

SIR THOMAS WHITE HAD TO CARRY A HEAVY BURDEN

Finance Minister Got Entangled in a Foolish Argument
In the House of Commons Over the Mistakes
Of the Shell Commission

COULD NOT RAISE A CHEER
FROM THE GOVERNMENT BENCHES

Borden Government Out of the Largeness of Its
Heart Has Granted an Investigation Into Mr.
Kyte's Charges—

(By H. F. Gadsby.)

Ottawa, April 13.—General sympathy is being extended to Sir Thomas White for the unlucky fate which entangled a Finance Minister with a rising reputation for common sense in a foolish argument on Shell Committees and Their Mistakes.

Macdonald of Pictou put the reduction ad absurdum which Sir Thomas was called on to defend this way:

(1) There is nothing to investigate, (2) it is impossible to investigate, because the Shell Committee is under Imperial control, (3) we are going to investigate but only as much as the Opposition finds out for itself.

This briefly sums up Sir Thomas's speech on the subject and the government's course of action up to date.

A Heavy Load.

It was a poor case and Sir Thomas knew it. He hemmed and hawed and floundered and stumbled, but couldn't step out freely anywhere on account of the load he was carrying, a load of little quibbles more suited to Arthur Meighen whose special business is the small stuff of debate—the smaller the better. Poor Sir Thomas! It was hard luck that he should be asked to cheapen his mind with such pettifoggery, but he did it just the same. The Finance Minister has a high sense of duty. He takes the lean with the fat. He doesn't expect all the gravy all the time. What's more, he did the best he could with a bad job. He used all the arts of the orator to coax the applause, thundered, lightened, hurricaned—the usual stunts in fact, but nothing doing.

Plenty of Gloom.

Hansard will be able to pick out at least a hundred sentences in which he waited for the rapturous cheers of his followers on the government side.

Save for a clique of five, assisted by the sardonic laughter of Dr. Schaffner who works hard for his expected Senatorship, no cheers came. Likewise no rapture—at least not what you would notice. Plenty of gloom, however.

The Hon. Andrew Broder, with a front of doom, Billy Maclean scowling darkly, Mondou and Lamarche considering in a corner how much good Nationalists should be asked to swallow; the rank and file of the party with long Sunday faces as who should say, "It's up to you. That rapids-are-near-and-the-daylight-is-past look every where! Arthur Meighen gasping like a sick fish. Premier Borden gnawing a soda mint tablet—no doubt to help him digest the reasons advanced by his Finance Minister.

The rest of the cabinet plunged in sorrow. Is it any wonder that it got on Sir Thomas' nerves and balled up his argument?

Largeness of Heart.

Sir Thomas analyzed, as he was pleased to call it, the contracts with the American Ammunition Co. and the International Arms and Fuse Co., as cited by Mr. Kyte. Sir Thomas drew from these the conclusion that the ratifying letter given by Sir Sam came from him as representing His Britannic Majesty's government and that consequently the Canadian Government had no real responsibility for them. It was therefore out of sheer largeness of heart—assisted by a strike of Conservative back benches—that the Borden government granted an investigation into as little as might be found out from time to time by the Opposition between now and the next general election. As for the rest, it was no business of theirs how much these Yankee adventurers and their Canadian go-betweens and side-partners gouged the dear old Mother Country.

Did Not Know Them.

Of course Sir Thomas did not put

it just that way, but that was the substance of it. Sir Thomas likewise disclaimed any Government knowledge of million dollar commissions on orders not yet in hand split by Benjamin Franklin Yoakum, E. W. Bassick, E. B. Caldwell, Eugene Lignanti, the flute player and other persons more or less nearly connected with that soul of honor and cherished friend of Sir Sam's namely Colonel John Wesley Allison. Sir Thomas disclaimed any knowledge of these gentry, disclaimed them with a great deal of personal enthusiasm. Afterwards he admitted that the mention of their names was enough to alarm the government, especially as Mr. Kyte's charges slanted at the honor of one of their colleagues. In short there is a disposition on the part of Sir Thomas and his colleagues to make Sir Sam the goat—if Sir Sam will let them.

