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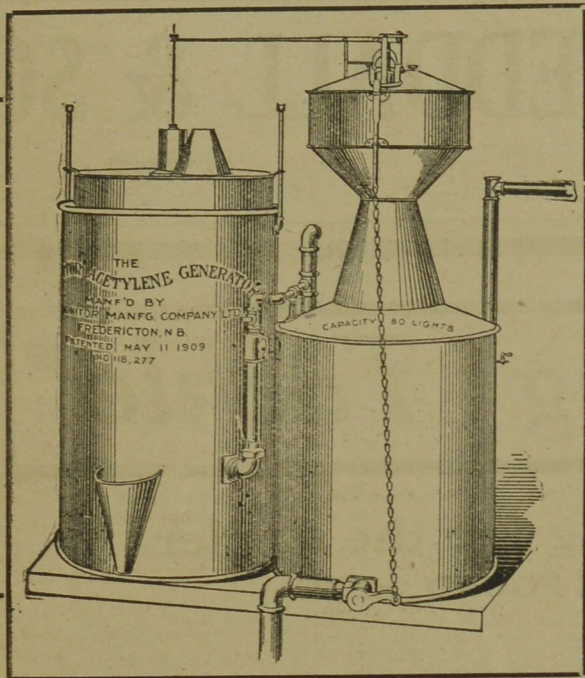
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MR. PUGSLEY'S SPEECH

(Continued from page two.)

was for many years president of the Conservative Association of the province of New Brunswick; Mr. George McLeod, another gentleman who stood high in the ranks of the party and Mr. George McKeen, one of the most prominent business men of New Brunswick. These three gentlemen were appointed arbitrators and heard evidence in the case, and the result was that instead of the government getting that property for \$8,000, which was the amount they had offered on the advice of the engineer, the arbitrators allowed Mr. Shives the sum of \$35,000 for it, and that amount the government had to pay. I suppose that if the government had bought that property for \$10,000, gentlemen like the hon. member for York would have been found to criticize that payment and to declare that it was an outrage that Mr. Shives, who had bought the property a short time before for \$1,700, should receive the magnificent sum of \$10,000 for it. And yet, Sir, these arbitrators, men of judgment and integrity, who stood high in the province of New Brunswick, awarded to him the sum of \$35,000. And, Sir, with the report of Mr. Stead, with the evidence which he furnished as to the contents of this property, I was of the opinion that if we simply expropriated it and put the matter into the exchequer court, with men like Messrs. Loggie ready to testify that they were willing to give a larger sum for this property, with other men like Mr. Irving and Mr. Forster ready to testify that it was worth anywhere from \$5,000 to \$10,000, I felt that the government would in all probability have to pay considerably more than \$5,000 by virtue of proceedings in the exchequer court, besides a large amount in the way of costs, before they could get rid of the liability in respect of the purchase of this property. Knowing all that, I was prepared to believe, and did believe, that the resident engineer, Mr. Stead, had acted in perfect good faith, had made a report according to his best judgment, and that it would be very much better for the government to act on his report and complete the purchase of the property than to throw the case into the exchequer court.

Well now I should not sit down without referring to the offer which Messrs. Loggie made for this property. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Crockett), has said it was an extraordinary thing that Messrs. Loggie should send a check for \$5,000 for this property without knowing that the Minister of Public Works was prepared to sell, that the whole thing must be stamped with fraud and that for that reason the House ought to condemn the minister and declare the whole transaction fraudulent and corrupt.

Now, Sir, let me explain why I think the action of Messrs. Loggie was a reasonable one. Remember that they had written a letter to Mr. Stead stating that in their opinion \$5,000 was a low price for this property and that if they had had it they would not have sold it for that price. Remember that when Mr. Murray and Mr. Andrew Loggie had a talk about the property, and he informed Mr. Loggie that he had offered the property to the government for \$5,000, Mr. Loggie asked him if he would not withdraw that offer, and stated that his firm would gladly give more for the property. Now, Sir, when this investigation came on, I stated to the committee, and this appears in the proceedings, that as Mr. Stead had inclosed to him that letter from Mr. Loggie, and as Mr. Murray had stated that that was Mr. Loggie's opinion of the property, I wanted Mr. Loggie here as a witness. Mr. Loggie would know that that was the object of calling him as a witness. He would know there was no other purpose in calling him as a witness because he had had no other connection with this transaction in any shape or form.

