

That June polling day dawned fair and bright. It wasn't necessary to buy votes, all we had to do was to keep the tide rolling. Grit workers surged around the poll with their air of Divine Ownership. It made one's blood boil and we worked all the harder. Deeds of valor were performed by men and women who had never before been interested in elections.

The people were aroused and showed it when the returns were added up. Each of our candidates had majorities of over three thousand. What a celebration we had that night. The Tories had been in the wilderness of opposition for over forty years so they had to make up for lost time.

In the midst of the delirium that night in the Arena Rink where the Tories had their headquarters, someone asked me as a leading ward-worker to make a speech. I was excited about the overthrow of the old government with their superiority complex and it made one feel good even if it was Tories that were taking over. It was the only radical statement made by me during the campaign. I said something about "it being the happiest work I had ever undertaken to take part in this victory in which the Grit aristocracy had been thrown to the dust and common man had come into his own". Big Alex got me in a corner later and slapping me on the shoulder said, "Clifford, that speech of yours was great". And he laughed long and loud, for he had little love for the established aristocracy, having made his way to the top by sheer ability.

CHAPTER III

The Valley of Humiliation

In the weeks that followed the change of government I was doomed to disappointment in getting a job. One thing that made me bitter was the fact that prominent job-holders under the Grit regime came asking me to use my influence to keep them in their soft jobs.

One day when I was getting building material in J.J. Grant's lumber yard my old friend A.J. Bannerman hailed me. He started away by saying "Cliff, this is the first time I've been around since election. Come on and have a drink. You sure gave us a h--- of a trimming. It is hardly possible that you came through that campaign without taking a drink".

"I did that, A.J. and I handled a lot of it. But now that the election is over there is not a man I'd sooner have a drink with than yourself even though I don't like the taste of rum".

"You'll have to learn to handle rum if you are going into politics. It is part of our lifeblood in Nova Scotia. Now that your feet are solidly on the Tory doorstep, get inside and rum is a good introductory card at any time."

Inside the shop of a prominent but thoroughly scared Grit bootlegger, we communed about electioneering. Into his ear I poured my story of disappointment in not getting a government job. He laughed, "Surely you don't expect one already. There is a Federal election coming on and they'll need you in that fight. So it wouldn't do to give you a job too soon. But make a nuisance of yourself without kicking over the traces, make a damned nuisance of yourself and afterawhile it will come. Good luck to you anyhow".

"Thanks, A.J., this rum is making my head swim, not being used to it. Thanks a lot". Thus with my old friend on that August afternoon I had my first drink of the fiery liquor, the liquor that was to put my feet on the road to economic liberty.

Sure enough, a Federal election was booked for the latter part of October and James R. MacGregor, the party secretary got after me again for service in the campaign. I haunted them as A.J. had suggested but beyond a politician's promise I could not get any satisfaction. At that time I had a steady job at my trade on the new Sharon Church and I had sense enough not to lose any time through politics without being paid. There was another phony battlecry being used by the Tories to get elected. They called it "Maritime Rights". Its deception was too strong for my blood so I steered away from that subject in any stumping that I had to do.

The reason for its deceit is that due to geography Nova Scotia is shut out of the markets of Central Canada, while because of high tariffs and aggregations of capital Maritimers are compelled to buy in a dear market. Thus year after year the common people get poorer and poorer. The only time that the shadow of prosperity crosses their threshold is when there is a war. Then due to Nova Scotia's strategic position, money flows into the Maritimes.

The platform of Maritime Rights that Tory politicians were saying they would put in force if elected, had an element of truth in it. But it would never be put into force because when elected, Maritime Rights would go the way of other election promises. Maritime Rights if enforced would mean that the rich central provinces would lose some of their markets and the rich boys behind the government who put up the cash for elections would not let that happen. These unseen forces control the heads of the Federal Government and these sources of visible power control the granting of Judgeships, Senatorships, Commissioners' appointments, etc. From the time each and every lawyer starts to practice, his eye is on a judgeship; [when he] gets married, gets into parliament and gets into the social whirl, a judgeship is deemed necessary to round out a well-lived life. If he ever had any genuinely patriotic ideas about Nova Scotia in his young life they would soon become submerged as he goes from triumph to triumph.

