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PROHIBITION AND OATS

In the Legislature yesterday the principal speaker was the Commissioner of Agriculture, Hon. Murdoch McKinnon, who occupied the floor for an hour and a half, dealing for the most part with the criticisms levelled against the Government's educational policy, prohibition and the oats question. With reference to the first matter, he showed that Mr Lea had in his district no fewer than 269 home gardens, 18 of which were in his own school district. Me Lea was surprised to learn of this and wanted to know why the matter had not been brought to his attention before, seeing that he was one of the school trustees. The Commissioner said it was the duty of a school trustee to find out what was being done in the school under his control and he hoped there would not be a case in future in that House of a school trustee standing up and pleading ignorance of what was being done in his district.

Regarding prohibition he reminded the House that he had been a member of the Alliance for many years and had attended every meeting of the Alliance for the last ten years. He had assisted in drafting the Prohibition Act and had no serious difference with the majority of the members until a short time ago when he had been bitterly attacked by one or two individual members. Since then he had appealed to his constituents for their verdict on his attitude on the temperance question and had received their approval. If he had been defeated he would have said he had been wrong and those who had attacked him were right. Three of those who had attacked him also held public positions and what had become of them? All three were relieved of their charges and were now outside of the province. He went further and said that if one or two of the others who had been foremost in their attacks had held public office they too would have been relieved of their duties.

Concerning the oats scandal, Mr McKinnon made a vigorous attack upon the members of the Opposition who were also members of the Oats Committee and who had used the alleged scandal as a "trump card" against the Government. He showed that these gentlemen had voluntarily undertaken an Imperial and patriotic duty in connection with the war and not only had failed to carry out this duty, but had gone about the country circulating a scandal which, if it were true, reflected primarily upon themselves. But it was not true and they had never even taken the trouble to investigate and find out the facts for themselves. The Committee was in the same position as the members of the 105th Regiment. Both had voluntarily offered their services on behalf of their country in its time of need. What would they think of the members of the 105th if, when they went to the front, they turned round and behaved as the Opposition members of the Committee had done? They would be lined up against a wall and shot. The Committee had been appointed at a large and representative gathering from all parts of the province. It was for them individually and collectively to see that the work they had voluntarily undertaken was satisfactorily carried out. These members had gone through the country complaining that no report had been received from the Committee. Whose report? Their own report, and because they had not seen fit to so discharge the duties they had undertaken, to prepare and submit a report on the manner in which they carried out the work entrusted to them they had declared it was a scandal and a disgrace.

When generations in the future look back upon the history of the province they would not find a blacker page upon it than that which dealt with the actions of those members of the Opposition who had scandalized the province in the eyes of Canada and the Empire in regard to the loyal and freewill offering of our people, for which they themselves were responsible.

Interesting speeches were also made by Mr John McMillan, Mr John A. Dewar and Mr A. E. McLean, the last named speaker addreessing the House when the hour of adjournment was reached. The House meets again to-day at 10 a.m.

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GERMANY AND UNITED STATES

While Holland, one of the remaining neutral nations, is bristling up under repeated outrages against her commerce and her shipping by Germany, the United States is patiently awaiting Germany's reply to the enquiries concerning the submarine attack on the Sussex and the Englishman, on both of which there were American citizens, a number of whom were killed and others injured. What trumped up excuses as to "military necessity" Germany may put up this time will be of little consequence and even of little interest except so far as it will affect the relations between her and the United States.

As to any hope for better conduct on the part of Germany, any hope that she will keep her word, there is none and the United States Government knows it, as the whole world knows it, to-day. The spasm of submarine activity now on, and which has already cost not only the Allied nations but practically all neutral countries considerable loss in shipping, is a fair indication of Germany's purpose. It has been a matter of complaint, not only in England, but throughout the world, and especially in Canada and the United States, that shipping is scarce, that bottoms are not available to carry the freight offering. In this scarcity of ships Germany sees a possibility of starving hated England and her newspapers have bluntly told how she purposes taking advantage of it. Here is what a leading German newspaper, Nachrichten, recently said about it:

"England's pain is Germany's hour. The English admit that what occasions them the greatest concern just now is the lack of cargo space. In Australia, in Canada and in America they have feverishly bought up immense quantities of grain in the hope of being able to ship them at the earliest possible moment to the European island Empire. That the German Empire should take into account England's troubles the world can hardly expect. The weakest part of our greatest enemy is her want of cargo space, and foolish and suicidal indeed would be the fighter who failed to take advantage of the spot that his adversary has bared in the struggle, and did not deal just there his most formidable blow. At this moment, therefore, our arms shall be directed with the whole of their force against England's most vulnerable spot. The world has heard it from the mouth of the Imperial Chancellor that we will suffer no humiliation, and allow no means and no weapons to be denied us in the exercise of our defence. The hour has come for the most concentrated, most intensive assault on this leader of our foes. Our fleet shall see to it that this hour does not pass unutilized."

