

**STEAM ROLLER CRUSHES EFFORTS;
LIBERALS WITHDRAW FROM INQUIRY**

Committee on Privileges and Elections Fails to Carry Out Government Promise to Probe to the Bottom Charges Against Premier and Hon. W. J. Hanna.

Counsel for the Defense Admits That Provincial Secretary Received \$500 From Mr. Taylor and That Latter Had Threatened to Expose Him—Circumstances Kept Under Sea!

The Steam Roller Triumphs!
No more extraordinary scene has ever been witnessed in the Ontario Legislature, or any committee thereof, than that which was staged before the Privileges and Elections Committee yesterday. The committee had been summoned on the distinct understanding that the charges made by Mr. Proudfoot against Sir James Whitney and Mr. Hanna in connection with the Taylor-Scott arbitration would be thoroughly ventilated. The Government press had announced that they would be probed to the bottom. It became evident during the first day's proceedings that this was a vain boast, and that Chairman Ferguson, supported by the Conservative majority, was determined to exclude all reference to and evidence regarding charges not specifically set forth, chapter and verse, in the reference to the committee.

The evidence of Mr. Thorne on Tuesday had been dragged out by Mr. Dewart, despite the steady blocking tactics of the Chairman. When the committee met yesterday morning it became evident at once that the night had not brought counsel to Mr. Ferguson.

Mr. George Taylor, of whom it had been alleged that he threatened Mr. Hanna with exposure during his presentation of a demand for a settlement of his case, was placed on the witness stand shortly after the committee met. Mr. Dewart speedily approached the matter of the subscription of \$500 paid by Mr. Taylor to Mr. Hanna for campaign purposes.

First Subscription, Then Threats.

At this stage of the proceedings Mr. Wallace Nesbitt rose and admitted that Mr. Hanna had taken \$500 from Mr. Taylor as a party subscription, that Mr. Taylor had threatened to expose Mr. Hanna, and that it was immaterial whether this subscription had been asked for by Mr. Hanna; the admission that Mr. Hanna had taken the money covered

the point. With this admission before him, the Chairman positively refused to permit Mr. Dewart to open up the circumstances in which the money had been paid.

Mr. Nesbitt said further that the admission of this payment having been made, no further evidence on the point should be taken, nor was it his intention to submit Mr. Hanna for cross-examination on that point.

Mr. Dewart continued to press for information as to the circumstances under which the money was paid. He asked whether it had been paid by check or in cash. The Chairman disallowed the question, and said it did not matter even if it had been paid in scrapiron. The point was not open for further question.

Another Vital Question.

Mr. Dewart, after appealing unavailingly to the committee, submitted a further question as to whether Mr. Taylor had been requested at other times by Mr. Hanna to make other contributions for political purposes. Mr. Ferguson once more refused to permit the witness to answer this question.

His ruling was sustained, and Mr. Proudfoot, seeing that there was no hope of a further investigation of his charges, instructed his counsel to withdraw, and himself withdrew from the investigation and left the room. The Liberal members of the committee, after vigorous protests from Mr. Rowell, Mr. Elliott, Mr. Bowman, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Munro, and Mr. Racine, also withdrew.

Subsequently statements were made by Mr. J. D. Montgomery, Mr. Taylor's solicitor, Mr. McNaught, Sir James Whitney, and Mr. Hanna. No further light was thrown by these witnesses on the vital point as to the circumstances under which the \$500 subscription was paid by Mr. Taylor to Mr. Hanna, but they were permitted to give evidence on many matters ruled out while the Liberal members of the committee were present, and