

Children Cry for Fletcher's

CASTORIA

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In Use For Over 30 Years

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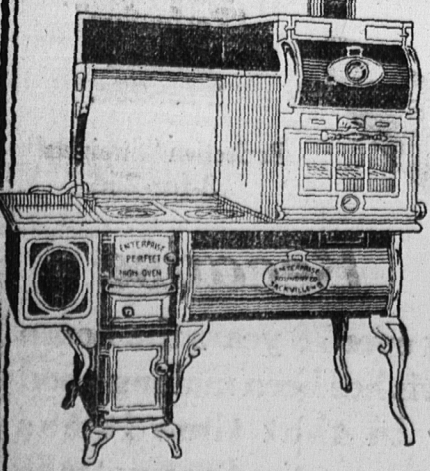
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Proceedings In The Legislature

(Continued from Page Fifteen.)

Donation Government. We are entitled to all that we can get from them and as I have already said we have not been backward in asking but there is a danger in going too far with our demands.

I was rather delighted a few days ago to read in a newspaper that the Post Master General of Canada, a young man on the threshold of success, who has attained to one of the most important portfolios in the Federal Government has given up everything and offered his services to his King and country; and I was still more delighted to read the following telegram:

"To Hon. P. L. Blondin, P. C., Ottawa:—My Dear Sir,—Please accept my heartiest congratulations on the example you have set to Quebec and Canada."

You have filled my heart with so much pride for our race that I now come to offer you my services and follow you in any capacity you may choose to the best interests of our countrymen of Canada and the Empire. Yours faithfully, F. L. Lessard."

General Lessard, Inspector General of Forces for Eastern Canada, a veteran of the North West Rebellion, a hero of the South African War, of the sake of his country resigns his high commission honours, emoluments—and offers his services to the Post Master General to go to the front with him in any capacity. This splendid example of duty has set me thinking, and you will pardon me, Mr. Speaker, if I have animated me on reading the news of the Postmaster General's admirable step and Colonel Lessard's telegram:

In the glare of the great tragedy that is being enacted in Europe with the consciousness that not only our lives but the very fate of Canada is being weighed in the balance, how small, how insignificant we should feel when we at night consider that we have spent hours, which should have been devoted to the great cause of the war, in useless wrangling and meaningless debate. How mean and contemptible our strife for political advantage in contrast with the noble action of the P. M. G. of Canada laying aside the emoluments of office to don the khaki in defence of Canada and the Empire, and the magnificent example of a Major General, a veteran of many wars, the hero of hard fought battles, giving over his commission to offer his services to the great cause in any capacity. When I read this noble soldier's telegram to the P. M. G. a thrill of admiration through my being and I too wished that in any humble way I might do my bit for the cause.

If however, for valid reasons, we cannot emulate these examples, let us not so act that our children and our grandchildren, and even remote generations, perusing the journals of this Assembly and seeing these pages of resolutions intended to embarrass, rather than assist, the Government executive men who with the dreadful Gettysburg before their eyes and the full realization that the island's brave sons were patriotically threading the bloody Calvary of Flanders, still could in that hour of danger forget all and fritter away precious days and weeks in vain disputes as to whether some \$20,000 for the relief of those brave men would be raised by a paltry tax or by borrowing. Let us rather be men and play men's part to the end that in years to come we shall not have to blush for our actions but be proud that in the hour of danger we could find it in ourselves to rise from the lower levels and sink our political differences for Home, for King and for Empire.

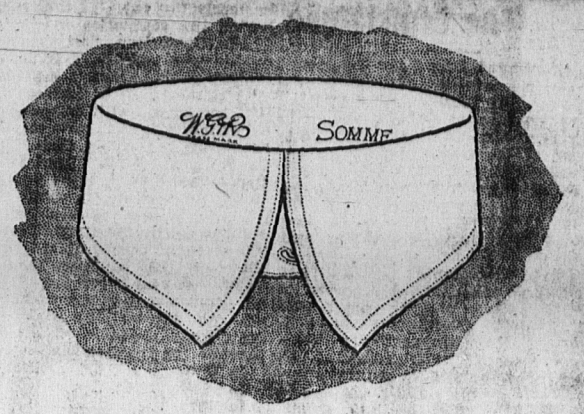
In the course of his speech on the Budget on Tuesday evening, Mr. George E. Hughes, dealing with Falconwood Asylum, charged the Government with gross extravagance and mismanagement in connection with that institution and stated that there was much unrest in the minds of the people of the province concerning conditions there. He then read a document (which he tabled) signed by eight of the inmates of the infirmary, in which document was set forth a long list of alleged grievances against a certain attendant. The allegation included lack of discipline in the institution, tormenting and persecuting blind men; allowing scandalous conduct, fighting and quarrelling; money being spent by inmates; insufficiency of bed-clothing; ill-treating inmates without cause; refusing visitors to see inmates; cutting off food allowance to those protesting; treating of all kinds. The attendant in question, the document stated, had been dismissed by Dr. Goodwill two years ago but had been re-instated by the government. The document, which was in the form of a petition to the Leader of the Opposition and the Liberal Party, asked for an investigation and on the strength of it Mr. Hughes demanded the appointment of a Commission to investigate the charges made.

