

"The New Slander."

Sir Charles Clears the Matter Up, And Demolishes "The Globe."

The report of Sir Charles Tupper's speech at the banquet given in his honor at the Halifax hotel, occupying ten columns of the Morning Herald. The speech is deeply interesting throughout. It deals largely with the great questions in which Sir Charles took a prominent part during the twenty-eight years he has been in public life. The following is that part of it which deals with "the new slander," and "demolishes the Toronto Globe":—

Now I do not intend on the present occasion to detain you at any length in relation to the controversies that have arisen in connection with the Canadian Pacific Railway. But I may say this that as this is the first occasion on which a Minister of the Crown has had the opportunity of addressing a large representative assembly like this, I can hardly sit down without a passing reference to a new scandal known as the section B scandal. It would perhaps be more appropriate if I were to call it

THE NEW SLANDER. Nothing perhaps has occurred in this country that has demonstrated more fully and completely the folly of any portion of the public press of the country outraging public opinion than the reception with which this slander has been met. Why is it that broadcast over this intelligent country, a country filled with a body of as intelligent men as are to be found in any portion of the civilized world, a country where there is as high-toned a sentiment of public morality as is to be found in any community of the civilized world, why is that charges made in this specific manner with all these details have simply amused the people? Why is it that there is little criticism and no excitement? If these charges were true, if any one of you gentlemen believed that this slander published in the columns of the Toronto Globe newspaper had a scintilla of truth you would not be here to-night to do me honor, no man of you would be here. I respect you too much to believe that a single man would be sitting here doing honor to a Minister of the Crown in Canada if you believed there was the slightest shadow of truth in this vile slander. (Cheers.) Why is it that this great organ of a great political party is treated with this overwhelming unalterable contempt from one end of this country to another? I will tell you why. It is because they have

SYSTEMATICALLY OUTRAGED the common sense and intelligence of this country until they are powerless to injure anybody. I say, with deep regret that a stronger illustration could not and cannot occur to prove that it is impossible for anything to be more injurious to a political party than for the time to come when the utterances of its leaders and its press are treated with disbelief and contempt. I say, sir, that the very foundation of our system is a wise and watchful, and vigorous opposition, and I say that it is only by the opposition pursuing that course that they are entitled to the respect or confidence of any person. Why is it that neither Edward Blake nor Alexander Mackenzie, nor any man in the ranks behind them, has been found to endorse during the last five years one of those lying slanders of the Globe? Because they know to well, Edward Blake knows too well, and Mr. Mackenzie knows too well, that it would be fatal to their position as leaders of a great party, were they to assent to statements that they would even bring down contempt upon their heads, even if it should have the strongest and most perfect case to present. Therefore they are too wise, even if they were not also too high-minded, independent and honorable, as I believe them to be, to lend the weight of their names to any of the miserable slanders that have been invented and circulated by certain sections of their party press. Now, what are

THE FACTS in reference to the so-called section B scandal? When we came into power we found that a hundred and eighty-five miles of the Thunder Bay section of the Canadian Pacific Railway were not under contract. Mr. Mackenzie had placed a hundred and twelve miles east from Red River, and a hundred and twelve miles west from Thunder Bay, under contract, and there was a gap of a hundred and eighty-five miles of difficult and impassable country lying between, and the whole money expended on the two portions under contract and in course of construction was utterly useless until this gap was filled up and completed. That was the position. Mr. Mackenzie had had surveyors for a considerable length of time on these 185 miles. Now, what was the first thing we did? We put under contract these 185 miles that were absolutely essential in order to make this expenditure worth anything at all. There were no inhabitants from one end of the line to the other,—nothing but a few Indians to be found, and the only way to reach the fertile shores of the Red River, and connecting with the great Northwest through Canadian territory was by the construction of this gap which was, therefore, considered to be of the most vital importance to the progress of the country. Tenders for the construction of the road came in and what did I do with them? Did I touch those tenders? No, I passed them into the hands of Mr. Trudeau, my Deputy Minister, a man of high character and standing, and of liberal prejudices it is said. All I can say is that I have found him a man of great ability and untarnished honor, upon whose fidelity and integrity I can rely with the utmost confidence. I placed them in his hands, and in the hands of Sanford Fleming, who I am happy to see sitting at this festive board to-night. (Cheers.)—a gentleman who to-day and I say it gently and unhesitatingly, who to-day enjoys the unqualified confidence of the Government of Canada, and is esteemed a man of the greatest ability and the most ardent integrity by every man whose opinion is

