

OTTAWA LETTER

Tories Cannot be Trusted, People Decide this In 1896

Men who Instructed Election Thugs how to Steal the Franchise and Stuff Ballot Boxes have Forfeited all Confidence.

Canada Suffers To-Day from Conservative Frauds

TWO VICIOUS TORY PROMISES.

The Conservatives promise if returned to power to give the new provinces their public lands for which the money in payment must be provided in a manner not stated. They also promise to hand over important government functions to a commission which will not be responsible to the people. This is a deadly blow at representative government.

(Special correspondence to The Fredericton Daily Herald.)

OTTAWA, Ontario, November 30.—The year 1896 will go down in history as the year in which Tory misrule received its quietus in Canada. During the last year of Conservative rule matters went from bad to worse. While members of the government were quarrelling with each other, and instigating election rascalities, the people calmly waited the opportunity of dealing with a party that had held and trained more election crooks during its term of power than had been known since Confederation.

THE SEVEN BOLDERS.

It was in the early days of that year that the dissensions and bickerings which had been going on for months in the Conservative Government culminated in the strike of the "Seven bolders," so aptly described by the then premier, Sir Mackenzie Bowell, as "the blackest piece of political treachery on record." Never before in any country was known such a cabinet, the leader himself said he had been living in a "nest of traitors." Some of them were not on speaking terms, and one of them accused another of writing anonymous letters vilifying his character. Yet these men held on to office week after week and month after month for the sake of gain. The members of the Tory cabinet of 1896 had lost their respect for their premier, they distrusted each other, and dare not trust the people whose confidence they had abused and whose interest they had betrayed. A leading Conservative newspaper referred to them as "a gang of cut-throats and rebels." Be it remembered that some of these same men are among the leaders of the Conservative party today, and in the event of a change of government would be placed in charge of Canadian public affairs.

Nothing has occurred since 1896 to change the moral tone of the Conservative party. A leopard cannot change his spots, neither can a Tory who has once dipped in the public chest be kept out of it, if the opportunity occurs to dip in again.

CAN TORIES BE TRUSTED?

Two pleas are presented by the Conservatives why there should be a change of government. The first is, that the Liberals have been extravagant and have permitted grafting. This is ridiculous and untrue. The second plea is, that if the Conservatives are returned to power most of the governmental functions will be relegated to a political commission not responsible to the people. This is cowardly, impractical and vicious. Is it safe to trust the government to men guilty of the Pacific scandal? Is it safe to trust the government to men who were in the "nest of traitors?"

Is it safe to trust the government to men who originated those pernicious practices known as "slipping," "switching," "stuffing" and "spoiling" ballots?

Is it safe to trust the government to men who deliberately instructed their confederates to rob the people of their franchise?

Is it safe to trust the government to men who gave contracts to the highest bidder in consideration of a handsome rake-off going into the Tory campaign fund?

Is it safe to trust the government to men who gave contracts to the public works to secure their own return to Parliament?

Is it safe to trust the government to men who imported election thugs from the United States for the purpose of defrauding Canadian citizens of their votes?

Every loyal Canadian will answer, No.

Should Canada be governed by men who for eighteen years failed conspicuously and ignominiously in everything of a public character they undertook?

Should Canada be governed by men who increased the public debt \$118,000,000 during their term of office? Should Canada be governed by men who borrowed \$62,000,000 to expend on public works, not having sufficient political acumen to raise the money any other way?

Should Canada be governed by men who, while in office, gave away 56,087,072 acres of land to railway corporations?

RECKLESS PRODIGALITY. The people of the world do not have to be told of the incalculable injury

they had suffered through the reckless prodigality of the Conservative Government in granting huge tracts of land to railways, and lying up even larger tracts from which the railways might make selections. This unfortunate policy alienated lands that were in the best of locations with respect to transportation, drove the settlers to far-away points, where their isolation from neighbors, schools and other advantages of civilization disgusted many of them to such an extent that they left the country. This policy kept idle lands that would otherwise have been settled upon, and become productive. It prevented municipal improvements on account of the great extent of land which thus became non-taxable and trebled the burdens of the local taxpayers, stilled the progress of the country and crushed the unfortunate settler.

