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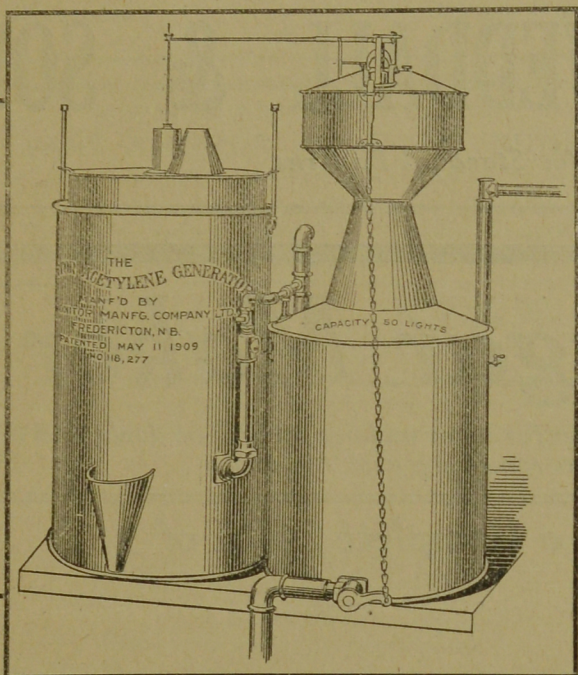
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**ROBINSON TELLS OF GOVERNMENT'S EXTRAVAGANCE**

(Continued from page two.)

THE GERRYMANDER.

Mr. Hazen's old policy was to divide the country into electoral districts, and reduce the membership of the House. He has forgotten the policy but he did not forget the gerrymander Westmorland and legislative voters out of St. John county. He should have thought of something higher than mere party advantage. The Sunbury members represent some six thousand, the Westmorland members some forty or fifty thousand or each one more than the total number in Sunbury, Gloucester, larger, than Charlotte, has but three members to the latter's four. Why not be fair to all parts of the province? The ministers separated Moncton from Westmorland because they thought that by so doing would enable them to elect three members in the county, but they will find themselves wrong there, as they did in the St. John bye-election.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell—We only took away special privileges your government gave St. John.

Mr. Robinson said the hon. gentleman must be thinking of the St. John Public Library.

Hon. Mr. Hazen said he had heard the hon. gentleman say such things before, and it was about time that he explained what he meant.

Mr. Robinson said that he did not know that he was called upon to make any explanation, and he did not propose to be lectured in regard to his judgment or his remarks.

The House took recess at six o'clock.

WORKING OF THE AUDIT ACT.

The House resumed at 8 o'clock.

Hon. Mr. Robinson said Mr. Fleming laid great stress on the alleged fact that no abuses are possible under the present audit act. He and other members of the government would lead the people to believe that there never was an audit act until the present one. Under the old system there were no over-expenditures, etc., without a special order. The first thirty odd pages of the auditor general's report for 1909 is taken up with orders of the treasury board or orders in council for expenditures, both on current and capital account for over-expenditures, and for absolutely unauthorized expenditures. In the act there is nothing whatever to prevent a violation of the "No over-expenditure principle." The government, can make a large over-expenditure or a small one. It can make one unauthorized expenditure or it can make more. Mr. Fleming says there is only one door to the auditor general, if so it is a very wide one and has many keys. The chief commissioner, the surveyor general the King's printer, secretary of the provincial board of health, all have keys and so on all through the list. Some one has a key for a permanent expenditure never discussed in the legislature. Anyone can get money as easily as ever. Under the old act it was necessary to have an order in council, debated by all the executive, but now the decision of three is all that is necessary. The door is so wide that an unauthorized importation of horses could be made. If a government has power to act as it pleases, what protection is there under the audit act?

The provincial secretary extols his own honesty and that of the government. No one has accused any minister of dishonesty, there is no disposition to do so, but remarks, such as Mr. Fleming makes, tends to breed suspicion. He goes about with a label on his coat and does not thus add to the dignity of the government.

COST OF SCHOOL BOOKS.