The "European Island Empire" receives much of its foodstuffs from the United States as well as from Canada, Australia, South America and elsewhere. To prevent this flow of food to England, Germany will stop at nothing, not even at the possibility of a rupture with the United States. Any promises she makes will be broken as readily as were those she has already made to the United States, and the credulous patience with which the United States has accepted her word after it had been broken over and over again has no doubt inspired the hope that she will still further submit to being hoodwinked. The expected reply to the United States Government has not yet arrived, although a "prompt reply" has been promised.

When it does come it will be absolutely valueless unless it is openly defiant. As to Germany's promises and pledges and undertakings the United States will not be deceived. What action she shall take is of course her own concern, but whatever it may be it will not be based on any assurances from Germany. American opinion of German promises is well expressed in a recent issue of the New York Herald as follows:—

"The attack upon the Sussex is the straw that breaks the camel's back. Whether Americans were killed, only wounded, or escaped unscathed, makes no difference. The attack was made deliberately by a German submarine, without warning. Pledge after pledge has been given to this government by Germany and broken; the illegality of such methods of warfare has been admitted and persisted in; under the latest phase of frightfulness the promise was made that no ship would be attacked, even if armed, unless resisting or attempting to escape, and violated. The retirement of High Admiral von Tirpitz was brought about as evidence that Germany had at last altered her tactics, but it was merely a sham. The German war machine has never entertained any intention of abandoning submarine attacks such as that on the Lusitania. It has believed that no matter what was done President Wilson was "safe and sound" on the peace question —that he would submit indefinitely to those outrages. It laughed us to scorn in the Lusitania affair. It proceeded to sink ships without visit or search, until the Arabic attack brought matters to a crisis. Then were made definite pledges. Definite pledges! The scene was transferred to the Mediterranean; the Ancona was sunk and Austria took the blame; the Persia was sunk, and both Germany and Austria dodged responsibility. Yet to this day there has been no final adjustment of any of these affairs, from the sinking of the Lusitania to the loss of the Persia. The case of the Ancona is still in the pigeonholes!"

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PRACTICAL EDUCATION

The United States has set many a good example in education and one of the best and most practical has just been set by the School Board of Kosciusko County, Indiana. Every girl who graduates from the common schools of this county this year must make her own commencement dress. To quote from the regulations: "The dress must be of white cotton goods and must not cost more than $5.50."

The commencement exercises in most schools are usually very elaborate affairs. Commencement dresses, of a pattern usually set by those who can afford them, are as elaborate as the exercises, and the mischief begins where those—and they are the great majority—who cannot afford them are obliged to provide them or be ostracized. This consideration no doubt influenced the Kosciusko Board of Education to make a ruling which was at once practical and economical. That the ability to make her own dresses is as valuable an education to a girl as is the mastery of a pretty considerable section of the ordinary school curriculum will be admitted by most people; that the training in economy implied in placing a limit on the expenditure for a dress is equally admissable.

A little more of the practical added to the very considerable amount of theory taught in our schools would be a very decided advantage to our young people and it is gratifying to know that the practical is receiving very much more attention in the schools of our our province. We have not yet added the household sciences to the curriculum in our schools, but we have good reason to hope that it is not far off and that before long we shall be on an equality in this respect with our cousins to the south.

ANOTHER EXPOSURE OF LIBERAL INCONSISTENCY

(Continued from page two.)

that duty and they should not have consented to act unless they had been prepared to discharge the duties faithfully and well. They had not done so, but on the other hand they had charged scandalous mismanagement against a sub-committee to which they had delegated specific duties, and had never even taken the trouble to find out whether there was any truth in the scandalous reports they were circulating. What were the facts? Every colony and dependency of the Crown had been offering freewill offerings to the Mother Country as a token of goodwill and loyalty—not so much for their intrinsic value but to show the friendly relationship that existed between them, and these had had their effect on Germany and on the other powers concerned. The Government decided to offer 100,000 bushels of oats, which was as useful and representative a gift as they could offer. It had been suggested that the cost of this should be defrayed by imposing a small tax, but it was felt that if they imposed a tax it would deprive the gift of the merit of being a freewill offering. The Government decided to call a public meeting representative of the whole province, and it was held, being largely attended. At that meeting it was decided the people should be asked voluntarily to contribute that gift. That was the unanimous decision, and a large committee was appointed to carry out the project. On that committee were Mr Hughes, Mr Gallant, Mr McDonald, Mr A. E. McLean and others—men who undertook to do this work on behalf of the province and of the Empire. If this committee had done anything wrong, if there had been any wrongdoing, in carrying out this matter, then the committee of which these gentlemen were members were to blame. Yet these very gentlemen were the poeple who spread scandalous reports about the work of the committee, and who clamoured for a report which they should have prepared and handed in! They had voluntarily undertaken the work, and if they had no intention of carrying through the work, they should have resigned in favour of others who were prepared to do something for the province and for the Empire at this critical juncture in their history.

