

The "Gleeful" Press.

Mr. Stratton then submitted proof of what he characterized as "the gleeful manner" in which these charges had been received by the Opposition. He read from headlines and articles from *The Mail and Empire* and *The World*, and remarked significantly that in the end they had been summoned before the court for contempt. One or two of the professedly independent newspapers had out-heroded Herod, and if one of them had had its way the Ministers would have been all in irons, if not quartered and hanged long ago. That the foul insinuations of Mr. Gamey were regarded as absolutely true was shown by the fact that it was the overthrow of the Government that these particular newspapers were desirous of. The same attacks on Liberal leaders had characterized the Conservative press for many years while the men were alive, but on their death they were referred to as great and good men. Mr. Stratton read a number of extracts respecting Sir Oliver Mowat and Mr. Hardy to illustrate this point.

The Foul Impeachment.

In the evening Mr. Stratton plunged at once into a discussion of the main issue of the "crude concoction and foul impeachment," which, he said, was as false as any statement could possibly be made. (Applause.)

"I could not fail to recognize the serious character of the statement that was presented to the House, but with the knowledge I possessed I knew it could not be proved by any credible witness. I was satisfied that no one of credible character could be brought forward to substantiate the statement made by the member upon his responsibility as a member of this House. At the same time, I was satisfied that that statement, serious and important as it was, was being sent out to the press, and would appear the following day. I took the only means that was possible for me to take at that time, and before the echoes of the slanders had left this chamber I said to the Premier most emphatically that there was no truth in the statement of the member for Manitoulin, so far as the material points of his charge were concerned. (Applause.)"

Loyal Friends and Colleagues.

"That was the first step that I took to clear my character of the foul aspersions made upon me at that time. That was all I could do. No man ever received a more cordial or loyal evidence of support than I received from the Premier and from my colleagues in the Government, and from the members of the House, a confidence and support which was encouraging to me, and which I felt satisfied would be borne out by the investigation that was about to take place. I felt, Mr. Speaker, that I had done nothing but what was constitutional and legitimate as a member of the Government, and I was not even injudicious in my actions or sayings with the member for Manitoulin. And I am violating no confidence of the late Lieutenant-Governor when I say—and it was my duty to tender him an explanation—that he was perfectly satisfied with the explanation that was made. My denial to the Premier was practically accompanied by my resignation as Provincial Secretary of this Province. His instant compliance with my desire to have a full investigation of the charges was a cause of gratitude to me. I felt the necessity of the investigation. I had been charged with actions that imperilled my honor as a citizen of the Province, and as the member for the constituency which I represent. And I felt, Mr. Speaker, that it was absolutely necessary and essential to have a full, free and impartial investigation. I have been sixteen years in public life, and I am quite satisfied that so far as I am personally concerned there is not one in this Province but can say that I have conducted myself honorably and honestly and decently wherever I have gone, and in the innermost heart of the member for Manitoulin he knows that he was treated by me in my depart-

ment as decently and as pleasantly as it was possible for a man occupying my position to do, in view of the conversation that was voluntarily offered.

Welcomed Investigation.

"I say, Mr. Speaker, that I felt the necessity of having these charges investigated. As a newspaperman, I felt the sensitiveness of public opinion; I appreciated the sensitiveness of public opinion when these charges would have been read by the people of this Province, and I welcomed the opportunity, when the statement was made in the House, of giving an interview to *The Globe*, *The Mail* and *The World* newspapers in Toronto. I merely mention that now to say that they know, and this House knows, that I had no time to concoct a story; that my mind would not be in a condition to concoct a story that would stand an investigation of 27 days. But I gave to the press my recollection of what took place between myself and the member for Manitoulin, and it is to my satisfaction, and the satisfaction of this side of the House at least, that in the whole course of that investigation there was no practical difference between the evidence offered to the court and my recollection of what occurred between the member and myself. (Applause.) I say that my plain, unvarnished tale has stood the test, and that my honor has been vindicated by the report of a commission, which was presented to this House—(applause)—and that the story of the member for Manitoulin has been exploded and doubly discredited. The Government that was subject to the false charges felt that their falsity must be shown, and the opportunity was gladly welcomed to have the evidence submitted to any competent jurisdiction, so far as I was concerned."

The Form of the Investigation.