Sir Sam would be able to point out, as Sir Wilfrid did, that the principal of collective cabinet responsibility applies in this case as well as in others, and if one member of the government falls, all fall.

To get down to brass tacks, how could the cabinet and the acting ministers who have handled the Militia Department during Sir Sam's various absences, be ignorant of the business going on right under their noses?

Why This Ignorance?

Neither Sir Thomas nor any other member of the government has attempted to answer these questions. Instead Sir Thomas went on to explain why he preferred a Royal Commission to a Parliamentary Committee—because it rejects rumor, hearsay, insinuation; because it insists on the rules of evidence, because it can star-chamber if it likes! because it needn't reveal state documents to the Germans—all the old arguments in fact, and one or two new ones.

Such arguments in favor of a Royal Commission as Sir Thomas overlooked Macdonald of Pictou picked up and hurled back at him—as for instance that a Royal Commission is a judge without a jury, cold law without warm public opinion behind it, also a Royal Commission is a pleasant, ambling, dilatory thing which needn't make a report until long after the events have been forgotten. And, if you don't believe it, consider how long the dear old dawdling Davidson Commission has been on the job already.

Nothing Doing.

Incidentally, Macdonald of Pictou spilled the fact that when General Bertram and David Carnegie were in the United States in June, 1915, the agent of a well known American company of standing came to them and offered to make fuses on a basis of cost plus five per cent.

When Colonel John Wesley Allison heard of this, he suggested to the agent that he add 75 cents to the price of each fuse, said sum to be split four ways, one to the contractor, one to J. Wesley Allison and two to parties not named.

The presumption is that the agent turned the proposal down. At any rate General Bertram and Mr. Carnegie did no business with him, but handed out the contracts to Yoakum, Cadwell and the crowd of "sinister adventurers" as Sir Wilfrid calls them, "who levied toll on the treasure of our land and the blood of soldiers."

Thus does Sir Wilfrid Laurier aptly express the full horror of it in one eloquent phrase—the millions stolen, the battles lost, the brave men slain, while these Yankee highbinders and their fellow conspirators were juggling contracts and manipulating commissions.

Canadians Cut Price.

Three weeks before these contracts were made with the two mushroom American companies a responsible Canadian company offered in writing to make delivery of fuses to the Shell Committee at \$4.20 each.

This Canadian company subsequently got orders from the Shell Committee for 250,000 fuses at \$4 each and another order for 250,000 fuses at \$3 each—or a net average price of \$3.50 each, which was significantly enough 75 cents less per fuse than the contracts let to the American Ammunition Co. and the International Fuse Co., for which Col. J. Wesley Allison and his friends were the providers.

\$3,500,000 WILL BE SPENT BY C.P.R. ON FARMS FOR SOLDIERS

J. S. Dennis Amplifies Announcement Made by Lord Shaughnessy and Upholds Latter's Views on Enlistment, Transportation and Shortage of Labor in the West

The providing of employment for returned soldiers is a question that is demanding nation-wide attention, and it is with great satisfaction that Canadians learn that the Canadian Pacific Railway is to take action in this regard.

Mr. J. S. Dennis, assistant to the president of the C.P.R., has just returned to Calgary, and was asked details of the scheme planned by Lord Shaughnessy. Mr. Dennis replied:—

LORD SHAUGHNESSY'S DECISION

"The decision of Lord Shaughnessy to provide through the Department of Natural Resources of the Canadian Pacific Railway farm homes for our returned soldiers is a further proof, if any were needed, of his willingness at all times to devote his great energy and ability, and the resources of the company, to the solution of the problems facing Canada as part of the empire.

The extent and magnitude of the work of preparing 1,000 farms will be realized when it is noted that it involves: Building 1,000 houses; building 1,000 barns; constructing 1,300 miles of fence; digging 1,000 wells; breaking and cultivating 50,000 acres; the buildings will require about 20,000,000 feet of lumber to erect. The preparation of these farms will entail an expenditure of about \$3,500,000.

ENLISTMENT QUESTION

"One thousand farms will, of course, provide for an extremely small proportion of returned soldiers who will want to obtain farm homes, and the Dominion Government must adopt some general policy of providing these homes. However, the Canadian Pacific Railway has led the way in trying to solve the pressing and troublesome question and no doubt before long the Dominion Government will announce its general scheme.

