

They are interested in the Nipigon district. They will ask for assistance in opening new townships and providing transportation facilities, in the form particularly of colonization roads running north from that settled fringe of land.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 1903.

## AWAITING THE INSTRUCTIONS.

### What Powers Will be Given the Commission?

#### LEGISLATURE'S DEBATE.

#### Mr. M. G. Cameron Quotes Conservative Opinions.

#### Mr. Whitney at Variance With His Party—Messrs. Pense, Lucas and Downey Also Speak.

The proceedings at the Legislature yesterday, though lacking the dramatic element which has characterized the previous sittings, were notable for a series of four speeches, which were closely followed by the people who crowded the galleries.

The most important feature was the announcement by the Premier that he hoped to be able to acquaint the House to-day with the terms of the Royal Commission to examine into Mr. Gamey's charges. A night session had been expected, but in view of the Premier's statement the leader of the Opposition proposed an adjournment, as without a knowledge of the terms of the commission much might be done which would have to be gone over subsequently, and therefore no delay would result by adjourning at 6 o'clock. Premier Ross agreed to this suggestion, and Mr. T. H. Preston (South Brant) moved the adjournment and will open the debate this afternoon. The leader of the Opposition undertook that as soon as he knew the terms of the commission he would tell the House how long it would take to conclude the debate.

The four speakers yesterday were E. J. B. Pense (Kingston), I. B. Lucas (Centre Grey), M. G. Cameron (West Huron), and J. P. Downey (South Wellington). Mr. Cameron, in his speech, introduced a number of pertinent opinions by past and present leaders of both parties, showing that they were unanimously agreed upon the wisdom of submitting charges of this character to a Royal Commission.

#### Questions of the Day.

Before the orders of the day were called Mr. Whitney asked when judgment might be expected in the East Middlesex election case.

Col. Gibson replied that he had reason to believe it would be given on the morrow.

Mr. Whitney inquired further: When may we expect the terms of the commission? It is quite impossible to see our way clear until we know what it is proposed to ask us to accept. I am sure that the business of the House and of this particular motion will be

expedited noticeably by this being done very soon. I do not wish, of course, to say anything with reference to it, but I think that after drawing the motion ten minutes should be sufficient to draw the commission; at any rate, 24 hours. I would like to know when we may expect it.

Mr. Ross—I do not think we will be able to give the information the hon. gentleman requires to-day.

Mr. Whitney—Does my hon. friend hope to be able to do so to-morrow?

Mr. Ross—I hope so.

#### Commentary on St. John.

Mr. E. J. B. Pense (Kingston) was the first speaker on the debate on the motion to refer the Gamey charges to a commission. He had expected yesterday, he said, to have the duty, in the absence of two older members of his party, to follow the member for West York before adjournment. But he had had no idea of the capacity of that gentleman, not only for demolishing a question, but for consuming time. The result was that he was to-day forced to open the debate. The last time he had heard the hon. gentleman was when he was a visitor to the House, under a former Premier, and he had felt a shock at the charge he then made against the Premier, of having given a concession to a bosom friend, that was not in the interests of the Province. He would never forget the rebuke which the hon. Premier, Mr. Hardy, then gave him in refutation of the charge. He was not present when the first dramatic scene was performed on the previous day, but he arrived when the hon. member was introducing a new form of catechism. He was glad that his leader had then been able to declare in answer to his catechist that he did desire the fullest investigation. He felt that that was the sentiment of the whole Reform party of this Province. Coming, as he did, direct from his home, he could say that this was the wish of the whole Reform party of his riding, and, indeed, of the Province. He could say also that the hon. gentlemen opposite were not in touch with the members of their party in the course that they were adopting. (Opposition jeers.) He could say also that there was a feeling of gladness in the country that there was to be prompt action in this matter. This promptness was all the more noticeable when we considered the precedent that we had in the Pacific scandal. The Hon. Mr. Huntington then made his charges on April 3, and Sir John Macdonald moved his resolution on April 8. The matter dragged on until May, and the House met in August, but not for the despatch of business. Then the Governor-General, in the exercise of what was his only prerogative, adjourned the House until November. There was a delay of six months. To-day the Premier asked for an adjournment of only three weeks, and his resolution for a commission was moved the day after the charges were made, and yet he was accused of trying to hold on to power for that petty time.

