

Mr. Kyte's Speech Warmed Things Up In Parliament

Liberal Member for Richmond Handed Out the Real Live Stuff --Raked the Boodlers and War Profiteers --Striking Picture of the Scene in Parliament From the Pen of Gadsby---F. B. Carvell as a Sherlock Holmes.

(By H. F. Gadsby.)

OTTAWA, April 6.—Now that the tumult and the shouting have clarified, so to speak, one can analyze the general features more calmly than was possible a week ago when Parliament was still aglow with George Kyte's speech. The House has not felt so warm since before the war. When the member for Richmond, N. S., had concluded his remarks, Sir Wilfrid Laurier was thoroughly kindled. "Stung," he exclaimed, and when Sir Wilfrid drops into the vernacular that way you can bet the large emotions are released.

The speech which nailed the Government to its Shell Committee and Major General Sir Sam Hughes to his dear friend Colonel J. Wesley Allison, although four hours long and not a dull minute anywhere, was perhaps the easiest part of the work. Before that was the long, hard job of tracing the Colonel to his various lairs in New York State and Virginia, surprising him red handed with his fellow bandits, sorting out his aliases as disclosed by the mushroom companies he dealt with or caused to be incorporated and establishing an official connection between his dark deeds, the old Shell Committee and Major General Sam.

The Colonel had as many disguises as Jupiter—but mostly he was the Golden Shower as experienced by Danae—and believe me, he took some trailing, also some quick-thinking and clever deduction.

Carvell and Kyte.

As two heads are better than one in this Sherlock Holmes business, it is no surprise to learn that Frank Carvell helped his friend George Kyte with the defective end of the case. Together they got the affidavits, secured copies of contracts, searched records and one way and another made such a neat tight-fitting legal case of it that Sir Sam and his Colonel and the Borden Government and the old Shell Committee could go into any court in the land and come out with a verdict of guilty. Then these two partners in good works, disdaining all little personal rivalries, pooled their information and while Frank Carvell sat back and fagged papers for him, George Kyte stepped out in front and made the speech of his life.

Between the two they spread all the horrid details on Hansard. Like Jack Spratt and his wife, they liked the platter clean—a mighty big platter and a lot of licking including the licking the Borden Government will get at the next general election. To get the whole case for the prosecution all the student of politics has to do now is to read the speeches of Carvell, Pugsley, Pardee and Kyte—they cover the ground. Carvell and Kyte probably cover more ground, but the other made good shooting too. Great heavens, what fighters those Maritime Province fellows are! They don't believe the truce should be used to cover a multitude of sins, and consequently they don't use it that way. They lift the cloak and show the pillage and graft underneath. While the boys are away in the trenches fighting the Germans, the Home Guard on Parliament Hill does its bit fighting the middlemen. How is it the Bluenoses develop so much fire? They may have blue noses, but there isn't a man of 'em has cold feet.

Kyte a Bonnie Fighter.

Take George Kyte, for example. Never was a blither, bonnier fighter than George of Richmond. Such a thing as losing his temper George Kyte does not know. As he lays about him there is ever a twinkle in his eye. When he is merriest look out for him—for it's then he hits hardest.

The only danger signal is a glint of red in his chestnut hair. If I were on the other side of the House I'd watch that, and when it lit up I'd say "Ware, George!"

As for the rest you wouldn't find in a day's journey a milder, gentler, more humane man than the one who administered the knockout to the Borden government. How quickly yet how mercifully he did it! One to the solar plexus, that is to say to the Shell Committee, another to the point of the jaw, Colonel J. Wesley Allison, another just above the heart, said heart being Major General Sir Sam Hughes. Three swift punches and all was over. The Government pattered, tottered, crumpled and went down for the full count.

Appropriate Stanzas.

To get away from these prize ring metaphors and put it in plain English, Sir

Thomas White who had rashly ventured into a discussion where the Honourable Robert Rogers feared to tread, thereby sacrificing to his pride of dialectic, the reputation he had won as a sensible Finance Minister who minded his own business—Sir Thomas, I repeat, went back on the whips' arrangement to take a vote and moved the adjournment of the debate, which was a sure sign that the Government was gasping for air.

After a few sad looks the Cabinet filed mournfully out humming under their breath "Downward Christian Soldiers," "Shells We Gather at the River" and other familiar and appropriate stanzas.

A two o'clock in the morning cabinet meeting was held, but no two o'clock in the morning courage was engendered.

They were melancholy, discouraged, bewildered.

The Premier Distressed.

Their mood, if one might judge it from their faces, as George Kyte soared high, draping his long tale in a graceful strangle hold around their necks—their mood, as the people in the gallery saw it, was one of pain and surprise, mingled with a hollow feeling at the pit of the stomach. The Premier was obviously distressed. The Finance Minister wore a look of disgust at the sordid story. The Hon. Robert Rogers smiled faintly, sardonically, for wasn't that ancient enemy Sir Sam getting his at last. So the Honourable Bob smiled as a man who doesn't run away like Sir Sam, who at the very moment his colleagues were being bombarded for his actions and transactions was some three thousand miles away from the fire zone, hob-nobbing with Baron Rothschild and his fellow millionaires in London.

Yes, Sam had run away and all the comfort the Cabinet had of him at this critical moment was the smell he left behind. All these thoughts were behind the Honourable Bob's dark and brooding smile.

