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SIR JOHN THOMPSON
Reviews the Situation.
A SPEECH FULL OF POINTS

(Halifax Herald's Report Continued.)

Take the case of Mr. Cochrane, a member of parliament. He has been accused and tried outside of the house of a crime of which he was never accused in it. It is alleged that it was a political debt of the party in his county in connection with a local election of several years ago and that parties who received offices from the government had contributed out of their salaries to the liquidation of the debt. There was not a word in the charge to show, and not a word has been brought forward to indicate that the Government were acquainted with the fact. Neither was there anything to show that Mr. Cochrane demanded such contributions from those who sought his patronage. But two or three men were shown to have been appointed to positions and to have contributed out of their salaries to the liquidation of the debt, and because the house of commons was unwilling to sacrifice a man against whom, personally, there was no evidence, we are accused of having whitewashed Mr. Cochrane. The statements made in some places about this case have been so largely astray that the mere repetition of those statements among those who knew the facts or read the evidence could hardly be believed.

THERE ARE OTHER SCANDALS.

There is the accusation, for instance, against Mr. Dewdney, that he made large sums of money out of the location of the Northwest capital at Regina. This is an old story. It is capable of proof, I believe that he did not make a dollar out of the transaction and he did not attempt to do so. The Toronto Globe, that eminent paper in the services of the Opposition which associated the name of Sir John Macdonald's widow with the matter, as having benefitted like Mr. Dewdney in the transaction, has now manfully withdrawn the statement and apologized for making it. There is the accusation, likewise, in connection with the Postmaster-General that there is something discreditable in his conduct, not becoming the position of a cabinet minister. Let me tell you the facts in regard to that. Mr. Haggart is a man who has sat for upwards of twenty years in parliament without a reproach being suggested against him. During the last session of parliament when the whole interest of the opposition lay in fastening charges upon the ministers of the crown, not a charge was made against Mr. Haggart from beginning to end. There was an insinuation put forward in the shape of a question put in the committee on public accounts, but let me say that the man who put that question which seemed to convey an insinuation was promptly asked whether he meant to insinuate anything against Mr. Haggart's character, and was told that if he did, and would make a charge, he would have a committee and full investigation. He replied that he had no charge to make, and yet, from the insinuation conveyed by the question, the report has gone abroad that there is something in connection with the Postmaster-General's conduct which is to be covered up and screened from the public eye. I stood recently in the presence of the Postmaster-General before his constituents, in the place where he was born and where he lives, and in that constituency

HE CHALLENGED ANY MAN TO MAKE THE STATEMENT IN PARLIAMENT

or in the press that was insinuated privately, and declared that the man who would make it should have abundant chance to prove it. All I have to say now is that our characters are as dear to us as yours are to you, and that he who strikes at our reputation should at least be bold enough to make his charge as like a man. (Applause.) In every department in which wrong-doing was found, the same strict measure of justice was meted out, as I have stated was the case in the department of public works. But sir, our opponents, as the session went on, grew bolder in their attacks, for they believed that the state of feeling in favor of purity in public life was so high and strong that it was only necessary to make a charge and half the public would believe it. When it came to the close of the session they trumped up a charge nine years old against men only one of whom was in the government of the day. It was charged that, nine years ago, Mr. Haggart had been connected with a railway contract in a way that would have forfeited his seat. The details of the charge were all specifically denied, but what mattered it? Mr. Haggart had been three times elected since then, and, whether the charge was true or false, it made not a particle of difference, so far as his right to his seat was concerned. The truth was well known to be that the opposition had no hope of implicating Mr. Haggart in the transaction, but they hoped, if possible, to attach some stigma to the memory of Sir John A. Macdonald, as having been aided poltically by the contractors. Sir John had set face to face with those who made the attack for nine years, since the facts had transpired, and not a whisper of accusation had been made, but when death had sealed his lips and the coffin had been closed, this was the time chosen for the attack. We resolved that the house should not entertain charges which did not relate to the government of the day, and which only concerned the title by which Mr. Haggart had held his seat nine years before. I am glad to be able to say that

THE INDEPENDENT PRESS SUSTAINED OUR POSITION,

and agreed that the charge was unworthy of being considered.

So much for scandal, but before quite passing from the subject, let me say that Mr. Abbott, the leader of the present government—(great applause)—has expressed in outspoken terms his policy in reference to this subject. It is of little consequence to us personally whether the government lives a long time or a short time, but Mr. Abbott has said that the first duty of this administration, and that to which it pledges itself, is free and full investigation into the existing public service and the rooting out and punishing of wrong doing wherever it may be found. (Loud applause.) We do not claim that this country any more than any other can be governed in a way that is absolutely free from blame. Charged as the administration is with the control of vast numbers of offices all over the country, it would be unreasonable to hope for perfection in all. In the mother country even, abuses have been developed to an enormous extent in connection with the war department, the navy, the commissariat and the civil service, but I am glad to say that, when these evils are found to exist in the mother country, the plan is not to work them into the policies of the day and make use of them in the interests of this party or that, but both parties combine to purify the public service, and that is the only way in which it can be purified. (Applause.)