Mr. Robinson went on to say that, having heard the statements of members of the government, he still believed that the school book system is indirectly costing the people thousands a year. There is continual loss. It was so in the first year, a larger loss in the second, and from Oct. 31st, '09, to the present, the loss goes on. The policy cannot be administered without a certain loss. Already there is a considerable deficit and the interest charges alone will mount up. The government should admit, that while books may be cheaper, the administration is costing the people dear. In 1908 the expenditure on account of books was \$11,588.87, and the receipts \$1,691.71. Next year the expenditures were \$14,033.52 and the receipts, \$9,529.76. For the 3½ months since the end of the last fiscal year, the expenditures were \$7,537.38, and the receipts \$2,648.18. Thus \$19,321.12 more has been expended than was received. There is a strange disagreement in the figures of the auditor general's report and the government returns in regard to books and scribbles from the publishers in 1908 and 1909. The auditor general gives the invoice value as \$23,896.20; the value given in the returns is \$28,582.51, a difference of \$4,686.31. But this is not the only case in which the auditor general's figures disagree with those given by the government.

VIOLATION OF PLEDGES.

One of the chief planks in the Hazen platform was the putting up of all public works to tender, and giving the work to the lowest tenderer.

Has that been adhered to? Has the tender system been broadened at all? He defied any one to show that in any way this plank has been followed. The tender system has been contracted. Last year the Public Works were handled without regard to tender and thousands of dollars have been lost. He himself had been credibly informed of cases in which bridges could have been built for one-half their cost or less, if the tender system had been followed.

Hon. Mr. Morrissey—Would you name them?

Mr. Robinson said he had the list and he would give the names to the hon. gentleman. The government is bound by the mandate of the people to extend the tender system as promised.

The government had promised to vest the management of the roads and the appointment of the officials in the county councils. The pledge had not been kept. Is there a single official appointed by the municipalities?

A survey of crown lands had been promised before the elections by Mr. Hazen and the conservation of the forests was another pledge. There is yet no evidence of this being carried out. To swell the revenues the probate fees have been used. This was something never done before. It would surely have been better to have left these fees to be used for the benefit of widows and orphans.

The Commissioner of agriculture had claimed a balance of \$36.00 on the sale of the Kentucky Horses elsewhere in the report an interest charge of \$40.00 in this connection had been shown so the surplus vanishes.

PROMISE AND PERFORMANCE.

In opposition the ministers advocated the abolition of the solicitor-generalship; now they had increased the salaries of the executive; they advocated redistribution, they have brought in the gerrymander; they promised to give the control of the highways to the municipalities, they appointed the officers; they promised to reduce taxes, they have increased the road taxes. Instead of reducing Probate Fees, they take the surplus fees for current revenue. Instead of extending the tender system they have contracted it. Instead of knowing no party they discriminate against the liberals. They promised no over-expenditures, over-expenditures are the rule. They promised to increase teachers salaries and have done nothing. Instead of appointing a farmer as commissioner of agriculture they chose a medical doctor for whose benefit a commission was appointed at great expense to the province. They advocated construction of small permanent bridges out of ordinary revenue and have negotiated an unauthorized loan on capital account for such bridges. Instead of conserving Provincial resources they have reduced the size of the saw log. Instead of economy and retrenchment they have made large increases in ordinary expenditure. Instead of reducing the debt they are increasing it more rapidly than ever, year their lawyers were running into They promised to lower the succession duties and the duties are unchanged. They promised to employ no lawyers to do legal work and last each other all over the province.

Hon. Mr. McLeod owing to disability moved the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. Wilson presented the petition of W. J. Fenton, A. P. Barnhill, T. H. Estabrooks and others, favoring a bill to incorporate the Fenton Land and Building Company.

porate the Hartland Miramichi Railway Company.

Mr. Wilson introduced a bill relating to the assessing of rates and taxes in the City of St. John.

The House adjourned at 9.15 p. m.

**PRESS COMMENTS ON FOSTER LIBEL SUIT**

Toronto News, (Con.)—It is clear that what he did as a private citizen and as manager of a trust company he could not properly have done as Finance Minister of Canada. This is the aspect which obtrudes itself upon public attention, and it is right that it should be so. . . . Mr. Foster's public record is wonderfully free of fault or blemish. As a platform and Parliamentary speaker he probably has no equal in the country. It is useless, however, to shut one's eyes to the fact that his position is seriously prejudiced and his influence greatly impaired by the insurance investigation and the legal action which has just closed with a judgment substantially in favor of his assailant.

AN UTTERLY DISCREDITED MAN.