worth anything from end to end of the Dominion. The tenders were placed in his hands, and the instructions to report. They reported that Morse & Co. were unequal to the work; that Andrews, Jones & Co., so far as they could learn, were entirely unequal to the work; that the first available tender they came to was that of Fraser, Grant & Pitblado—the first man that they believed were able to deal with such a contract at all. What did I do? Suppose I had taken their advice? They recommended to the Government to pass over Morse & Co., and Andrews, Jones & Co., and gave the contract to Fraser, Grant & Pitblado. We did not take their advice. We said it was quite true that it was of the highest importance to push the work with vigor, but, we said we have adopted a test of the bona fides of tenders and of the ability of those who make them. We have said that if they deposit a certain sum of money, that shows their bona fides, and that if wheedled upon they deposit five per cent. of the gross amount of the contract, that shows their ability. We had fixed the test and therefore we disregarded what we knew to be perfectly sound advice and we said to them, put up the money. They could not put up five per cent.—nor one per cent. We said to Andrews, Jones & Co., who declared that they had the money ready, put up your money and if you do so within so many days you shall have the contract. Now, why did we limit them to a very short period? Because I had Mr. Fleming's written statement that to lose a week would probably result in the loss of a year, that just at that time if we did not make a contract and let them get in their supplies before the frost came out, they could not attempt to proceed for twelve months. We gave them more time, and at the end of that time they could not put up the money. They had eight days and at the end of eight days they had not put up the money but they got Morse & Co., whose tender had been passed over, to put up a part of it, but they were unable to put up the money. Under these circumstances we called upon Fraser, Grant and Pitblado, who within three days deposited the \$200,000. The contract is now practically finished and cars are running daily over this track built in the face of gigantic difficulties, and yet to this hour from that hour I have been abused because, as it is alleged, I passed over lower tenders in order to give my friends that contract.

THESE CONTRACTORS. were no more my friends than they are yours, Mr. Chairman. Fraser, I know slightly. I barely knew him by sight. I had never received the slightest favour in the world from him although I understood that he was a Conservative. Grant, I did know by sight. I had met him but once. And Pitblado I only knew as a very violent political opponent and a man who had done all he could all his life to keep me out of power. Yet for five long years the Globe has rung the charges upon "my friends," Fraser, Grant and Pitblado; and you can understand which sort of a cause it is that a great paper must have when it stoops to the retailing for five years of that which it knows to be one of the most lying slanders. Why do they call these men my friends? For the purpose of making it appear that I assisted to get this contract unfairly into their hands. Yet they repeat this slander, notwithstanding the fact that Sanford Fleming in this report stated that they were the only men down to their tender that could begin to grapple with that work. They associated with themselves Manning, McDonald & Co., and I was very glad they did so. This was a contract of four millions of dollars, and which, in addition to putting up two hundred thousand dollars, required that they should command a half million of money at once to enable them to do anything at all upon this work. And, sir, there never was,—it would be impossible for any public man or any Minister of the Crown ever to take greater care and pains for the protection of the public interest than we did. They say they had associated Manning, McDonald & Company with them. I knew McDonald was a good contractor, and that Manning was a man of wealth, and I was very glad to hear that they had entered into this arrangement. We gave them the contract. Now what does the Globe say? It says that Sir Charles Tupper, who would not give Andrews, Jones & Company a few days more to put up the money, could give Fraser, Grant & Pitblado three weeks to sign the contract. Why sir, they knew perfectly well that Mr. Mackenzie let scores of contracts remain assigned for much longer periods, and men went to work the moment they were told that they should have the contract, and in many cases afterwards, until it had been for months afterwards, until it had been to a large extent performed. They knew that the only important thing was to settle the contract, and capital would be at work at once, and that the signature had nothing to do with the matter, except as a mere formality. The contract was practically made the moment the deposit was in our hands, and we did not give them one moment more than Andrews, Jones & Co., got to put up the money. Yet for four years the Globe has rung the charges as to corruption and favoritism in regard to this matter! I have no hesitation in saying that, after twenty-eight years of public life, in which I have striven with all the power that God has given me to make a character and reputation for myself, I would stake my whole character upon the letting of these two contracts, under an examination by the most eminent engineers and the ablest business men that can be found. (Great cheering.) Well, sir, they say that these people have been assisted, that the government have

RECEIVED. them, that we obtained from them large sums of money for election purposes. Now, I ought to know something about that; the money all goes through my hands that they receive, and I know that they never received a dollar that was not certified to by Sanford Fleming or Collingwood Schreiber, and I believe that those who know these gentlemen know very well that you cannot get very much money through either of them without earning it. (Cheers and laughter.) They never received one single dollar that was not received upon the certificate of the Chief Engineer that the money was earned upon the contract. But it is said that

