

most startling statement ever made in any Assembly in this Dominion, and such a statement that I never thought it would be my lot to make. We have discovered a deliberate conspiracy on the part of certain persons, not members of this House, to corrupt members sitting in this House. Before I go further, Mr. Speaker, I will ask you to open certain letters which I am told have been placed in your hands.

The Speaker proceeded to open one of two letters addressed to himself as follows:—

“MONDAY MORNING, March 17, 1883.

“Mr. Speaker, the enclosed \$1,000 was yesterday paid to me to influence my vote in the Legislative Assembly by Mr. Wilkinson. I place it your hands at the earliest opportunity on your return to the city. I remain yours truly, ROBERT MCKIM.”

The Speaker proceeded to count the bills and said this envelope contained ten \$100 bills.

Mr. MORRIS—May I ask to whom the external envelope was addressed?

The SPEAKER—The external envelope was addressed to myself, and the second one was also addressed to myself, endorsed: “This envelope not to be opened until requested by the Attorney-General.”

Mr. MORRIS—I request that they be kept together.

The SPEAKER—I have another one with the same endorsement, that it be not opened till requested by the Attorney-General. This was received from William D. Balfour, member for South Essex, and reads as follows:—“House of Assembly, Toronto, March 17th, 1884: 3 p.m. Dear sir, I hereby enclose you the sum of \$800 in \$100 bills, handed to me at 2:30 p.m. to-day, and now handed to you by me. It was given me by a man named Big Push Wilkinson, in room 9 Walker House, to influence my vote against the Government during the present session. I made no promises. Yours faithfully William D. Balfour.”

Mr. MOWAT—Mr. Speaker: That money has actually been paid for the purpose of influencing votes in this House. I need not say it is a high crime and misdemeanour, and that the House will deal severely with the bribers, when the case is proven, is also perfectly clear. I will mention the names of the conspirators so far as we know and so far as we have evidence to prove from the actual facts which have come into our possession, and whilst we have only just received real evidence to prove that money has been paid, in addition to this promise of still larger sums have been made to some members for the same corrupt purposes. Offices have been promised likewise, and the conspirators declared that in offering the offices for this purpose, in connection with the Dominion Government, they had the sanction and authority of the Minister of the Interior to do so. Other personal advantages beside this have been offered with the same corrupt intent.

Mr. MORRIS—Will the hon. gentleman repeat that?

Mr. MOWAT—These conspirators, in making these offers of offices in the gift of the Dominion Government, declared that they had the authority of the Minister of the Interior to make such offers. It is satisfactory to know that all the temptations offered have proved unavailing, and not a single member of this House swerved from his duty in any particular. (Cheers.) Not a single member proved for one single moment faithless to his trust, and I congratulate the Reform party on the fact that in choosing their representatives here they chose men whom no temptations either in money, or promises of offices, or personal advantage had the slightest influence over. (Cheers.) We have reason to believe, I may say we have reason to know, that this conspiracy was formed early in the session, and that it began its work early in the session. But the temptations then made wholly failed and the parties to them abandoned their efforts in despair of effecting their purpose. They were, however, resumed later by the same parties and others with the result which we now know. The several honourable members approached in this way thought it would be a fitting thing to do on their part, and that they would only be doing their duty to this House and their constituents by disclosing what was taking place, and they accordingly did disclose the matter to members of the Government. Every approach made to them; every conversation which took place; every step in the negotiations and every act that was done was immediately disclosed to one or more members of the Government. Nothing was done without the knowledge of every member of the Government, or without the advise and sanction of one or more of us. By this means we have come into possession of indubitable proofs of the grossest corruption of which there are any records in this Province. Now I don't mean to add any further words of mine in regard to this matter, but I will read a statement of what I have reason to believe and do believe. Any words of mine, Mr. Speaker, would detract from the horror and indignation with which this conspiracy will be regarded by the whole Dominion and by good men of all parties. I make this statement, which I embody in a resolution, as follows—

THE RESOLUTION.

That the Attorney-General, a member of this House, has from his place in the House stated that he is credibly informed and believes that divers persons named by him, including Christopher W. Bunting, John A. Wilkinson, Edward Meek, F. S. Kertland, and one Lynch, have entered into a conspiracy to accomplish the defeat of the Government in this House by corrupting members of this House to vote against the Government and Government measures.

That the first-named three persons are well-known and active members of the party in this Province opposed to this Government, and that the last-named two persons are American citizens.