At my instance, Mr. Loggie was subpoenaed, but unfortunately he was taken ill—he was suffering from a severe attack of asthma, as the certificate of his attending physician showed. He was unable to come to Ottawa, but knowing as he did that the object of calling him as a witness was to have him testify as to the value of this property and as his firm had been willing to buy it, Mr. Loggie did what he thought was even better than giving his evidence; being unable to come to Ottawa by reason of his illness, he sent a certified check from the firm for \$5,000, being of opinion that that was the best evidence he could give that he was desirous of purchasing this property for the benefit of his firm.

Does it strike you, Mr. Speaker, that that was an unreasonable thing for Mr. Loggie to do? It does not so strike me. It seems to me that Mr. Loggie, knowing that all that he was wanted for as a witness was to give his testimony as to the value of this property and to corroborate the statement he made to Mr. Murray that he would pay upwards of \$5,000 for it, he sent his check for that amount. Was it not a reasonable thing that when through illness he was unable to respond to the subpoena and come to Ottawa he should send forward his certified check with an offer to buy the property for the sum which he had previously said he

was willing to give for it? He did so, and sent forward the check for \$5,000.

WORTH \$5,500.

He came here afterwards and under oath swore that the property was well worth the sum of \$5,500 and that the government had got a good bargain when they got it for the sum of \$5,000. Now, Mr. Speaker, some reference has been made to the fact that the department under my direction decided not to accept Mr. Loggie's offer, but that we agreed to sell a portion of the property for the sum of \$3,500. Well, I am free to admit, Sir, that in three or four years if any criticism is passed upon my conduct when this wharf is extended, when the railway track is built along the wharf, and when as the result of that the people of Richibucto get much needed railway terminal facilities, and when so great an advantage as that has accrued to the place by reason of the improvements we shall have made—if any criticism be then passed upon my conduct in connection with this property, it will be not that we purchased this property for \$5,000, but that we have sold two-thirds of it for less than it was worth, and that we should have held on to it in the public interests or else insisted on getting a larger price. That will be the criticism passed on my conduct before three or four years have passed away. But, Sir, I have felt that at present or in the near future all we intend to do is to extend this wharf a distance of about 200 feet along the front, which will give us a frontage of from 350 to 400 feet. That will enable the railway to be carried along parallel with the face of the wharf so that the cars will lie face to face with the steamers, and other vessels that come there. That will be giving reasonable accommodation to the people and I thought that as I had the opportunity of disposing of the remainder of the property for the sum of \$3,500, it was not an unreasonable or an improper thing we should accept the offer made to us, or rather that we should carry out the counter offer made by us to Messrs. Loggie.

One condition is attached to it, it is true, but it is not in any way contrary to the public interest. It does not militate in any way against the public interests. They will put a face on the wharf and they are desirous of having the railway extended to their own wharf and in order to do this it will be necessary to have tracks laid across the portion which the government has reserved for public properties. They have stipulated for that and we have agreed that two tracks of railway shall be laid by them, but in such a place as the chief engineer shall determine, and under the supervision of the engineer of the Department of Public Works.

In that way, I think, the public interest will be reasonably safeguarded. I think it is not an unreasonable thing to sell this property to Messrs. Loggie for \$3,500, being the portion of the property to which I have referred, leaving to us, to the crown, 200 feet immediately adjoining the wharf upon which the railway track, which is the vital part of the property, so far as extending the terminal facilities in connection with the Kent Northern railway is concerned will be laid. Therefore, we get for the sum of \$1,500 the most valuable part of this property, the part which so far as the government is concerned, so far as extending these terminal facilities is concerned is worth as much as all the rest of the property, and when we have extended the wharf we shall have very excellent terminal facilities, sufficient to meet the requirements of the town for many years to come. At the same time we are happy to know that we are selling the remainder of the property to the firm of A. & R. Loggie, one of the most enterprising firms in the Maritime Provinces, men who develop any property which they acquire, men who are going to improve and build up that wharf and extend the railway along it, thus giving facilities for the transshipment of fish and other products of the province of New Brunswick. It seems to me that in doing that we have made an arrangement which is not contrary to the public interests, but which the public will say is very greatly and very clearly in their interest.

SUMMING UP.