THE ENGINEER WAS REMOVED. Well, when I was in England, Jennings was transferred to British Columbia, that is

quite true. The contractors complained of the engineer and I never had the good fortune to get through a contract yet without some grumbling against the engineers. I believe it is a chronic mood on the part of the part of the contractors, on endeavoring to advance their interests to say that the engineers have dealt unfairly with them. My friend, Mr. Fleming, with the best intentions in the world, with the view of accomplishing the saving of a large amount of public money, knowing that these two contracts run over his 185 miles, through a most difficult country, and believing that it would be possible to improve the surveys and effect a large saving of money, wrote a letter to Jennings, the engineer of one section, and to Mr. Caddy, the engineer of another section, to say that he would guarantee to them that they should receive a percentage,—I forget how much, a small percentage—upon all the money they would save by the improvement of the line. What was the result? We took the position that by a careful re-location on the ground by a staff of engineers a large amount of money could be saved. This was done, and I have no hesitation in saying that a thing that was never heard of before was accomplished in Canada—that we completed these two contracts with a million and one-half of dollars in the treasury under the amount at which the work was contracted! I believe that the work was greatly stimulated by the exertions made and letters written by Mr. Fleming. He wrote them without my knowledge; and the government did not know that he had written them. He was alone himself responsible, and was prompted by the deep interest that he took in the work, and it was only when he severed his connection with the government that the letters were placed in my hands, and I called upon the government to assume the responsibility. The contractors then complained, and said that the engineer was doing them a gross injustice, and that the reason he did it was that he had an absolute direct monetary interest in the matter. They said, you are reducing the work that we were entitled to perform over a million dollars, and we are not getting fair play. But Mr. Jennings was not transferred till the time came when Mr. Caddy, who was a high-minded, able and honorable man, was appointed to take charge of both sections,—the work having been so far advanced that the engineer could attend to both sections. Then a question arose with reference to measurements. They claimed that an injustice had resulted from

THE RESULTS FROM. Mr. Schreiber said, "I will take pains to ascertain whether the measurements are correct or not." He sent two gentlemen of high standing and character, Mr. Bell and Mr. ———, for the purpose of having most conclusive evidence in his possession as to the actual amount of work done by the contractors. When we made these exertions for the purpose of getting the road open a year or two sooner than we otherwise could, the contractors claimed it was an injustice to them, and the government agreed that when the work was completed it should be left to an independent arbitrator to say, what was right between man and man. Were these facts concealed in any way? No; on the floor of Parliament I stated them. I told Mr. Blake that the contractors had complained of the measurements, and we had agreed to take the work out of the hands of the contractors for the purpose of giving the people of Canada the benefit of the use of that road this summer. When I tell you of the enormous tide of travel and traffic that is pouring into the Northwest, and that we could get in six days from Toronto to Winnipeg freight that could not go around via St. Paul, in six weeks, you can understand what it is for the people of the North-West and it is for the people of Canada to have that road open. The only way of having it opened this year was the course we pursued. That was to settle with the contractors. For this reason: they could not run the road after the 1st of July, as their contract terminated, and it was impossible without destruction of life and property to have one company constructing the road, and another operating it. I said, we will take this road out of your hands and pay you for it, and pass it over to the Canadian Pacific Railway and settle with them. These facts were stated, and approved of by Mr. Blake and every member of the House of Commons, because every man had to see that the road was taken, not in the interest of any individual or company, but in the interest of the country itself. What was

THE FIRST STEP? I said: Give me a statement of the terms upon which you are willing to settle with me for the three hundred thousand that remain. They required that that should be paid fifteen per cent. on that amount. I said why? They said, because of the money that we have expended in the preparation to perform that work for which we now get nothing. We put in steam shovels, and established works to put us in a position in which we could make money; hitherto we have been losing money, now we have reached a point at which it is possible to make a profit. I do not pretend to judge of a question of that kind. I handed it to the Chief Engineer and told him to make me a report. They required us to come in and take the rolling stock off their hands. I said, we will not do it; you must sell that yourself for what it is worth; I will only deal with you in regard to the contract that I have made. Mr. Schreiber reported that they were entitled to the fifteen per cent. on their work, but that it ought to come off of the Pacific Railway Company into whose hands the work was given. I said, send for Mr. VanHorne who was connected with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. I said to him, "there are the terms which my Chief Engineer says are fair terms,—that is, to pay fifteen per cent. on the work that was to have been done." Mr. VanHorne admitted that the arrangement was a fair and reasonable one, and that they should do it, and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company purchased the rolling stock of their own motion. It was a thing with which we had nothing to do. There is the whole statement; and out of that transaction, stated fairly in the presence of Mr. Blake, and approved of by every member of the House of Commons, these lying scandals have been concocted, because they thought I had gone out of the country; that I was beyond their reach, and would not be on the spot to give them their answers. Then, for the purpose of showing that I was willing to rob the country in the interests of Fraser & Co., they said I had forced Whitehead into partnership with them and then when the work into the

