

Mr. MEREDITH said the proper course would be to take evidence at once.

Mr. FRASER said there could be no doubt that the proper way would be to take a statement, and it might not be necessary to go on, as the persons implicated might possibly acknowledge their guilt and throw themselves on the mercy of the House.

Mr. MORRIS asked if the evidence should not be given under oath.

Mr. MOWAT said this was simply a preliminary investigation as to what course should be taken by the Committee with reference to the matter. When the parties charged with the offence were present the evidence would be taken on oath.

Mr. MEREDITH thought they had had statements of the members in the House last night. He thought the statement of the members should be taken on oath.

Mr. FRASER said there was no necessity of the evidence being given on oath at this stage.

#### DR. DOWLING'S STATEMENT.

The first witness called was Dr. Dowling, M.P.P. for South Renfrew.

Mr. MOWAT—Will you state to us what you know about this matter referred to the Committee?

Mr. DOWLING then made the following statement:—On Thursday last Mr. Bishop and Mr. McKim came to my room in the Continental Hotel and told me I was wanted by Mr. Wilkinson on very important business. We three went down to the Walker House together, and went into Wilkinson's room. Wilkinson said there was some dissatisfaction with the Mowat Government. He (Wilkinson) had been at Ottawa with Mr. Bunting, and I think he mentioned Mr. Meredith, and he had come back with lots of money. He had \$10,000 or more, and had made up his mind to buy out a few of Mr. Mowat's supporters in order to defeat the Government. He asked me if I would go into the arrangement. I would not say whether I would or not. I thought it was a pretty crooked piece of business. I then said I did not like to enter into any such arrangement. He said, "I would like Mr. Bunting to see you; there is a protest hanging over you, I am pretty sure it is against you. If you come with us all your expenses will be paid. We want you to resign your seat in South Renfrew. We want to form a Coalition Government, and if you resign your seat and vote against the Mowat Government we will give you \$2,000. If you resign your seat we will give you \$3,000 and drop all proceedings against you and satisfy you on this point. I will see Mr. Bunting and arrange for an interview between you and Mr. Bunting at three o'clock this afternoon. You go and see Mr. Bunting and talk the matter over. Mr. Bunting is a pretty wealthy man, and you can depend on everything he says." There was a good deal more said.

Mr. MOWAT—What was the next step?

Mr. DOWLING—I saw some of the members of the Government and told them about it. I think Mr. McKim, Mr. Bishop, and myself came to the House and spoke to some of the members of the Government about it. I did not intend to go to Mr. Bunting's office then, as if he wanted to see me he could come to my hotel. They told me I might as well go and see him any how. I went and saw him at three o'clock that same afternoon. There was a gentleman with him, who left the room, and Mr. Bunting said when I entered, "You are Dr. Dowling." I said "Yes," and he said, "I want to have a long chat with you; we will go into another room." I went into another room and

#### MR. BUNTING LOCKED THE DOOR.

He commenced to talk in the same manner as Mr. Wilkinson, and asked me if I had seen Mr. Wilkinson. I said "yes." He said, "I suppose he has told you the Mowat Government has been, and are, in a rather precarious position." He then said that it was rather too bad that the Dominion Government and the Ontario Government could not pull better; Sir John was as smart as a cricket, and he was certain to remain where he was at the head of affairs for ten years to come, and asked if I was going to support the Conservative party in this House against Mr. Mowat. I made no reply. He said:—"Your election has been protested, has it not?" I said:—"Yes." He said:—"I am in a position to say this—If you go against the Mowat Government from now till the end of the session all proceedings will be dropped against you. I understand the Mowat party have used you poorly. They have allowed you to fight the election and your own protest. Now Mr. Fauquier was a young man like you and the party have helped him through. If you can make up your mind to go with us, I can make up \$3,000 in two hours. We may want you to resign your seat. We want South Renfrew for one of the members of the Coalition Government, and if you resign your seat we can very well give you a couple of thousand dollars more. He told me if I wanted another interview with him I might drop him a private note and he would meet me at my hotel or any place at all. On another occasion we went down to Lynch's room and he said:—"I understand Mr. Wilkinson has been talking to you. I want to get you and a few supporters of the Mowat Administration to go with us from now till the end of the session. I have a proposal to make to you. If you vote against the Mowat Government I will give you \$2,000. I will

close it in an envelope, and you can read what is on the back." It was to the following effect:—Lynch bets with Dr. Dowling the contents of this envelope that he will not vote against the Government from now till the end of the session. He also bets the contents of this envelope that the Mowat Government will not be defeated this session. When the conditions were fulfilled I was to get the contents of the envelope. He then said: "You come down with me to Mr. Meek." He gave me the envelope containing the money, and I said: "No, I won't do anything of the kind." He then said, "We will go to Mr. Bunting," and I said, I would not go.

