

respectable citizens of Toronto being Conservatives, yet refused upon that occasion to vote for a man who came out as a thick-and-thin supporter of Sir John A. Macdonald. Yet those champions of the working-men got up in this House to-night and insulted every working-man in the city of Toronto, by stating that his vote was to be bought by the mere granting of a half-holiday. The honourable member for North Renfrew deliberately told this House that they had only to give these men the half holiday and they would howl as you liked. The attack had been apparently made upon the Commissioner of Public Works, but the point was aimed at the working-men of Toronto. (Cheers.) The writing of the letter, he contended, was no evidence of the corrupt intent set forth in the resolution, and if hon. gentlemen had thought so, why did they call so much evidence? They had that information almost the first hour of the first day the Committee sat, and they called witnesses after witness in the hope of finding some case in which there had been some interference. They had failed, and failed signally. He would be the first to condemn any act of corruption on the part of this or any Government if there were any proof to sustain the charge. There was no such proof in this case, and he felt himself perfectly justified in voting against the amendment.

Mr. CRAIG (Glenarry) said that being one of the Reformers who voted for the late Government and supported the late Mr. Sandfield Macdonald, and having at the same time promised to give the same support to the present Government, he had much less sympathy for the Commissioner of Public Works in the present case when he remembered the way in which he had conducted himself while in Opposition. It would have been far better that the men had not been allowed to go to that nomination, but he thought an undue advantage had been taken of the liberty by the foremen at the works. He hoped, from the expression of opinion by this House upon this occasion, that a lesson had been taught which would prevent such things in future. With regard to the workmen, however, he did not believe that the Commissioner of Public Works could have exercised any influence over them by any action he could take regarding them, even if he would, which would in any way influence them in giving their vote. His experience of working-men was that they were too independent for that, and it was proven in this case that the men could have got plenty work elsewhere, and were in no way dependent upon the Government for employment. As a matter of fact, the Government had to increase their wages in order to retain their services. While he was not prepared to say that it was altogether correct to let the men go, he was prepared to sustain the Attorney-General and the other gentlemen in the Government in their assertion that there was no corrupt intent. (Cheers.) There was nothing in the evidence to show that a single man was influenced, and, while he deprecated the charges made by hon. gentlemen on the Government side of the House against the Administration of Mr. Sandfield Macdonald, he was yet prepared to record his vote against the amendment of the hon. member for East Toronto. (Cheers.)

Mr. BISHOP said that he felt bound as a farmer to speak a few words in defence of the farmers of the country.

Mr. CAMERON—Name the person on this side of the House who sneered at the farmers.

Mr. BISHOP said that if the hon. gentleman would wait he would hear the names. The hon. member for East Toronto has sneered, with reference to a speech of the member for South Brant, that he would not have been surprised at a man just from the state of the plough making such an exhibition of himself as that gentleman had done, but that a member of the legal profession should do so he could not have believed. What was that but a sneer at the farmer? (Applause.) He went on to say that a few years ago the gentlemen on the opposite side of the House had taken a trip to Lake Superior and their forty-second cousins with them (laughter), at a cost of about \$4,000 to the country, and everything was all right in their eyes, but now, when there was only a couple of hundred dollars for a half holiday to some poor labouring men and mechanics in question, they cried out loudly about a wrong having been done.

Mr. SNETSINGER said he had always had every confidence in the Government, and he saw no reason now why that confidence should be shaken. He regretted that the matter had occurred, and he hoped it would not be repeated; but at the same time he would not for a moment say that the hon.

Commissioner of Public Works had written the letter with respect to the Central Prison workmen with the intention of corrupting them. He (Mr. Snetsinger) did not believe that the giving of this half-holiday had made the difference of one vote with these men. There were very few votes changed at a nomination. He thought that there could have been means employed by the Government, if they desired to exert undue influence, which would have had more effect in that way than the giving them a half holiday. (Applause)

Mr. GIFFORD expressed his intention of voting for the amendment.

Mr. CURRIE said that the amendment was professedly aimed at the Minister of Agriculture, but in reality it was directed at the Ministry of the day. He remarked that it was not necessary to go so far as England to find a precedent for letting public employes have half a holiday to go and attend a nomination. In the Public Works Department of the Dominion there were 1,100 or 1,200 persons employed. These men had always gone to nominations and taken a prominent part in elections, and they did not hear that a single dollar of their wages was ever docked for the time they had occupied in doing this. The same with regard to the men employed on the Welland Canal. He held that there had been no coercion of the Central Prison workmen; they had been permitted to go to the polls and vote as they pleased. He believed that there was no gentleman in the Province of Ontario who had fought so long, so faithfully, and so well in the past on the side of good government, as the Minister of Agriculture. (Cheers.)

Mr. CAMERON rose to close the debate, and in doing so said that he thought that this motion would do more harm than good in one respect. It would teach the people of this country that there was a lower scale of morality in this House than they had expected. With respect to the statement that he had been personally offended by the hooting of the Central Prison workmen at the nomination, and to his being unfriendly to working-men, he said that he was unfriendly to working-men if they behaved like rowdies, and he believed that the Central Prison workmen marched to the hustings in a body as they were, were organized and brought there with instructions to hoot at Opposition speakers. He denied that men working for the Dominion Government had ever gone and attended elections and at the same time received their pay. He denied that they had done this by the instructions of the Commissioner or Deputy-Commissioner.

Mr. CURRIE—As a matter of fact, whether by direct or indirect order of the Commissioner of Public Works it has been done.

Mr. CAMERON went on to defend himself against the charge of having sneered at the farmers and to explain the words he used with respect to them. After a few further remarks he brought his speech to a termination.

The members were then called in and the motion for the adjournment of the House was put and declared lost.

The amendment was then put and lost on the following division:—

YEAS—Messrs. Ardagh, Bulter, Boulton, Boulton, Cameron, Code, Corby, Daly, Deacon, Fitzsimmons, Gifford, Giles, Guest, Hamilton, Harrington, Lauder, McCall, McGowan, McRae, Meredith, Merrick, Monk, Read, Richards, Rykert, Scott, Tooley—27.

NAYS—Messrs. Barber, Baxter, Bethune, Bishop, Caldwell, Chisholm, Christie, Clarke (Norfolk), Clarke (Wellington), Clemens, Cook, Craig (Glenarry), Crooks, Crosby, Currie, Deroche, Farewell, Flalaysen, Fraser, Gibson, Gow, Graham, Haney, Hardy, Hodgins, McLeod, Mowat, O'Donoghue, Oliver, Pardee, Patterson, Paxton, Prince, Sexton, Sinclair, Smith, Snetsinger, Springer, Striker, Watterworth, Webb, Williams (Hamilton), Wilson, Wood—44.

The original motion was then put and carried, and the House went into Committee of Supply accordingly, Mr. Hodgins in the chair. An item was passed, and the Committee rose, reported progress, and asked leave to sit again.

The House adjourned at 2 o'clock.