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## A BOMBHELL IN THE MINISTRY

(Continued from page 3.)

and gone to the expense they did to roll up a vote against prohibition, when all that was needed was to stay at home. It is not possible to believe that Hon. G. W. Ross, for example, knew of such an agreement, or was a party to it, for he is on record for declaring, when once it was proposed to amend the Canada Temperance Act so as to require a majority vote of the whole electorate to enact it in any municipality that such a condition would 'take an unfair advantage of public opinion and render it almost impossible for public opinion to be fairly recorded.' Why, at the general election Sir Wilfrid Laurier himself polled 470 votes less than a majority of the electorate in his constituency, and the nine members of the present Ministry who were elected in 1896 fell short of an actual majority of the electorate in their ridings by 4,170. Yet Sir Wilfrid and his colleagues had no hesitancy or prickings of conscience about accepting their minority of the votes as an ample evidence of the will of the electorate. But if we assume that Sir Wilfrid was candid and truthful when he told of that 'implied' agreement; assuming that the Liberal temperance men in the convention did—as he in effect charges them with doing—enter into a conspiracy to humbug the temperance people, does this make the position of our leaders any better, or does it lessen in any degree our duty to stamp with our disapproval men who put forward as an excuse for being false to their public pledge the astonishing plea that they had all along been determined to be false to it, and that they had, in fact, conspired with others so as to make it safe for them to be false to it?

### OTHER BROKEN PLEDGES.

"It would be utterly wearisome to review in detail all the ugly record of promises made and broken by the present Government. I can only glance at some of those not already noted. We declared that the number of paid ministers in the Cabinet was too great under the late Administration. We have the same number still, and their aggregate salaries are \$4,000 per year greater, one-half of this sum going into the pocket of the Minister who recently declared that every pledge has been kept. We denounced the expenditure on account of superannuation, and pledged ourselves to wipe it out; it was greater by \$14,331 in 1899 than it was in 1896. We denounced as useless the creation of the Department of Trade and Commerce. The 'useless' department has been continued.

"We promised to abolish the Senate or radically change its constitution; by affording that body an opportunity to save the country from the consequences of extravagant and corrupt deals, the Government has enabled the Senate to demonstrate its usefulness, almost its indispensability.

"We denounced the development of monopolies, trusts, and combines as a consequence of the policy of our opponents; not a single one of those which were in existence in 1896 has been destroyed or put out of business, while others have been created and given a foothold in the country by the direct action of the Government. We declared that the expenditure for the administration of justice was too great, Sir Wilfrid Laurier even going so far as to say that thousands of dollars paid to counsel had been improperly, if not corruptly, paid; the expenditure of this department has been increased by \$353,000. We denounced the expenditure of \$120,000 for immigration purposes; we have more than doubled this expenditure, increasing it to \$255,000. We condemned the granting of public lands as bonuses to railways:

"Only by the opposition of the Senate was the Government prevented from consummating a deal by which twenty-five thousand acres of gold-bearing lands, to be selected by the beneficiaries, was to be given per mile for the building of a narrow-gauge tramway, a transaction so flagrantly improper that several Government supporters refused to vote for it, and it is doubtful if anyone would now be willing to defend it on its merits. We denounced the granting of cash bonuses to railways, declaring it to be 'a fruitful source of jobbery, speculation, and corruption'; we have well-nigh out-Heroded Herod by the reckless way in which we have granted business bonuses to railways, giving in

one instance for the same railway two millions more than we had condemned our opponents for offering, and in another actually granting a bonus to a road for which no charter had been granted, and which was not even projected.

"We condemned all corruption: yet our leaders have made us responsible for the Crow's Nest job, by means of which the directors of the leading Government organ were permitted to practically grab a quarter of a million of acres of coal lands, and the country is saddled with a totally unnecessary payment of two millions of dollars."

"We promised purity of administration; the history of the notorious Drummond railway job shows what regard our leaders had for such a promise. But why go farther? The record of our party while it has been in power under its present leaders is one long, shameful story of promises unfulfilled and pledges broken; of reckless extravagance, of jobbery and corruption; and of utterly disgraceful betrayal of every principle for which as a party we have stood. For the purpose of securing themselves in office the men who have been entrusted with positions of leadership have brought disgrace upon our party and dishonor upon the name of Liberalism.