Mr. MOWAT—What about Kirkland?

Mr. DOWLING—It was the same thing with him. He was one of the party who were working on behalf of the Opposition. He made offers to me. When they spoke to me first about it, I said "No, I don't want anything to do with

#### THESE CROOKED OPERATIONS.

I thought it was a scandalous piece of business, especially when the attempt had come from Ottawa, and the whole thing was arranged in Ottawa, so Mr. Wilkinson said. I really thought it was scandalous, but the members of the Government told me to continue without committing myself in any way, but to see how far these parties would go and what they would do. The interview with Kirkland took place on Thursday, and he has been at my hotel every day since, excepting Monday. He said he wanted to defeat the Mowat Government, as he was interested in some timber land in Algoma, and he had seen Mr. Pardee. Mr. Pardee would not agree to his terms and he knew that Mr. Meredith would agree with them. On Saturday night Kirkland came and asked me if I was going into this arrangement. He said: "If you do, here is \$2,000." He produced \$2,000. There was one \$1,000 bill and ten \$100 bills.

Mr. FRASER—The money was produced.

Mr. DOWLING—Yes; I think it was a Dominion Bank bill or on the Bank of Montreal. I saw the money. He shoved it into my hands. He said, "A Coalition Government will be in the interests of the Province of Ontario." He asked me to sign a "round robin," but I would not do so. He produced a document in the form of a letter to the effect that a Coalition Government was in the interests of the Province of Ontario, but I did not sign it. Kirkland said there was to be a vote of want of confidence in the Government within a few days with reference to their timber policy, and he had spoken to several members of the Mowat Administration, and they were satisfied that they could vote against the Government on this timber policy. He offered to pay a certain amount of money and use his influence with Mr. Bunting to have the protest dropped.

Mr. FRASER—Different individuals appeared to come to you with the same offers and the same money?

Mr. DOWLING—Yes, that appeared to be it.

Mr. FRASER—Who made the appointment with Mr. Bunting?

Mr. DOWLING—Mr. Wilkinson.

Mr. MCINTYRE—Did any one introduce you to Mr. Bunting?

Mr. DOWLING—Wilkinson told me there would be a man on the elevator who would show me Mr. Bunting's room.

Mr. BALFOUR said the whole proceedings which took place between the persons who had attempted to bribe him had been made known to the Government. I have said we put down a full note for my safety, and I will just read from it as the shortest course. The first time I was approached by any of these parties was one day last week, I think on Tuesday morning, although some hints had been thrown out to me by Mr. Kirkland for some days before. He never, however, made definite proposal. He talked about the timber policy of the Government and the advantage which would accrue to the country by a change of the timber policy, and explained the position of affairs in the Thunder Bay District. The first time that a definite proposal, as I said before, was made was on Tuesday morning, when Kirkland called me into the card-room of the Walker House, and explained fully the changes he wanted made in the timber policy of the Government. He said he had had repeated interviews with Mr. Pardee, and that this gentleman had refused to concede what he required, and that he was bound to secure what wanted. In fact he said he was bound to go

#### ANY LENGTH SHORT OF MURDER

to obtain what he wanted. He said Mr. Pardee was influenced by certain parties who were supporters of his to do things for their benefit which had brought \$20,000 down and handed it to Mr. Pardee to keep him from making a change in the timber policy of the Government. He said that several members of the House approved of his policy, and mentioned that Mr. Lyon, Mr. Gray, and several others had waited upon the Ministers with a view of getting a change made in the policy of the Government; that Mr. Pardee finally got mad, and almost swore at them, and ordered them out of his office. He endeavoured to show that his policy was a better one in the interests of the country, and if I would make a speech in favour of it he would pay me liberally for it. He did not do this, he said, for the purpose of a bribe, but merely as he had been in the habit of paying members of Legislatures in the United States. With a view of drawing him out I expressed some agreement with the plans. He then told me that he had spent \$40,000 in lobbying important measures in the United States.