As for the Honourable Arthur Meighen, he was plunged into a green sickness of despair—no more steam in L'I Arthur—at least not just then. The other cabinet ministers looked as if it was all news to them—perhaps it was, Sam is a hard man to keep track of—but they didn't enjoy it any more on that account. That kind of news takes the gimp out of any Cabinet—news of a naughty brother who boasts that he has them all by the short wool and dares them to get rid of him as they did of Garland and Foster. Oh, what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive! And how much more tangled the web is when a Major General, a master of tactics, does the weaving! Yes, Sam's net is a strong net—it will drag them all down.

They Should Have Known.

If Kyte's charges were news to the Government, it was the Government's own fault. All the Government had to do was to look up the files in the Munition Board's office, where the contracts still remain uncanceled by which Colonel J. Wesley Allison and his distinguished associates, E. B. Cadwell, Benjamin Franklin Yoakum, E. W. Bassick, all Americans, and Eugene Lignanti, a Montreal flute player—with Major General Sam in the background—split a two million dollar rake-off and presumably a three and a half million dollar advance on twenty-three million dollars' worth of orders for time fuses and graze fuses, only about ten per cent. of which have been delivered up to the present date.

These orders were placed by the Shell Committee on June 19 last year, with the American Ammunition Company and the International Fuse Company, two mushroom outfits with only four thousand actual cash capital between them, the former organized three weeks and the latter just ten days before the blessings negotiated by Col. J. Wesley Allison arrived from Ottawa. These two Yankee mushroom companies with no plant, no machinery, no buildings, and two complete sets of dummy officials, not only received orders for \$23,000,000 worth of time and graze fuses, but also cash advances of over three million and a half dollars, enough to set up ten fuse factories in Canada—all this at the hands of a Minister of Militia who in 1911 stood for no truck nor trade with the Yankees. The contract with each company is entered into by the Shell Committee, acting through Brigadier General Sir Alexander Bertram, and each contract is accompanied by a ratifying letter from Major General Sam Hughes, which would naturally bring his name into the debate, even

if it hadn't been there before.

Farmed the Orders Out.

Up to March 14th last the two mushroom companies—of course they are peddling the orders out—had not delivered more than \$2,400,000 worth of fuses, a little over ten per cent. of the allotment, and though the time clauses in their contracts have been flagrantly violated, the contracts still remain uncanceled. At this stage of the game, with three million dollars and a half cash advance in hand, three million and a half of Canadian money for time fuses for which Canadian soldiers must wait at a bitter cost of pain and blood, and only \$2,400,000 worth of fuses delivered, these two favored companies could go out of business altogether, pocket their profits on the fuses, already made, perhaps a million dollars, keep the cash advance amounting to another two million dollars clear cream and let the Canadian Government whistle for its money back.

They Took No Chances.

If the contracts are cancelled that is what they will probably do. The way Colonel Allison and his helpers have got things fixed up, they stand to win whatever happens. As a matter of fact, as far back as June 10th, 1915, nine days before the contracts were signed with the two companies, a profit sharing partnership of negotiating middlemen, consisting of E. B. Cadwell, president of the American Ammunition Co., Benjamin Franklin Yoakum, of New York, and E. W. Bassick, of Bridgeport, Conn., was busy not only counting its chickens, but actually dividing them, before they were hatched.

Yoakum in Again.

The commission of 10 per cent. on an anticipated eleven million dollar order was split this way—Yoakum \$475,000, Bassick \$275,000 and Cadwell \$250,000. Such keen fellows, or the keen people they stood for, would hardly forget to share up the cash advance at the same time.

This same B. F. Yoakum, who took the long end in the million dollar split, figures as partner in another profit-taking triumvirate formed shortly after the war began and consisting of himself, J. Wesley Allison, and Eugene Lignanti, sometime flute player or piccolo blower at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Montreal. Who is Yoakum? He seems to be spread over all the combinations. In private life he is a curb broker in New York. Ottawa knows him as a frequent visitor to the Militia Department on business so mysterious that he never registered at a hotel, but always slept in a private car at the Broad street station. Whose private car, by the way?

The Flute Player's Part.

Lignanti, the flute player, who fell out with his followers last September—hence the disclosure of profits—probably put up all the real money that was in the combination. He was a saving man, and here was a chance to make enough to retire from the flute business forever on the investment of a very small capital. Lignanti took a chance. It was the best chance he ever took in his life. When he drew out of the partnership he had claims for \$216,000 in commissions, and a commission on shells which he commuted for \$50,000 spot cash. On contracts that Lignanti knew of himself, Allison and Yoakum stood to split \$1,600,000 in commissions between them.

Flavell Must Have Known.

All these facts the Government could have learned by looking up the records in the office of the Munitions Board. That great and good man, Chairman Flavell must have known the facts although he did not cancel the contracts or otherwise act on the guarantee clauses. Moreover, George Kyte, being a good sport, gave the Government fair warning a week before he announced at a public meeting just about where he was going to land the punch. Even at that the Government was caught unprepared, being very much like Belshazzar of old, who went on Belshazzaring in spite of preliminary notices on the walls and elsewhere. No doubt Belshazzar thought that when the occasion arose his Solicitor General would explain everything. Oh, well you all know what happened to Belshazzar.

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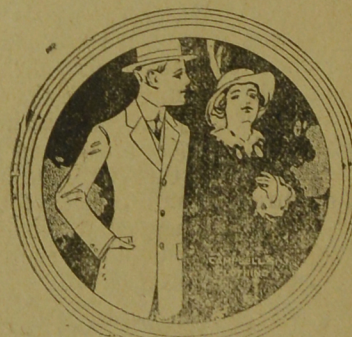
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