The blame for this iniquity is upon the Conservatives.

NO SUCH RULERS WANTED. Are men fit to rule in Canada who exempted the Canadian Pacific and all its belongings from taxation forever?

Are men fit to rule in Canada who gave away 25,000 square miles of timber lands to their political supporters for nothing?

Are men fit to rule in Canada who have been denounced by Royal Commission as having violated the laws of the land?

Are men fit to rule in Canada who while in power, plunged the country deeper and deeper into debt each year. Every sensible man will answer, No!

LIBERALS CHANGED THINGS.

In 1896 the public debt was \$258,497,432. This is \$50.61 per capita. In 1907 the public debt approximately was \$259,000,000, or \$40.20 per capita. From this it would appear that the Liberals have scarcely increased the public debt and have created \$93,000,000 of a surplus.

The revenue for the first six months of the current fiscal year amounted to \$50,441,208. These figures are significant when it is remembered that this is \$13,000,000 more than the total revenue of the Conservative Government in 1896 after they had been in office eighteen years.

Another interesting comparison may be made on the subject of revenue. In 1896 the total revenue for 12 months ending June, '97, was \$91,202,626 and it is confidently expected by the Finance Minister that the revenue for the current fiscal year will reach the \$100,000,000 mark.

The Liberal Government has session after session introduced legislation for the benefit of the public at large, and when the programme of the Government for this session is announced it will be found that much useful legislation is promised, and will be submitted to the judgment of the House.

WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

It has been said that the present may be the last session of parliament before an appeal is made to the people. If this be the case, then the people would do well to reflect upon the record of the two political parties. Government cannot proceed in the dark. Everything done is in the light of day and duly incorporated in blue books. For many years Canada maintained an adverse struggle against hard conditions set up by a Conservative government. It was not a government for one year, but for many years. In 1896 the Conservatives had been in power eighteen years. Eighteen miserable trying years to the people of Canada, during which of political chicanery known to a corrupt party. Their money had been squandered, their birthright given away, their franchise stolen, their trade ruined, and after all this the people were left with a burden of millions of debt that discounted the future for years yet to come.

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CANADA WON'T DO IT.

Will Canada again trust the Conservative party after such bitter experiences? A burnt child dreads the fire, so will the people of Canada think twice before putting in power the party that was responsible for so much adversity and so many iniquities during eighteen dark years.

Much rather will reasonable men compare the last eleven years with the eighteen that went before. It hardly seems the same country, one is almost disposed to think that figures don't reflect the truth when comparing them year by year with Conservative times.

WHAT CANADA ESCAPED.

What would have happened had the Conservatives been allowed to have their way the past ten years? Every enactment for the benefit of the people has been opposed tooth and nail. The Grand Trunk Pacific would never have been built had the Conservatives ideas prevailed. The farmers of the West would have been crying in vain for transportation facilities had the Conservatives gained their point. The great West would still remain a desolate wilderness had the Conservatives been successful in their opposition to the government policy. The coal lands of the West would be divided among the capitalists and monopolists had the Conservative policy been continued. The timber lands would be going to political favorites for nothing, as heretofore had the Liberals not been in power, and inaugurated a system of public competition. Contracts would be given to the highest instead of the lowest tenderer had not the people placed the Liberals in power, thus protecting their own interests. The treasury would be looted, as of old, grafters would flourish, middle men would be working the big rake off, political heelers would be piling up a corruption fund at the expense of the people had this not all been stopped by the advent into power of a Liberal government.

PROGRESS IN EVERY DIRECTION.

The finger can scarcely be placed upon one spot on the commercial map of Canada and not find progress, substantial, permanent prosperity, and healthy, vigorous growth. The cause is not far to seek. The government of the country has been all that could be desired, and the results prove this contention.