hands of the Government. This is not only not true, but it happens to be

THE REVERSE OF TRUTH. Whitehead entered into a deed of co-partnership with Fraser and Grant. He brought down the deed of co-partnership to me at Ottawa to ratify. I refused, and said you cannot go into partnership at all, because we cannot recognise any person with Whitehead, since we have one hundred thousand dollars security for the execution of the contract, and if we allow him to take in a partner it will vitiate the security. They therefore made the contract without my knowledge, and I refused to ratify it. But in the meantime they had given Whitehead twenty-five thousand dollars. Mr. Lash was the Deputy Minister of Justice, Mr. Blake's former partner, now in Mr. Blake's office, whom Mr. Blake will say is not only an able lawyer, but as high-minded a man as lives in Canada. Every dollar was paid by Mr. Lash because I did not have anything to do with it, since I said it was a legal transaction. The proceeds were put in Mr. Lash's hands, and he disposed of the money. Every dollar that Fraser & Grant got they got from Mr. Lash as Deputy Minister of Justice; and it is out of such material as that that this paper ventures to manufacture that statement. Now, what about the money for the elections? It would not be at all surprising if Mr. Manning, who is a wealthy man, contributed to the elections. I believe that it is the Ontario elections they allude to. Mr. Shields, before he went into contracting at all, was a wholesale grocer in Toronto, one of the most active and energetic members of the party to be found in the Dominion. Mr. Macdonald was a Conservative, and it would not be at all surprising if they contributed; but I say this openly and above board, in the presence of the company, whence I suppose my words will be carried on the wings of the press to every corner of the Dominion of Canada: I have been Minister of Public Works and Minister of Railways and Canals since 1878, and I say that from the hour I entered office down to this hour, if they will show

A SINGLE INSTANCE in which I ever personally benefited myself, or ever received one dollar for my party from any contractor, I will consent to be driven with disgrace out of public life. I knew this, that from the hour I should accept a contribution for the party purposes from a contractor, directly or indirectly, I should be his slave instead of his master, and from the hour when I entered upon the duties of these offices, I never had a transaction with a contractor, and never exchanged a word that I would not have been glad to have Mr. McKenzie on the one side of me and Mr. Blake on the other. When year after year for long years this paper and other portions of their press had referred to the country with lying slanders in relation to the Canadian Pacific Railway, the Government appointed a Royal Commission, and that Royal Commission sat and examined every person that they had reason to suppose had any connection with any contract. I appeared before that Royal Commission and gave my sworn testimony. Every contractor was put upon the stand, and was asked whether there was any interest on the part of the Government, or any member of it, in connection with the contract that he had. Every person they could get hold of, was called before the Commission, and instead of sustaining

ONE JOT OR TITTLE OF THE LYING SLANDERS, there in that report of the volumes of evidence taken before the Royal Commission, you will find that after examining everybody who could be supposed to be cognizant of any facts bearing upon the inquiry, so far from there being one word of truth or one particle of foundation for these slanders it was the very reverse. So complete was the refutation that no man in Parliament was found to endorse one of their slanders, and is there any stronger evidence than that the leaders of the Liberal party should show these things to go unchallenged assuming them to be true. Is there any man who does not know that if Mr. Blake or Mr. McKenzie could establish any of these charges it would be the greatest thing for themselves that could possibly be done. It has never been attempted on the floor of the House. I have again and again told those gentlemen that I was ready for the most exhaustive examination by a committee of themselves, on sworn testimony, but to this hour there has never been a man found within the walls of Parliament to endorse one of those slanders. And what is the consequence? That the Globe newspaper to-day, that should be a power in the land, which as the organ of a great party should have immense power throughout this country, as is powerless to deal with any real act of wrong or injustice, as it is possible for a journal to be. Any man in this country may do anything he chooses in the conduct of his political life and they are powerless to bring him to the bar of public opinion, because they have outraged that public opinion so long by gross and malignant falsehoods that no one pays the slightest attention to anything they say. (Cheers.) When the examination was going on, the Globe said something about this telegram or that paper; they hinted that if the Commissioners would call upon this man or summon that man before them, they would be able to learn something about the matter. I cut the paragraph out and I asked the Commission to call every man that had been named. They did so, and instead of being able to sustain the charge, they themselves admitted that there was no ground for them. Then the Secretary of the Commission wrote to the Globe requesting them, if they could, to name some person who would give evidence to substantiate the charge that had been made. They said they did not know anything about it, that they had heard these things mentioned, but had no personal knowledge of them. I hope, therefore, that you will excuse me from dealing any further with such matters; but it was impossible for me to sit down without dealing at some length with a matter of such vital importance to the reputation and character of the public men of this country.

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