PREMIER MATHIESON REPLIES. In connection with the above charges, the Premier, Hon. J. A. Mathieson, made the following reply last night, after the Commissioner of Agriculture had moved the adjournment of the debate on the House the very matter with which it was about to deal, that is, the charges made last evening by the Junior Member for West River, who I hope will be in his seat before I have gone very far. I may say that I intend to follow up the remarks which I am now making by a substantial motion. I have here a report which appears in the "Patriot" of April 4th under this heading: "An investigation is demanded into the condition of affairs at Falconwood Hospital. Some serious grievances are set forth by Mr. Hughes in his speech last night on the Budget debate. Petition from eight inmates of the infirmary is read complaining of cruelty and ill-treatment. A number of specific charges are made."

This report contains the following statement: "He first touched on the cost of the Institution. This year, the Public Accounts showed that the total cost, including unpaid accounts for the year, were \$30,000. Under the Liberals the cost was \$38,000—less than half. Some allowance must be made for the increased cost of supplies but \$10,000 would be a fair estimate for that. This enormous expenditure in connection with the Hospital, indicates that there must have been considerable graft and mismanagement. Under the Liberals tenders were called for everything. It is not so under the present Government. It is stated there were some additional expenses, owing to the moving of barns. Is this desirable, in view of the danger from fire, to remove them close to the main building?"

Last fall, when prices were mounting and threatening to mount higher and higher, the Government thought the proper course to take was to anticipate the higher markets and make contracts for supplies of all the more staple articles used in the institution. The result was that five months' supplies along certain lines and three months' supplies along other lines were contracted for and created obligations which show in the accounts; but all those obligations that were incurred and the purchases that were made were absolutely for the public interest and saved a large sum of money. The comparison is unjust and unfair, and what more, it is inaccurate. "Considerable graft and mismanagement" is alleged. I may say that this will not be the subject of my motion. The Public Accounts Committee can take up the statements and charges of the hon. gentleman who has made in regard to expenditures in connection with the institution, or the matter may be dealt with in any other form the House may see fit. The report in the newspaper goes on to say that "There was much unrest in the minds of the people concerning the management of the institution." Now, let me say this, Mr. Speaker, that in every world one of the great dangers is suicide, and in every asylum, notwithstanding all the safeguards that can be placed around the patients, unfortunately suicides happen. They have happened in this institution before, and as long as humanity is liable to be afflicted with insanity, just so long will suicides be liable to happen. I can recall a few years ago, when the former Government was in power, one person who was afflicted with insanity and wandering about the streets, was taken to the Hospital for safety and committed suicide that very night. We sat on the other side of the House at that time and we never thought of exposing or bringing the matter up before the House, as long as it was a political advantage. We had a higher standard to follow. We have known, in former days when the Liberal Government was in power, of one patient killing another in one of the wards. Did we ever think that from our side of the House? We ever seek to make political capital out of it? We knew of a patient being lost in the woods and found hanging to a tree. We knew of patients escaping and wandering through the country. Did we ever attempt to turn such unfortunate facts to some mean advantage? It would have been a shame and a disgrace to us, and I do not believe there is any man on the other side of the House who would have followed the leader or any other man had dared to make political capital out of human frailty and mistakes. It was reserved for this late day that such a course should be adopted. On Friday last a man had escaped. Every effort was made for his recovery and he was recovered safe and sound. I have known, in former days when the Liberal Government was in power, of three patients who, acting entirely independently of one another, escaped from the institution. We sat on the other side of the House and were perfectly aware of the circumstances. Did we ever think for a moment of parading such facts for political benefit? It would have done us absolutely no good, for the public would have seen the man who had escaped, and we would have used these weaknesses as a stepping-stone to the advancement of their own despicable ends. "Mr. Hughes then demanded that a Commission be appointed," the report continues, "and an investigation held in connection with the institution. In addition to what has been transpiring in the Hospital, there have been reports of trouble in the infirmary. Mr. Hughes then produced a petition which had been put into his hands on dated March 1st. IT IS NOT A PETITION, BUT A SERIES OF GROSS CHARGES. Let me say at this point, that when a document comes into the hands of a member of the House and contains charges against officers of the Government and against the Government itself, that member may elect to do one of two things: He may hand over the document—as the hon. member might have handed over this document—to the proper authorities; or he may examine it and act upon it. That would be the higher way, the more patriotic way, the more generous way and the honourable way. But we must not expect too much of strong political partisans. The hon. gentleman decided not to use the document in that way, but to employ it to political advantage; and having decided on that course, he had the choice of getting up and making vague statements, or using the influence of his position to give currency and authority to statements which would otherwise have been regarded as of little or no value. He did that. He stood up in his place and took the responsibility of putting those statements before the House and before the country, and when he did that he assumed the position that every hon. representative under similar circumstances assumes his seat in jeopardy. Here we have a report of a series of charges by unknown persons. They may be true or they may not, but in any case they are utterly unknown to the public at large and their statements would have no value or effect. And time again, when we sat on the other side of the House, we received communications, some of them