What have the Conservatives done during the past few sessions to justify any claim they may put forward to be entrusted with the government of the country?

EXAMINE TORY PROMISES.

What have the Conservatives promised for the future that would make it desirable to place them in power?

These are very pertinent questions and go to the root of the whole matter. First they have not introduced any legislation that by any stretch of the imagination can be construed into an advantage to the people. But they have strenuously and consistently opposed everything put forward by the government without regard to the effect upon the well being of the electors.

Secondly, they have inaugurated a campaign of slander that drew public attention with the result that the people became seized of the actual facts and were disgusted with Tory methods. One by one the bottom dropped out of the charges made, for the simple reason that they did not rest on a secure foundation, and in many cases the explanations were of such a character that the Liberals were placed in a much better light than before.

It further developed that the very men who charged wrongdoing had been guilty of the very things they charged against the Liberals, then there was great anxiety to drop the subject, but the Liberals would not permit this, and the double shuffle, the side-stepping, which resulted was the feature of last session, notably with regard to insurance matters and speculations in Northwest land.

As to Conservative promises for the future, what do they amount to? Merely this, that if returned to power, they will reopen a number of vexed questions that have been settled amicably—they will set one Province against another with respect to increased subsidies—they will disturb the relations which exist between capital and labor—they will unsettle commercial affairs by dickerings with corporations for the purchase of their holdings—they will reverse the fiscal policy of the government—they will enter the market and borrow great sums of money to exploit public works.

MOST VICIOUS SUGGESTION.

That promise to hand over important administrative functions to a commission, is probably the most vicious, as it is the most subversive of representative forms of government. Let one recall the long struggle Canada had in years past when it was understood by clean dictum from London that there should be no form of representative government here, and the ultimate outcome as demonstrated by our enlightened institutions, and then imagine handing over the government of Canada to men who would put us back where we were one hundred years ago? The thing is not only absurd, but impossible.

This is the main promise made by the Conservatives. They promise to be honest, and they promise to destroy representative government. The first they cannot fulfil, it is contrary to Conservative nature, and the second would bring on a social revolution.

CANADA WON'T HAVE THEM.

These are the men who want to govern Canada. After the experience of many years, which has taught the Canadian people wisdom, they are quite able to judge between the Conservatives and the Liberals, and the latter have no cause to be ashamed of their record, nor of the services rendered to Canada for eleven years, which clearly entitles them to a long lease of power which the people will, without a doubt extend to them.

LET THE PEOPLE JUDGE.

Let the people of Canada mark closely the actions of the Conservatives during this session of parliament, and observe what they do that might be described as useful. Note what assistance they give the government in endeavoring to enact useful legislation—watch their attitude with respect to the introduction of original legislation. Let the people also closely observe the measures brought down by the government, carefully consider the reports brought down to the House from the various departments, and notice the improvement and the progress in every branch of the public service, and the verdict will be in favor of the best government since confederation.

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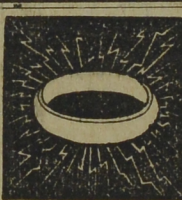
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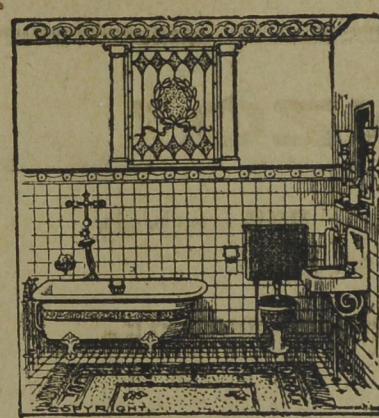
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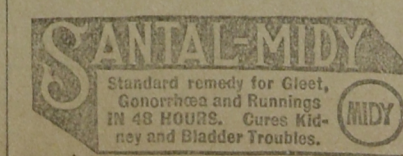
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