

had been read that evening, which had been written by the hon. member for East Toronto, and which had been distributed at the instance of the hon. member for South Grey. The Government never distributed a single copy of that infamous electioneering circular. He held that so important a step ought not to have been taken by a Government which was dying and struggling for its existence. That was the outrage that had been committed, and it was one which deserved an enquiry and impeachment. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. OLIVER thought it due to himself to make some statements in reference to this matter. When the hon. member for South Grey first brought this matter before the House, his resolution remained on his hands for several days because he could not get a seconder. He had made two ineffectual appeals to him (Mr. Oliver). The House had heard lately that among hon. gentlemen opposite there were mysterious modes of obtaining possession of private letters and telegrams. A telegram to him (Mr. Oliver) in reference to the matter under debate had been obtained, according to the hon. member for South Grey, in the following manner:—Mr. Lewis happened to be in a bar room, and there in pulling his handkerchief from his pocket he dropped the telegram which was seized upon by a friend of the hon. gentleman and sent to him, and eventually brought before the House. The hon. gentleman occupied a position in this matter which he (Mr. Oliver) would not like to occupy. A notice to attend the meeting of the Committee had been served on him on Friday. On Saturday he went to Ingersoll, and on stepping off the train on to the platform he was stopped by a high-toned Conservative who served him with another notice. For this extra service that gentleman had been paid. He had presented to the Committee a letter from Mr. Bodwell, who was then in Grey, dated the 21st, and he called the attention of the House to the fact that that letter was not published. That letter spoke of the acts of corruption which were going on in South Grey, and of the advantage taken by Mr. Lauder and his friends of the land valuation, and said that it was a pity that some one who was familiar with the circumstances could not be got to go there and set the matter right. He also submitted to the Committee a circular containing a resolution of an Orange lodge of South Grey, addressed to all subordinate lodges, ordering them to vote for Mr. Lauder, stating that Mr. Dickey had pretended to be an Orangeman, but was not one, and had insulted the late Grand Master. Mr. Lewis had called on him (Mr. O.) some time before that and had requested him to let him know when the nomination in Grey took place, as he was anxious to go there to assist Dickey. He told him he was not the man to go, but on receiving this letter he had sent the telegram which was produced. That portion of the report which said that his telegram to Lewis was sent on account of the telegram from Mr. Kerr was not true. The instigators of the charge against the late leader of the Government, having failed in the attempt against that gentleman's character, thought the next best thing would be to implicate one of his partners. He would like to know why the hon. gentleman kept back that letter. It was a private one and he would like to have it back if it was not to be used.

Mr. RYKERT—Was it marked private?

Mr. OLIVER said that he gave it to the hon. gentleman. He could look at it and see. The hon. member for East Toronto bore hard on the fact that he had not on the first day of his examination mentioned the receipt of Mr. Lewis' telegram. The fact of the matter was that he had not received the telegram himself. It was received by Mr. Brown, his agent, and he had not it in his possession till after the examination commenced. The evidence of Mr. Brown went to show that he had received fifty telegrams and answered them, signing his (Oliver's) name to them. He believed the country was sick of the discussion of this matter, which after all did not much surpass acts committed in almost every constituency in the Province. The

previous election in Proton, when the whiskey was behind the church—(laughter)—or even the election in East Toronto, where it was said many five dollar bills were dropped, of course accidentally, on bar-room floors, might be quoted as examples.

Mr. LAUDER denied that he had taken part in getting up the affidavits, and he never had any previous conference with those men on this matter. He took great credit to himself in getting the lands in Grey properly valued, and said that any one could see that there was no political design in his course. He had been a good deal blamed for what he had done in

the matter, but he felt that he had been fully justified. The Commissioner had appointed the Committee himself, and yet that Committee had not brought in such a verdict as had been expected by the Government. The leader of the Ministry felt that at all hazards he must clear his colleague of the charge given in the report, and the only way he could get rid of it was by a vote of the House. He challenged the hon. Premier to have another committee, and if that was granted the evidence would be taken on oath, and it could be proved that his colleague was anything but innocent of the charges that had been laid against him. The statements made before the committee formed were not made under oath, and in hardly three matters of importance did any of those examined agree. The Premier no doubt could count upon his friends in the House to stand by him, but the people throughout the country would not be satisfied until the truth was properly arrived at. Facts were continually coming to his knowledge, which made it still more clear that what had been charged against the interference of the Ministry's officials in South Grey was correct. He declared that Lewis was still in the employ of the Government when he was canvassing in Grey. It had been alleged that a Dr. Nicholson, a Government official, had canvassed for him (the speaker), but that statement was entirely incorrect. He was quite willing to leave his case before the country and his constituents.

Mr. WOOD (Victoria) said the main object of the appointment of the Committee was to determine whether what Lewis had done was done by sanction of the Government. So far as Lewis was concerned, the verdict in his case was unanimous that he had acted wrong; but so far as the hon. Commissioner was concerned, there were different opinions as to his share in the matter. He briefly reviewed the evidence, and said that from it he gathered that the hon. member for East Toronto was not altogether correct in what he had stated in reference to Messrs. Kerr, Wells, Oliver, and McKellar. The pith of the whole matter was whether Mr. McKellar sent Lewis to Grey knowing how he would act up there; but there was nothing in the evidence to justify such an assertion. He referred to what he must call a hard remark that had been made by the honourable member for East Toronto, when he said it had been his misfortune to defend persons charged with crime where the evidence was not so clear as that in the report, and still the jury had found the defendant guilty. It was a misfortune that men should have been found guilty on such slim evidence, and it was a misfortune that the honourable member was not able to convince the jury that they should have given different verdicts. It was the worst speech that he had ever heard made against the jury system of this country. He dissented from the ninth clause of the Committee's report, for he could find nowhere in the evidence that Mr. McKellar stated to Lewis that he would deal liberally with the electors, except it might be that Lewis whose veracity was very much questioned, said that that was the impression he had of what was the general import of the conversation he had with the hon. Commissioner. He was sorry to hear the hon. member for South Grey predict that this would be a party question, for he held that in a matter of this kind, in which a man's character was brought up, the members should vote irrespective of all political considerations. Speaking of his own personal knowledge of Mr. McKellar, he said that that honourable gentleman was a man of unquestioned integrity, and that it would be highly improper to convict him on the testimony of such a man as Lewis.

Mr. SEXTON said that the whole question rested upon what transpired during the interview at the American Hotel between Mr. McKellar and Lewis, and there was not a particle of evidence to show that the honourable Commissioner was deserving of the least blame in the matter.

Mr. E. B. WOOD thought that, out of courtesy, those gentlemen at least who were in the habit of investigating evidence and collating facts should be allowed to make a few observations upon that great Proton question. In the first place, he should refer to some observations which had fallen from the hon. member for North York. He seemed to be under the impression that when a matter was delegated to a Committee and that Committee reported it was a mark of disrespect to that Committee for the House to bring their minds to bear upon the question brought before that Committee, and to pronounce judgment. He would inform the hon. gentleman of a fact of which he must be cognizant, that a Committee was only a small portion of the House delegated with certain powers, for the sake of convenience, to take