The same truth holds for any politician who comes back to the people and performs another sleight-of-hand trick and gets himself elected. He must play ball with the Premier who controls the good jobs and the Premier must play ball with the unseen forces that supply the money to win elections. So the whirligig goes on and on until the people start to think there can be no other answer. Oh Democracy, what crimes have been committed in thy name!

The Tories were elected by a small majority to the Federal House, Colonel Cantley being the elected Conservative in Pictou County. I worked at my trade most of that winter but my financial position was little better. I met Big Alex on Kirk Hill one day. He asked me how things were going as I had never bothered him about a job, never could see it as good strategy to do so. Somehow he seemed to understand men's motives. About a week afterwards I met Tom MacKay, town liquor inspector on the street. It was a damp snowy day in March.

"Doing anything now, Cliff?" "Not much, Tom. Things are very dull in my trade this time of year."

"Where can we go for a talk?" I suggested we go to the Odd Fellow's clubroom. It was empty so he laid before me the political setup. Attorney-General John C. Douglas had promised to vigorously prosecute the liquor traffic in the province. There was to be a prominent Temperance lawyer appointed as inspector-in-chief with several sub-inspectors under him. These Inspectors were to have wide powers, being provided with Writs-of-assistance — legal documents making possible raids on any house or premises by day or night. Needless to say such documents would only be given to men of proven discretion. The Attorney-General, John C. Douglas, was an exceptional politician and leader of men. His friends had a loyalty towards him that only an outstanding chieftain could obtain. Tom had got his political education under Douglas in Cape Breton when battle, murder and sudden death were no idle jests but grim facts. Tom told me that he was going to get the Deputy-Inspectorship for Eastern Nova Scotia and he wanted an Inspector in the principal town, New Glasgow, who could be trusted to play the party line. Although he did not say so, I gathered that the plan was to force the Trade and its ramifications under the control of the Conservative party. For years the Liberals had batted on the traffic now it must be shifted to Tory pockets. Besides, it had been found that since the elections some bootleggers were undermining the Tories' new-found power.

"Tom", I said, "courts are something I know nothing about. You know as well as I do that inspectors have been the butt and joke of press and pulpit for years. The strength of the Trade is so great that an ignoramus such as I am, would be kicked out inside of six months. That

part of your proposition about driving the Grits from their fat jobs appeals to me. I'll have to talk it over with the wife. She has a horror of publicity such as I'll get from this."

"I'll have to know before the first of April for I'm going to try to take over as soon as the roads open. Have a talk with Fred Milligan and the Mayor. You know politics. This will be worth your while. As for being scared of the bootleggers, make no mistake about it, we are going after them; that is the only way to get them eating out of your hand. You have a lot to learn. Common sense is all you need. Also your days of talking on a platform are over if you get this job where your tongue is like fire, — a good servant, but a bad master."

"Well, Tom, believe me I'll be glad of the day when I'll stop stumping. I'm sick of this talking about what I don't believe. I'll let you know by Saturday night."

The upshot was that after much backroom log-rolling on April 7th, 1926, the headlines announced, "Ex-labor leader appointed N.S.T.A. Inspector."

CHAPTER IV

Into the Swim

It was a pitiful and forlorn inspector who put in his appearance at the town office to be sworn in. Tom came with me for moral support, then took me to the Police Station and introduced me to the Force. Now it must be remembered that up to this time courts and the Law were as foreign to me as the moon. I was suspicious of and had a dread of lawyers and policemen. My wife was sceptical and opposed to this way of making a living, if living it could be called; seventy-five dollars a month was to be my salary for a start. How the authorities ever expected a man to be honest to the Law and to himself is a deep question, without the prima facie statement was accepted that the Inspectorship was a farce.

However I was determined by my tenure of office long or short, I would be no farce. If the semi-criminal wise-guys thought me a "fish" and a gullible fool, — well let them dream until my feet set. Then would be called into play the strategy learned from the old book on the French Revolution, "audacity, audacity and more audacity". This was something hard for them to understand except in results.

In the modern control of liquor there is no parallel office to the Nova Scotia Temperance Act Inspectorship. An Inspector to be successful had to be a mixture of lawyer, policeman, politician, fox and lion; and on top of that he had to have the element of luck.