That for the purpose of corruptly influencing the votes of members of this House, the said five persons have at divers times during the present session of this Legislature approached several members of this House with money, offers of money, promises of offices in the gift of the Dominion Government, and promises of other personal advantages to such members.

That divers members of this House so approached, being indignant at the criminal conduct proposed to them, have deemed it to be the fitting course on their part, and a duty to their constituents and the public, acting herein with the advice and approval of members of the Government, to seem for a time to entertain such approaches in order to the detection, exposure, and punishment of the persons guilty of making such corrupt attempts, and have in pursuance of their duty from time to time disclosed to members of the Government the approaches from time to time made to them, and the several acts therein of the guilty parties; that among the members of this House in regard to whom such corrupt attempts have been made are Mr. Robert McKim, member for the West Riding of Wellington; Mr. William D. Balfour, member for the South Riding of Essex; and Dr. John F. Dowling, member for the South Riding of Renfrew; that in carrying out the objects of the conspiracy the said Wilkinson, to influence the vote of the said McKim, repeatedly offered him money, and has at length delivered to the said McKim one thousand dollars; that Mr. McKim immediately on receiving the money placed it in the hands of Mr. Speaker, to be by him produced to this House; that both the said Wilkinson and the said Bunting for the same corrupt purpose undertook to pay to Mr. McKim a further sum of \$1,000 on a future day; that the said Bunting was a party to the payment of the former sum and to the promise to pay the latter sum for the corrupt purpose already stated, and that to secure the same corrupt object the said Wilkinson and Bunting further offered and undertook that the said McKim should be appointed Registrar at Regina, in the North-West, with a salary of one thousand dollars a year; that both the said Wilkinson and the said Bunting assured the said McKim that the Dominion Minister of the Interior had pledged to them his word that their said promise of the said office would be carried out, and the said Bunting on his own part pledged his word to the same effect; that for the same corrupt purpose already mentioned, and to influence the vote of the said William D. Balfour, the said Wilkinson repeatedly offered to pay, and did this day deliver to the said Balfour, the sum of eight hundred dollars in cash, and undertook to pay a further sum of seven hundred dollars on a future day; that for the same purpose the said Kertland also offered to pay to him the sum of two hundred dollars; that immediately on receiving the said sum of eight hundred dollars Mr. Balfour placed the same in the hands of Mr. Speaker, to be by him produced to this House; and that further to secure the same purpose the said Wilkinson undertook that the said Balfour should be appointed by the Dominion Government to a Registrarship at Regina, in the North-West; that the said Wilkinson, for the corrupt purpose already mentioned, and to influence the vote of the said John F. Dowling, offered him the sum of two thousand dollars cash, and to pay him a further sum of two thousand dollars at a future period; that the sum so offered to be paid down was exhibited to him by the said Wilkinson, and that there is reason to believe that other corrupt offers were made by the said conspirators to, and rejected by, other members of this House, and it is hereby

Resolved, That the charges and matters referred to and set forth in said statement of the information and belief of the Attorney-General be forthwith referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, with instructions to enquire and report thereon, and with power to send for and examine all necessary persons and papers in or concerning the premises.

Mr. BALFOUR—Mr. Speaker: I trust that other opportunities than this will be presented in order to explain the whole matter that has been submitted to the House. From the time I was first approached in this matter by those parties who were base enough to seek to purchase my support, I made up my mind that I would be doing a duty to my Province by seeking to bring them to justice. (Hear, hear.) I may say that no step that I took in the whole matter, from the time I was first approached—no step was taken without the knowledge and approval and advice of the members of the Government of this House. (Hear, hear.) I can only assure the hon. leader of the Government in this matter—I can only assure my fellow-members—I can only assure the country, that not an office in the gift of the Dominion Government of the present day—not all the money at their command—could induce me to betray the trust that my constituents reposed in me. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.) Not all these things, Mr. Speaker, could induce me to assist in defeating the present Government, led by the Hon. Oliver Mowat, and constituted of the other gentlemen around him; not all these things could induce me to assist in their defeat; and I can assure them that as long as I am in this House they will have my hearty and unswerving support, let tempests come from where they may. (Cheers.)

Mr. MEREDITH—Mr. Speaker, this is a great surprise to me as to any member on this side of the House, and I fully concur in the observations of the Attorney-General as to the startling character of the statements that he made. I concur also, sir, in the desirability of a faithful and full investigation, before the proper Committee of this House, of what has taken place, and there shall be no attempt on this side of the House to frustrate the fullest enquiry into everything. (Hear, hear.) And now, Mr. Speaker, I have just one word to say with re-