Winnipeg Free Press.—Mr. Foster, by entering suit against Dr. Macdonald, challenged vindication for himself. His hardihood in so doing can only be described as amazing, and may surely be pointed to not without aptness in connection with the ancient proverb, that those whom the gods would destroy they first make mad. The whole matter has been carefully gone through in court, and the verdict is against Mr. Foster, instead of furnishing him the vindication which, with an assurance and effrontery well-nigh incredible, he appears to have thought possible for him to, receive at the hands of the jury is that the criticisms uttered by Dr. Macdonald were justifiable. And behind the verdict of the jury is the verdict of the country,

which stamps George E. Foster as an utterly discredited man.

WORTH FIGHTING FOR.

Hamilton Times.—Dr. Macdonald and the Globe are to be congratulated upon the outcome of this audacious attempt to browbeat and muzzle criticism of the platform and press. The defendant was not merely fighting for the public interest against the nominal plaintiff. One less confident of the strength and justice of his case, or less able pecuniarily to uphold his part, might have been defeated by the mere costliness of the struggle forced upon him. Dr. Macdonald permitted no consideration of this kind to weaken his determination to stand with his back to the wall and obtain the verdict of a jury with the case fully before them.

IN THE BLACKNESS OF DARKNESS.

Toronto Telegram.—Congratulations are offered by The Globe to the jurors who decided the question at issue in the libel action of Foster v. Macdonald. These congratulations are deserved. It was easy for the jurors whose partisan sympathies are against Mr. Foster to reach a verdict that closes the public career of a political opponent in the "blackness of great darkness." . . . The worst fault charged against George E. Foster has been duplicated over and over again in the annals of Canadian finance. But the fault charged against Mr. Foster is not and never was a virtue. It would have been a public misfortune if a jury had called evil good, at the bidding of a partisan prejudice, or outraged the liberty of the press by protecting Mr. Foster against the criticism which he has invited by his own mistakes.

CRUMB OF COMFORT.

Montreal Gazette, (Con.)—In this, Mr. Foster's good faith is justified. The twelve good men and true, after listening to all that was brought forward by the defence in what was really an attempt to destroy the honor and reputation of a leading public man, condemned only Mr. Foster's judgment. The result is unfortunate for him, and will give joy to his enemies, some of whom are the most evil influences in Canadian political life. It will not give joy to many others.

A POLITICAL CONSPIRACY.

Montreal Herald.—The incident had stamped indelibly upon the public mind an impression, of what the moral character of the man amounts to, and with that impression against him Mr. Foster can never play a really great part in the public life of Canada. And what deserves to be remembered most of all about this disagreeable episode is that it was, as to personnel, almost a political conspiracy, for the men who were working together were nearly all political friends. Mr. Foster was working in familiar company, for with him were Mr. Fowler, Mr. Pope, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Lefurgey, Mr. Montague, Mr. Roblin, Mr. Rogers, Mr. McGillivray and others of lesser note. That, taken with the surrender of the moral sense, and the staking of so much on so risky a chance, is what most deserves to be remembered about the Union Trust episode.

AN AMERICAN OPINION ON "DREADNOUGHTS."

A few years ago it was thought that the United States Navy had reached its limit in the 16,000-ton battleship. This month the 20,000-ton battleship Delaware was delivered to the government, and in a few weeks its sister ship, the North Dakota, will be ready. Contracts have been awarded for the Arkansas and Wyoming, each of 26,000 tons. Now Secretary Meyer proposes that next year Congress authorize a 32,000-ton battleship to be the largest in existence. The estimated cost will be about \$18,000,000, as compared with \$8,000,000 for the 16,000-ton flagship Connecticut.

When the British government built the original Dreadnought it not only rendered obsolete a large fleet of its own battleships but it started the other nations of Europe in a mad race of naval construction that threatens to bankrupt them. The first effect of the building of a 32,000-ton battleship by the United States will be to render the greater part of the existing battleship fleet out of date and to destroy its homogeneity, which naval experts have argued is an essential for successful operation. Many harbors will be closed to so large a vessel, and naval drydocks must be enlarged or new ones provided to receive it. At the same time, while the cost of the new standard of battleship increases rapidly with its size and armament, the Navy Department shows no disposition to moderate its demands as to the number of new battleships to be laid down each year.

The whole Dreadnought policy, ever since Great Britain first adopted it, worked harm wherever tried. It has led constantly to fresh excesses of militarism, burdensome taxation and bloated armaments that in themselves are a menace to the peace of the world.

"With all your wealth are you not afraid of the proletariat?" asked the deliver in sociological problems.

"No I ain't," snapped Mrs. Newrich. "We boil all our drinkin' water."

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