signed and some anonymous, containing charges and informations of various kinds against officers in connection with the Asylum and the Poor House. Whenever a statement seemed to contain sufficient gravity to seek to make political capital found before the House, we went to the medical superintendent, looked into the question to see if there was anything in it, and in the result we brought none of those matters before the House. If we considered any statement to be of sufficient consequence to merit it, we drew the attention of the Premier to it by a note and enclosed him the correspondence; but never did we seek to make political capital found upon grounds so far below the standard of decent statesmanship. Now the hon. member can rise in his place and make all kinds of statements without putting his seat in jeopardy; but when he comes before the House and gives the weight and authority of his position as a representative of the people to statements accusing individuals of improper conduct or even of crimes, alleging misconduct and other offences against those in authority, throughout the country, and every member of a British Legislature who gives weight to charges of that kind assumes the responsibility of being able to carry those charges through. The hon. gentleman went further and laid those charges on the table of the House, and in that he did well. He would have done better had he looked into those things himself, or had he put the matter at the disposal of those in charge throughout the institution. But not having taken the higher road he took the next best way, and I will say this: that the opportunity that is to be given that hon. gentleman to bring before the House and the country will be given to any hon. member who will take the same course as he has taken. I will not go into the merits of the charges; I will not deal with them at all, but I will call the attention of the House to the gravity of some of the statements which the hon. gentleman has given weight and currency. "Studied persecution of blind, crippled and infirm men." That is one of the allegations. "Neglecting to distribute sufficient blankets to the men comfortable at night, while in meantime blankets were locked up in the closets." Permitting an old man 70 years of age to carry on scandalous actions with a deaf and dumb girl," and so on—statements that, if untrue, are a scandal and disgrace, that any member of a British Parliament should give them force of law. If, on the other hand, they are untrue, and so on—statements that, if untrue, are a scandal and disgrace, that any member of a British Parliament should give them force of law. If, on the other hand, they are untrue, and so on—statements that, if untrue, are a scandal and disgrace, that any member of a British Parliament should give them force of law. If, on the other hand, they are untrue, and so on—statements that, if untrue, are a scandal and disgrace, that any member of a British Parliament should give them force of law.



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In the document, with power to send for all papers, etc., and to examine witnesses upon oath. The motion was carried. The Premier then moved that the Committee consist of the following members: Messrs. Prowse, McLellan, McNevin, McInnis and Leach. Mr. Johnston moved in amendment that in place of Messrs. Leach and McInnis, the names of Messrs. Saunders and Bell be substituted. He entered into an explanation as to why he moved the amendment, when the Premier intimated that he had no objection whatever to the members nominated by Mr. Johnston being on the Committee and withdrew his motion. The amendment was therefore carried, the committee consisting therefore of the following members of the House: Messrs. Prowse, McLellan, McNevin, Saunders and Bell. The House then adjourned.

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