He said he had explained the proposed changes in the timber policy of the Government to Mr. Meredith, and he was assured by the leader of the Opposition that he would move an amendment in the House as a motion of censure on the Government, and that all the members of the Opposition would approve of it and vote for it, as well as some supporters of the Government. After some other conversation he left me, and I came down to Mr. Pardee and asked for some explanation of his timber policy, telling him what the men had told me about the matter. Mr. Pardee asked me to see further what the men would do, and without committing myself, let them go as far as they would. I wasn't approached again by Mr. Kirkland until Thursday. After dinner Mr. McKim came to my room and told me that Big Push Wilkinson wanted to see me in his room, which is next mine. I went in, and after some general conversation about the weather, he asked me what I thought about a coalition Government for the Province. I said I had heard something about such a scheme, when he said there was too much partyism in Provincial matters, and they could get rid of some of it by having a coalition Government. By this the Province could secure all her rights from the Dominion Government. I said I would like to understand what the coalition Government was going to be like and what show the Liberal party was to have in it. He said there was no doubt Mr. Meredith would make a good Attorney-General, Mr. Morris would make a good Minister of Education, and there was only one man in the House fit to be Treasurer—Mr. Ross was no good—and that was Mr. Creighton, and he would be Provincial Treasurer. The other three offices would be allotted to Reformers, and with a view of getting me to consent, knowing my great intimacy with him and regard for him, he said Harcourt would have the choice of the remaining portfolios, which would be at the disposal of the Reformers. He said that a Reformer of some influence would be likely to be one of the Ministers. He said a lifelong Roman Catholic was to come in from outside, and a vacancy was to be made for him by the resignation of one of the members of the Reform party. That this lifelong Roman Catholic would carry with him a gentleman who had considerable influence—also a Roman Catholic—and now a member of the Government. He said Fraser was too much given to bullying, but he had too much Roman Catholic influence to be put on one side. If the Conservatives were to go to the country they could not carry it as long as Archbishop Lynch live, and that if they could carry on the Government for four years that by the end of that time the Archbishop would be dead, and then the Conservatives would have a chance to get in.

#### HE HAS SEEN CORRUPTION.

He had seen a good deal of corruption in Algoma, and Mr. Meek has been at Osgoode Hall to investigate matters when the Premier had mortgaged his property for \$20,000 to pay his share of the fund. They had good evidence that all the other Ministers of the Government had done the same thing. If I would support the scheme he had made arrangements for carrying it out, and he would secure for my paper all the official advertisements, and if I would state the terms he had such means of commanding money that I could have what I wanted. I had no sooner left Wilkinson's room than Kirkland came into my room and took me over to his. He said the currency had not come down yet and he produced some papers addressed to him authorizing him to spend \$10,000 in securing an amendment to the Canadian timber laws, and said he would give me a draft or other security if I would speak in favour of the change in the timber laws. At seven o'clock Wilkinson met me and asked me if I would go and see Mr. Bunting at the Mail office, and he would make an appointment for me at ten o'clock the next day. In the meantime I was engaged at the Public Accounts Committee, and not being very anxious, I did not go to see Bunting. On Friday, the 13th, after dinner, Mr. McKim came and said Mr. Wilkinson wanted to see me. I went into his room, where he was alone, and told him I hadn't gone to see Mr. Bunting as I was busy. He said it didn't matter and I need not see Bunting now, as he had thought the matter over and drawn up a round-robin which he handed to me. As near as I can remember it was as follows:—

#### THE ROUND ROBIN.

"We, believing that it would be for the advantage of the Province to have a coalition Government, which should be run by men of both parties, and that it would tend to the defeat of the Mowat Government, we hereby agree to vote against them on the first and every subsequent opportunity to the end of the present session, in order that they may be defeated and an end put to party strife." He said they wanted this signed by four or five members of the Government side in order to induce Mr. Harcourt to come out, as he (Mr. Harcourt) didn't want to take a stand and get left. On my signing this he said he (Wilkinson) would pay over, to use his own words, say \$1,000 to me as a guarantee, and he promised before God to pay over another thousand when the matter was completed. This wasn't to be the consideration for my vote, but I was to hold the money as a guarantee for obtaining whatever office I decided on asking, as a shrieve in the North-West, or a position for a friend. I know what it is, said he, to be