#### Scope of the Inquiry.

They were told that there was danger of a failure of the inquiry. In the Pacific scandal case the first reference was to the Committee of Privileges and Elections, but that was a failure, and the Government of their own motion appointed Judges named by themselves and holding appointment from their own hands to try the case.

Further, from the gentleman named as counsel for the other side in this case there was no likelihood of a failure of justice. Further than that, our Judges were respected. They had been trying election cases for a number of years without criticism or complaint. It was complained that a Royal Commission would be ineffectual because witnesses could not be required to incriminate themselves. In this there could be no difference between a commission and a committee of the House. The members of a commission, more

over, would be better able by reason of their experience to judge of the personal characters of the witnesses.

The hon. gentleman had said that the inquiry should be by the peers of the accused. He was afraid that the hon. gentlemen of the other side had already disqualified that jury. The hon. gentlemen had complained also because of the lack of a quorum on the commission. He thought that they would probably be the last to complain of there being only two Judges to try the case. The hon. gentlemen had complained a great deal about whitewashing. There would be less whitewashing by a commission than by any other body.

Mr. Pense referred briefly to the Alaska boundary question. Everyone had felt the outrage that the United States had placed upon us by naming such men as they had to sit upon the commission. The British and Canadian Governments had met them by naming the Lord Chief Justice of England and a Justice of the Canadian Supreme Court. If we wanted any further approval of the action of the Premier it would be found in this latest international matter.

#### The Virtue of Resignation.

The hon. gentlemen had also said in strong terms that the Government should resign. What would be the position of any Government holding power by a small majority if they were obliged to resign whenever the Opposition pleased to make charges of misconduct? Sir Hector Langevin, when accused of serious crimes, did not discover the virtue of resignation for several months after the charges were made against him. Mr. Pense referred to the bye-elections, which had been mentioned by the Opposition as a case of handwriting on the wall. They were ready to read any such writing when it showed success in four out of five cases. In conclusion, he said that one of the great faults of politics in Canada was the intense party feeling. For that reason it was proposed to remove the investigation from such influences, and to secure thereby that it should be thorough.

#### Mr. I. B. Lucas.

Mr. I. B. Lucas (Centre Grey) criticized Mr. Pettypiece for not having accepted the challenge in the House when taunted with having in his paper criticized Mr. Dryden. That seemed to be a habit on the Government side. The member who had just sat down had even criticized the Government in his paper for not having taken more active steps against those guilty of electoral corruption, but in the House he had nothing to say on the subject. He assumed that on another occasion Mr. Pense would exhibit the same courage in the House which he showed down east. The Attorney-General had lectured the Opposition on not maintaining a calm and judicial air, but that speech was the least calm and judicial he had ever heard from the Attorney-General. The whole question now was, how should the charges be investigated? He agreed that the Premier had acted with commendable promptitude in moving that the charges should be investigated by a committee of the House. Twenty-four hours later he had changed his mind, and, saying a Parliamentary committee would be prejudiced, had proposed a judicial commission. The Attorney-General knew the Judges would have no authority to enter a finding.

#### Might Go to a Police Court.

The member for Manitoulin did not need to come before a Royal Commission. Thanks to the criminal code, he could bring the accused into the dock and take evidence on the charge in a regular court. All this debate was rendered necessary by the action of the Premier in consulting the accused and proposing a Royal Commission. The Opposition wanted an opportunity to probe and get to the bottom of every detail. The moral justice of the Province required a different court than the restricted body which the Government proposed. The member for Manitoulin wanted nothing more than what the Liberal party were on record as demanding for the trial of such cases. How different was the proceeding in 1884, when Sir Oliver Mowat said, let all the evidence be given be-