And now let me ask you if there are not other questions to which I might fairly call your attention? I have told you that many things have happened to us since we addressed you eleven months ago.

MANY THINGS HAVE HAPPENED TO THE OPPOSITION ALSO.

In the drill shed speech I contrasted the attitude of the two parties as they stood at that time on the eve of the election. We were led by the great chieftain who had commanded in so many campaigns, while, on the other side, the leader of the opposition hosts was abandoning his party and going into private life because he could not follow it to the line of battle on which the liberal party desired to form. We were told that that was a slander; that the great heart and genius of Edward Blake were still with his party, and that there was nothing he desired more than its success in that campaign. The ballot boxes were not closed when Mr. Blake came out and in an open letter confirmed every statement that we had made, not only as to his disagreement with his party, but as to the grounds on which that disagreement rested. He admitted that the policy of his party was one which appeared to involve danger to all the great interests of the country. He objected to the policy not only because it was a difficult thing to go into, but because it was an almost impossible thing to get out of if it should be found unsuited to the country. It meant, in effect, he said, a transfer of the control of our trade and fiscal affairs from this country to the neighboring republic to be legislated upon at Washington, and he believed that this would be the precursor of political annexation. He admitted finally that it might entail direct taxation. Yes, Mr. Chairman, "many things have happened to them since then." (Applause.)

Another of these things was this: There was a sense of indignation throughout the country at the efforts of some of Sir Richard Cartwright's allies and agents to place this country in subjection to the United States. It was found that one of these had gone to Washington, and had declared with regard to this province, "you have only to squeeze the fishermen, to drive Nova Scotia into annexation." It was said that

"EVERYTHING DEPENDED ON THE LIFE OF THE OLD MAN,"

and that when he died, "Canada would be drifting towards annexation without any other port in sight." Man after man of the old liberal leaders was compelled to come forward and disavow sentiments of that kind. Oliver Mowatt, the premier of Ontario, came out in a letter twelve columns long in the Toronto Globe to prove, first, that the liberal party was loyal, and, in the second place, to exhort them to be more loyal in the future than they had been in the past. (Laughter). "Many things have happened to them since then." (Applause). Even the valiant knight who is their financial leader, has found it necessary to come out and say something about his loyalty too. I do not remember that Mr. Mowatt troubled himself to prove that Sir Richard was a loyal man, but Sir Richard hearing that his loyalty had been doubted, came out at Almonte and declared that he had a loyal grandfather many years ago. (Laughter) There are signs of a moving public sentiment, which calls men to account for their public utterances and public life, and sees that they toe the mark of a national sentiment. Another thing has happened, too, that the opposition did not believe to be possible. The leader of the liberal party made a speech at Kingston lately, in which he declared that the liberal-conservative party is now living on the reputation of Sir John A. Macdonald. Ladies and gentlemen, our opponentt have been living for years on the prospect of his death. They never expected, when his gray head was laid in the grave, that his party would continue to command public confidence, but they have learned it now. Applause.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD DIED ALMOST WITH HIS FACE TO THE FOE,

in the midst of the hottest parliamentary session ever known in Canada. When we laid him in the grave we turned to our duty which was to be true to the trust which Canada and he imposed on us, and to the principles for which he lived and died. At the close of that long hard fought session, there was not a man who left the ranks (Applause) It was not a question who would climb into his position, but how to carry on the public affairs of the country, on the lines of the policy he had taught us and which the people believed to be best for the country at large. This is one of the things that have happened to them. (Renewed applause.) There is another thing! When we met you in February last we were challenging our opponents to define their new trade policy and to tell us how they were going to throw away sixteen or seventeen millions of dollars revenue and still keep up the public service. They put us off until the campaign was over, but the time came to meet us in parliament and answer the question there, and to go out on public platforms as one of them did at Boston, which appears to be their happy hunting ground. (Applause.) They had to face the question they hoped the election would have buried, and how do you suppose they did it? Sir Richard Cartwright said—(someone applauds)—you will do better if you wait until you hear his response. (Applause.) When Sir Richard was challenged to say how he was going to make up the loss of revenue, for he wanted him to say

WHETHER HE WAS IN FAVOR OF DIRECT TAXATION

or not, he said that, as a physician, he did not intend to prescribe for the patient until he was called in. That was a shrewd answer, but his triumph only endured a moment, for Mr. Davin, a shrewd Irishman from the North-west, said that while he admired the physician who would not prescribe for a patient until he was regularly called in, the man who stood outside the patient's window bawling out that his physician, who had charge of the case, was no good, and that his remedies should not be taken, without being prepared to say what remedy he would recommend himself, was no physician, but a quack. (Loud applause). That is one of the many things that have happened to them since then.

(To be continued to-morrow.)

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