Now, just a word in regard to the evidence as to the value of the property. I think that too much stress cannot be laid—and I appeal to hon. members opposite who were not before the committee, if I am not correct in this—upon the fact that the hon. member for York, (Mr. Crockett)—who has taken practically the whole time of the committee on public accounts in connection with matters relating to my department, and particularly matters in the province of New Brunswick, and who has been able to produce a single witness, outside of Richard O'Leary, the strong, prejudiced partizan who sold this property. Not a single inhabitant of the County of Kent, who was prepared to say that we paid a single dollar for this property more than its fair value. To the contrary we have evidence of Mr. Forster, a man who knew Richibucto as any hon. member of this House knows the village in which he was born and spent his boyhood and early manhood. Mr.

Forster lived at Dorchester, not far from Richibucto, had been in Richibucto frequently, and knew the property thoroughly.

He swore that if a man wanted it for a business property he thought it was worth \$10,000. Mr. James D. Irving, who knows that part of the country well, placed the value at \$5,000 to \$10,000. Mr. Carter, a gentleman called by the other side, placed the value at not less than \$5,000. And we have Mr. Loggie, who not only swore that it was good value for \$5,000, but backed up his opinion with a certified check which he was prepared to give on receiving the conveyance of this property. This is in addition to the fact which I have already mentioned, that this hon. gentleman (Mr. Crockett) did not call—because he could not—any respectable resident of the town of Richibucto, except Mr. O'Leary, who would say that we paid too much for this property. They had one man Mr. James, who had lived all his life in Richibucto, their own solicitor, a man employed by Mr. O'Leary to draw the papers, yet they did not venture to ask him whether or not we paid too much for that property. So the case stands today with the absolutely conclusive evidence that this property is worth more than, or at all events, as much as the government paid for it. It is absolutely proved that the resident engineer of the department acted in good faith, and in perfect honesty when he certified that the value of this property was \$65,000. And, in the absence of any evidence that I ever knew, but that Mr. Murray had been for years the owner of this property, in the absence of any evidence that I acted otherwise than in good faith upon the report sent me by the resident engineer, approved by the chief engineer, and in the fact of the fact that all the witnesses, with the exception of Mr. O'Leary himself—the unreliability of whose testimony I have already pressed upon your consideration—declared their opinion that the price paid was fair and reasonable, I think this House will hesitate before adopting the want of confidence resolution proposed by the hon. member for York, that this is a corrupt and fraudulent transaction deserving of the censure of this House.

Mr. Meighen, Mr. Borden and others spoke in support of Mr. Crockett's amendment, but the amendment was defeated on division by a majority of forty-eight.



SEALED TENDERS addressed to the undersigned, and endorsed "Tender for Construction of Wharf at Shediac, N. B.," will be received at this office until 5.00 p. m. on Thursday, May 26, 1910, for the construction of a wharf at Shediac, Westmorland County, N. B. Plans, specification and form of contract can be seen and forms of tender obtained at this Department, at the office of E. T. P. Shewan, Esq., District Engineer, St. John, N. B., Geoffrey Stead, Esq., District Engineer, Chatham, N. B., and on application to the Postmaster at Shediac, N. B. Persons tendering are notified that tenders will not be considered unless made on the printed forms supplied, and signed with their actual signatures, with their occupations and places of residence. In the case of firms, the actual signature, the nature of the occupation and place of residence of each member of the firm must be given.

Each tender must be accompanied by an accepted cheque on a chartered bank, made payable to the order of the Honorable the Minister of Public Works, for the sum of two thousand one hundred dollars, (\$2,100.00). The cheque will be forfeited if the person tendering declines to enter into a contract when called upon to do so, or fail to complete the work contracted for. If the tender be not accepted the cheque will be returned. The Department does not bind itself to accept the lowest or any tender.

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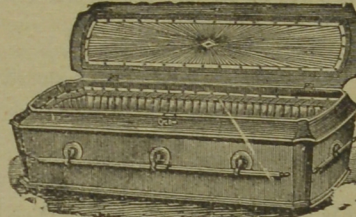
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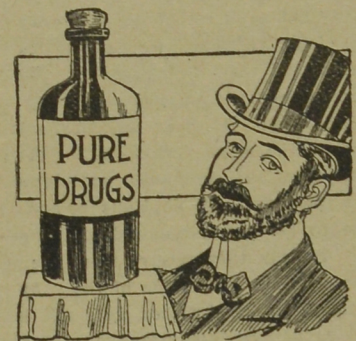
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