

ate, the sovereign voice of the people, disapproves of their policy. In fact, great movements are sometimes accomplished by a Government riding for a fall. The greatest leaders in this land and in the old land, the men whose names are constitutional political landmarks in the history of the land, of whom Emerson says, 'Their shadows reach over the institutions of their country,' have gone to the cllectorate and have been defeated, and have risen again properly vindicated in the course which they have pursued. But whether Governments rise or fall, it is important that the administration of public affairs must be kept at the right standard, and that by no means must they resort to dishonorable or unworthy methods in order to secure themselves in power.

Only Honorable Support Wanted.

"When this charge was first made on the floor of the House, I said if it was shown that we could not support ourselves by honorable means I would prefer to retire. I say so now. (Loud applause.) Public life has no charm for me associated with the wreck of my life's reputation or the dishonor of my family. (Applause.) I hope the time will never come when any Government to which I belong will jeopardize the good name of its party for the glittering bauble of a few more years in office. (Applause.) We did not conspire with Mr. Stratton, the Provincial Secretary. There was no conspiracy against the hon. member for Manitoulin. (Applause.) No attempt was made to sap his virtue—or whatever virtue he possesses. (Loud Ministerial applause.)

Without Foundation.

"The commissioners have so found. For 27 days they sat and heard 119 witnesses. They examined all the statements, they weighed the evidence of the witnesses. They studied their demeanor, and on the charge of conspiracy they say on page 38:—'Mr. Gamey had no personal intercourse with any member of the Ministry except the Provincial Secretary. With two or three of the others he had some official correspondence, but with the rest not even that. With regard to the added charge of conspiracy, the commissioners are of the opinion that as a matter of law there is no evidence whatever to sustain it as against members of the Government and the other persons charged.'" (Loud applause.)

No Motive For Improper Judgment.

Mr. Ross went on to say that one of the ablest lawyers in Canada had served the prosecution. What money he required was at his disposal to bring witnesses from the very ends of the earth, all the machinery of the Government was available for him to prove his case. He went into the case *con amore*—perhaps not; at all events as became a lawyer bound to do his duty towards his client. After all that, what was the result? The commissioners found there was no evidence of conspiracy. They accepted that verdict; the country would accept that verdict; all right-minded men would accept that verdict. What object would the Judges have in giving any other verdict? Their position was intact, they were free from the political currents that drive Governments out of office and into obscurity. They had nothing to vindicate but their honor, and in the face of that fact they were driven to the conclusion that the Government was not guilty of conspiracy, that there was nothing to sustain it. (Applause.) And so they said not only that the charges of corruption were not proved, but that they were disproved, disproved in the judgment of two of the ablest jurors of this Province. (Applause.) "Notwithstanding the bray of the Conservative press, notwithstanding the strong partisanship that prevails in this country," he ventured to say that a jury of twelve Conservatives, who, with their hands upon their hearts, listened to that evidence, would come to the same conclusion as the Judges if they approached it free from bias. (Applause.)

Vindication of Public Men.

"Has it come to this—surely not—has it come to this that the people of Ontario will not rejoice in the vindication of her public men? Will it be said that the people of Ontario are so unfair, are so partisan, that they would rather see a Government totter to its fall and bring down with it the record and reputation of the public men of this country than see that justice should be vindicated? Surely not! Surely we can appeal to the conscience of the people of this country, irrespective of politics, and say to them, 'Notwithstanding our faults and shortcomings—and these we admit—notwithstanding our weaknesses, and we are frail as other human nature, we have been tested as with fire, we have been under the fierce light of the most searching legal investigation that any Government has ever submitted to in Canada. We were on our trial before the ablest jury and before the high court of the people of this country. We have passed through that unscathed, no blot on our reputation, no stain upon our escutcheon, no reproach cast upon the manner in which we have administered the affairs of the country.'" (Applause.)

Mr. Gamey's Duplicity.

Mr. Ross referred to the conduct of the accuser only by quoting from the Judges' report the passage relating to Gamey and Frank Sullivan, wherein it is stated that both, by their own confessions, practised systematic duplicity, and . . . implicit reliance should not be placed upon their uncorroborated statements in material points, and where these statements conflict with independent or disinterested witnesses the latter should be preferred. As to the evidence of Mr. Hammond, the reporter for The Globe, Mr. Ross said it would be sufficient to read the Judges' comment; that its import had been exaggerated and it was on a comparatively minor branch of the inquiry. Mr. Hammond had said in evidence that he had told all he knew, and what he had told was entirely harmless, so far as the charge of corruption was concerned.

