,768 lbs. of butter. In 1904 we had 39 butter factories, and they produced 907,125 lbs. of butter, an enormous increase which speaks volumes for the success of the policy of the government. In 1897 we had 47 cheese factories which made 1,207,281 lbs. of cheese. In 1904 we had 53 factories which made 1,866,426 lbs. Surely this is a very excellent showing.

The Province of Nova Scotia is now adopting a dairy policy similar to ours, and the same policy exists in Ontario and Quebec. As to the complaint which he makes with regard to the payment of dairy superintendents, there is not a farmer in New Brunswick who does not

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recognize the value of the services of these gentlemen. The work they do is of an educational character, and that is the kind of work that is required to bring agriculture up to a higher standard. If by any chance my honourable friend shall come into power, I do not think that he will abolish dairy superintendents and reverse the whole dairy policy of the province which has been so highly successful. The wheat policy of the government and the establishment of roller mills has been another subject of attack, and the hon. gentleman made a great outcry because there has been a decline in the production of wheat last year as compared with previous years. But he forgot to state that there had been a decline in other crops, especially grain crops. There was a shortage of 600,000 bushels of oats as compared with the previous year. There was also a shortage in barley. There was a decline of nearly 200,000 bushels in buckwheat produced, and we know that there was also a most regrettable shortage in the hay crop. The government surely cannot be held responsible for the failure of the grain crop last year any more than they are entitled to

(CONTINUED ON SIXTH PAGE.)

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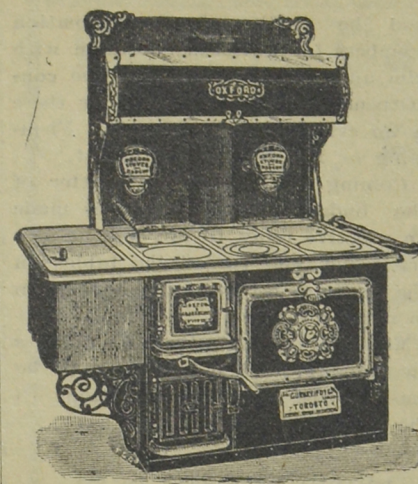
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