Mr. Stratton then quoted the Premier's heroic declaration, wherein he said: "We will govern this country as honorable men, with character unimpeached, or we shall not govern it at all." The Government had then asked for the appointment of a commission, instead of facilitating the proceedings in every way, entered upon a system of obstruction at every stage. They contended for an investigation by committee, and in this regard he would not say they were dishonest. He at the same time believed that many strong-minded Conservatives in the Province approved of the Government's action in appointing a commission, instead of a committee of the House. The leader of the Opposition had said the Judges had no right to complain of criticism. He did not think there was any man in the Province, Judge or jurymen, politician or layman, who would complain of honest criticism. Mr. Whitney had referred to the case of George Brown, where he had criticized the Judges, but he had forgotten to mention that all the influence possible had been exercised to imprison him at the time. (Hear, hear.) His hon. friend had been rather unhappy in his reference to that case.

Mr. Blake on the Commissioners.

Sir John Boyd, at the conclusion of the sitting, had quoted the words of a great Judge at the close of the Parnell inquiry, saying, "Conscious that throughout this great inquest we have sought only the truth, we trust we shall be guided to find it and set it forth plainly in the sight of all men."

Mr. Blake, in concluding his address, moreover, had said: "On the part of the people of Ontario, I leave this matter with much confidence in the hands

of the commissioners, men known and honored in our community for their high position, for their honor, and their ability. I may say that they are men with whom I have companioned all my life, and I know whereof I speak."

Mr. Stratton, continuing, said it came with bad grace from the leader of the Opposition to say that the Premier should have gone into the witness box. The Premier was there, ready to go into the witness box, summoned by the Opposition. He had been there from day to day, and had not been called to the box. It might with reason, however, be asked why the prosecution had not called Mr. Gamey after his return from his visit to the other side. Why did they not call McGregor, Mr. Gamey's pal, who came down to assist Mr. Gamey when that gentleman got the money from himself? Why did they not call Jones? It was clear that their sole object had been to make party capital.

Watched by Sleuths.

The Provincial Secretary did not know why he had been chosen for the unenviable notoriety. He had not known anything of a plot before the day it was announced in the House, but he did complain of the way in which he was pursued. During the three weeks that the House met, and during the month following, he was dogged by sleuth hounds of the prosecution. He could not leave a door of the Parliament buildings without one or two men following after him, some on wheels and some on street cars, and with a vindictiveness which he thought the people of the Province would resent when they had an opportunity. The chief counsel for the prosecution had stood by Mr. Gamey until after his trip to Buffalo. Again, he had characterized Mr. Gamey's chief witness, Sullivan, as an unblushing and willful liar, a man utterly reckless of the truth.

Mr. Gamey's Politics.

Mr. Stratton gave instances of many politicians who had changed their politics without being accused of being corrupt; and, taking up the charge of payment by himself to Gamey, he said no evidence was kept out. The rules of evidence were extended. Mr. Gamey had been independent in politics long back. He had stated to friends between September 1 and 10 last that he was going to support the Government. At the Conservative convention he had not given any definite declaration of his position. It was true that he abused the Government. He would rather have supported Mr. Whitney in power. The telegraphic report sent by Mr. Gamey to *The Globe* was to the same effect regarding his position at the convention.

The Government had no need for Mr. Gamey's support. They had a majority of only one, and if they could not hold power without him they could not do so with him. Everything was uncertain and dependent upon the bye-elections.

Mr. Gamey's Account.

Mr. Gamey said that he received \$3,000 cash from him. Mr. Meyers, Mr. Chase and he (Mr. Stratton) all contradicted Mr. Gamey. There was not a witness who said that Gamey was bribed. Mr. Gamey himself was the only one who said that money had been paid him, and he (Mr. Gamey) knew in his heart that that statement was not true. His own books had been gone into, and no withdrawal was found of \$3,000. Why did Mr. Gamey not present his accounts? The Sudbury one was presented, but it was said that the ice would prevent his getting at the Gore Bay account.

Mr. Gamey—You are absolutely wrong. The account was filed right in the court. The Gore Bay account was filed in the court and the Sudbury one of last fall.

Mr. Stratton said he was not aware of this being the fact, but he would examine and have it substantiated. Mr. Gamey did not know whether it was on the 9th, 10th or 11th of September