AN IMMENSE PROJECT

"The enlistment of the 250,000 additional men called for by the Government, will, of course, double the number to be taken care of after the war is over, and also causes a serious present problem. The western provinces have responded nobly to the call of the empire in enlisting men to fight our battles, and already there is a serious shortage of labor of all kinds, due to this enlistment. In the effort to meet this shortage, the Dominion government is now advertising in some 4,000 papers in the United States for 50,000 laborers to come west and help put in the crop this spring. They find that there is no chance of getting this number of men, and have announced that

from 3,000 to 5,000 is the greatest number that can be obtained.

SHORTAGE OF LABOR

"The recognition of this shortage of labor by the Department of the Interior, and the efforts they are making to meet the situation by bringing men from the United States is a contradiction of the statement made at a meeting in Montreal a short time ago by Gen. Sir Sam Hughes, Minister of Militia, that the enlistment of men in the west was not causing any shortage of labor, and is a proof, if any were needed, of the soundness of the policy of recruiting advocated by Lord Shaughnessy at the same meeting. Every true Canadian realizes that Canada must ultimately send her last man and spend her last dollar to enable the empire and her allies to bring the war to victorious termination, but why enlist men before they can be used.

TRANSPORTING TROOPS

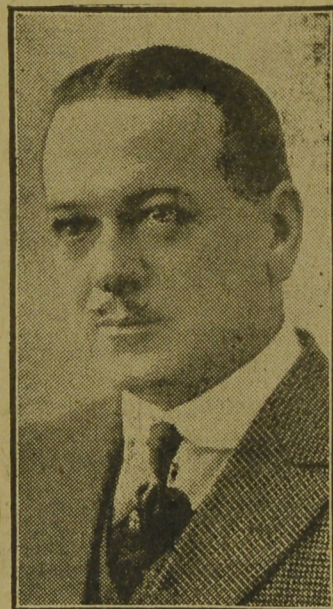
"It is now recognized that under the most favorable circumstances it will be the end of the year before all the men now enlisted can be transported across the Atlantic, and after that date, at most, 10,000 men a month can be sent forward. Many of the battalions now authorized are very much below their full strength, and it will be many months before they will have succeeded in enlisting their full quota of men. Why then go on authorizing additional battalions and removing men from the useful employment of helping feed the empire or supply it with munitions until they can be utilized in the firing line?

WESTERN CANADA'S LOYALTY

"Of the men already enlisted, western Canada has provided much more than its share on the basis of population. As western Canadians we are proud of that fact, but why drive a willing horse off its feet, particularly when its energies can be utilized in the meantime to such great advantage in other ways, and it can be kept in good condition for the time when its full strength can be properly applied in the supreme crisis?"

"THE WHITE FEATHER" AT OPERA HOUSE TONIGHT

The anxiously awaited engagement of "The White Feather" takes place at the Opera House tonight and should by long odds prove to be the most satisfying of the season. Its coming has been so well heralded that just about everybody will be there. "The White Feather" is an extremely clever play of an exceptional timely quality. It suggests the better side of the stage, and when you go home, tonight after having witnessed the performance, you will realize that you have been pat-



Albert Brown, the Lieutenant Actor, to be seen in his wonderful performance at Brent, in "The White Feather," at the Opera House tonight.

ronizing a play marked "sterling" all over it. It is not a hazardous

Of course the Canadian companies were expected to do it for less. There was no nigger on the fence in their case, no 75c. added to be split four ways.

Facts like these keep cropping up from time to time. This explains the haunted look of the Government front-benchers. Meanwhile they jiggle about like a hen trying to cross the road in front of a funeral.

prediction to say that those who go to the Opera House tonight will have the privilege of witnessing this famous British war office drama in the presentation of which will be embodied the highest ideals of the English speaking stage. No true Britisher, no loyal Canadian can afford to miss seeing it. Albert Brown, the Lieutenant actor, will offer as Brent, the British secret service officer, and his performance is said to be a revelation.

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