### DRIVE THEM FROM POWER.

"What, then, is our duty to our party and to our country? Again I repeat that only by repudiating these leaders, by disassociating ourselves from them, and by doing all that may be in our power to punish them for their falseness and treachery, by driving them from power and from the offices which they retain as the price of their treason to principle, can we as individuals and as a party avoid sharing their guilt and participating in their shame. In no other way, and by no means short of this, can we hope to regain or retain as a party the respect and confidence of a patriotic and decency-loving public. It may be said that this can only be accomplished at the expense of a return to power of our political opponents, a party opposed to the political principles in which we believe. I do not dispute this, nor do I shrink from this alternative. Neither do I believe that any true man or any man who has an abiding faith in the truth of Liberal principles, or in the ultimate triumph of truth, will shrink from it. We are bound to assume that the Conservative party is permeated and guided by a genuine belief in the truth of its political ideals and in the correctness of its principles. At any rate, we cannot truthfully charge that party or its leaders with having betrayed or abandoned its principles to get or retain office. This much we must say in fairness, even if we cannot see eye to eye with them. At the most, then, the defeat of the present Government would only mean loss of office to men whose holding of it is a disgrace and a scandal; it would involve no defeat of the principles of Liberalism; no rejection of those principles by the men whose votes would bring about the Government's overthrow. On the other hand, for us to overlook and condone the treachery and desertion of principle of which our leaders have been guilty would not only be a deliberate decision on our part to make ourselves and our party partakers of their crimes against political decency, but it would mean putting a premium upon falsehood, promise-breaking, and treachery to principle, and a recognition of these as legitimate weapons of political warfare; a prospect from which every decency-loving Canadian must recoil with horror.

"If the Liberal party be what we have believed it to be, a great force for political good in this Dominion; if its principles be founded, as we have believed, upon ethical and economic truth, we need not fear that it will be permanently weakened by rescuing it from the leadership of men who have been false to all their professions, recreant to all their pledges, and who recognize in our party nothing more or better than a machine to keep them in office.

"The overflow and punishment of the leaders who have betrayed and disgraced us in the important present duty to which we must put our hands and do with all our might.

"That done, we may again look the world in the face, for we shall have vindicated our party and proved our right to claim for ourselves the highest earthly title—honest men. We will then be able once more to advocate those political ideas in which we have believed, and once more to ask the public to believe us when we promise to stand by those ideas. This will

involve a reorganization of the party, it may be objected. Doubtless, but if we must choose between reorganization and the infamy, the degradation, of being justly regarded as a party of pledge breakers, willingly led by a cabal of place-holders who have proven recreant to every principle they ever professed, I do not think honest men will hesitate long before making their decision. As I have already said, I am not addressing myself to any within the Liberal ranks who regard the getting and holding of power and office as the proper end and aim of all political effort. I am trying to speak only to those who are and have been Liberals because of their sincere belief in the principle of Liberalism. I have made no statement which is not fully warranted by the facts. If I have spoken strongly it is because this is a time for plain speaking, and for strong speaking and my only regret is that I am not able to command the language needed to fittingly characterize the conduct of men who betrayed a great party and a great cause for the paltry consideration of office and empty titles. To the great body of honest Liberals—a large majority of our party as I believe—I would say, do not hesitate to do what is plainly your duty. It is not the part of true men to falter and hesitate for fear of consequences: their part is to do right, never doubting that the consequences of right action must be good. Do not fear for Liberal principles, nor doubt that in good time the party organization and the party leaders will come to carry forward these principles and to lift the banner of Liberalism from the mire in which faithless and treacherous leaders have trampled. No great and just cause was ever finally lost because leaders prove false, and if we of the tank and file only prove true, and refuse to wink at or condone the treachery of our leaders we need have no fear and do doubt of the ultimate triumph of Liberalism in Canada."

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