He was glad they had reached this stage of the investigation. He wished to thank his supporters in the House for their indulgence through the trying ordeal. Had the Liberal party been less confident they could not tell what might have happened, but there was not a weakening on the part of a single supporter of the Government. They would not believe that any member of the party, much less a member of the Government, would have prostituted his high position for the purpose mentioned in the Gamey charges. In this connection he expressed surprise at the attitude of the leader of the Opposition and his supporters in assuming the truth of the charges before the evidence was taken.

Lift Up Public Life.

We had a reputation at the back of us, continued the Premier, a reputation as good as that of the best men in this community, and I do not say it boastingly. (Applause.) We have not been deceivers, political Pharisees; we have not been whited sepulchres, as we have been reproached by some. Who is going to say that those of us who have been ten, fifteen, twenty-five or thirty years in public life have been all their time playing the part of political hypocrites, masked villains, exposed at the opportune moment, and then tried and condemned to the discredit from which we could never have emerged? Is that the justice and the fair play that we can expect from hon. gentlemen opposite? I put it to hon. gentlemen that they are as much the custodians of the honor of this House as we are. (Applause.) If this Government had been as guilty as was charged by the member for Manitoulin, there is not an hon. gentleman in this House but would have felt that some cloud had passed over his good name. I say to my hon. friend now, in all sincerity, that if I am a judge of the proper course he should pursue, that the course he should pursue in the present case, that will best meet the views of the best men of this country of

both parties, is that the report of these men should be accepted in the terms proposed, and that we should close this chapter in the political history of this country. No man can reproach me or my colleagues for prostituting our positions for public gain. We have not borne the burden and heat of political life these many years to sell out at last to a political malefactor or to any party. (Loud applause.)

Mr. Stratton's Conduct.

Before I conclude let us look at the position of Mr. Stratton. He entered political life with a small majority fifteen or sixteen years ago. He has gone in and out among his people. At every election that followed his majority has increased, until, I think, at the last election it was 1,200 or thereabouts. No one who knew him would lay such a charge at his door as was made by the member for Manitoulin. How did he build up that reputation and become the head of a great financial concern? Is it not evident on the face of it that there was public and political morality there? How did he bear himself during the strain—not as a man who had done a smart thing and was not going to be caught at it, but with the steady defiance of a man that knew no man could prove him guilty of the charges. (Applause.) And when he said to me, "I shall resign, I shall cut myself free from the Government," I said: "I have known you for fifteen years; you have filled important and responsible positions; your department has handled about one million dollars a year; you are an able administrator, most industrious and faithful. I say I shall not believe any charge against you until it is proved in the courts of law." (Loud applause.)

Appeal to the Jury.

And the imputation cast upon myself and my other colleagues we resented then, and we resent now; and we appeal to the jury, we appeal to the great jury of this country, in the hope and in the belief that the report of these commissioners will be the crystallized judgment of the people of this whole country, and we hope that this matter will be removed from the sphere of active politics, that this House will never have to weary itself as it has done and to preoccupy its time with similar investigations, but, relieved from these, it will be able to apply itself to the great functions of a Legislature, looking for the prosperity of the country and for the elevation of public morality and the progress of education.

When the Premier resumed his seat there was a great outburst of applause from his supporters, and, as the House rose immediately for lunch, he was surrounded and congratulated upon his great effort.

Mr. Whitney's Opening.

Mr. Whitney commenced his speech at 3.15 o'clock, and was loudly applauded by his supporters when he arose. He thought that the Premier had not given so full a discussion of the subject as he had expected. He himself proposed to offer some observations in regard to the language of the Premier and the propositions advanced by him, and then some reference to the report, the purposes of the commission, the manner of the conduct and procedure, and the results which had been found by the two commissioners. It was quite clear in the opinion of all reasonable people what ought to have been done, instead of what was done. He would endeavor to point out that the Premier and the Liberal press had endeavored to keep before the country only the fact that a court had come to a judicial finding on the subject. The