Mr HUGHES: Excuse me interrupting, but it was the sub-committee, not the general committee that was responsible for shipping the oats.

Mr McKINNON: Here is a member of the committee disclaiming having anything to do with the work. To say the sub-committee of three was responsible was no defence, as it was the general committee of which they were members who delegated the duties to these three gentlemen. But not only did they delegate the duty, they defined and specified the terms under which the sub-committee was to carry on its work, mentioned the firms they were to apply to for assistance, and distinctly laid it down that they were to appeal to the large committee for any assistance they required. These were the conditions under which the committee of which Mr Hughes and Mr Gallant were members delegated the duties of shipping the oats to their sub-committee. How did they act when charges of irregularity were launched against their sub-committee? Did they make personal inquiries to find out the truth of the allegations? Did they call upon the sub-committee for a report? Did they ever go down to the wharf to see the oats for themselves? Did they do anything to discharge the duties which they voluntarily undertook on behalf of the province and the Empire? Let them answer now! (There was no response.) When the Patriot newspaper published the scandalous allegations against the sub-committee for whose appointment they were responsible, did these two gentlemen deny them? Did they circulate them—circulate them against their own reputations as responsible men who undertook a public, patriotic duty? Let the two hon. members answer. One of them lives within five minutes walk of the wharf where the oats were alleged to be lying rotting. Did he ever take the trouble to go down and investigate for himself? These members were assigned by their fellow-citizens to do certain important work on behalf of the Empire in this great war. They had another commttee assigned to do another important duty on behalf of the Empire; it was called the 105th Regiment. Both were volunteer bodies; both had undertaken voluntarily to discharge important patriotic duties. What would they think of the members of the 105th, if when they went to the front, they turned round and criticized part of their own organization, refused to discharge the duties they had voluntarily undertaken and went about spreadng scandal against their own regiment? He would tell them what would happen. Every member who did anything of the kind would be lined up against a wall and shot. (Applause.) Yet that was exactly what these hon. members who were also members of the Opposition had been doing. When a future generation looks back upon the history of the province and reads how these men not only failed to discharge the patriotic duty they had volunteered for, but went about the country scandalizing their own committee in the face of Canada and the Empire, he could assure them that they would not find a blacker page in history.

Mr JOHN McMILLAN said that he was one of those who had used the oats scandal in the course of the campaign, and he thought that the Government had made a mistake in not imposing a light tax instead of taking voluntary contributions. At first he favoured voluntary contributions, but he now saw his mistake. Many people who ought to have contributed had not done so, while others from whom little should have been expected had done handsomely. In his own district a farmer whose farm was mortgaged had given 15 bushels, while the wealthy man who held the mortgage had given nothng. Proceeding to discuss agriculture, he admitted the Government had done something for the farmers, but nothing in comparison with what had been done previously. The school system, in his opinion, was just as satisfactory under the Liberals as it was now. He did not know if school gardens were of much value. Under the Liberals a professor in Prince of Wales College undertook to show by a model garden how to cultivate the soil, but when he visited the garden he found it full of weeds nine feet high. He did not know whether the garden was still in existence, but that was the condition in whch he found it when last he visited ti.

Mr JOHN DEWAR delivered an eloquent address on the war and the part which the dominions are playing in it, and proceeded to review the varous clauses in the Governors' speech. He believed in every boy and girl obtaining a good education, but success in life did not always depend upon the educational facilities provided. Hundreds of men were bigger than their school and success in life was due more to the character and fibre of the individual rather than of the kind of school he attended. He believed in giving boys all the advantages it was possible or practicable, and by all means let him study nature. But there was no use trying to make a boy stay on a farm if he did not want to do so. Referring to the roads, he said, speaking without bias, everyone must admit that the system of the present Government had proved a great success and he instanced his experience in his own district in proof of it. He deprecated the charge which had been made against the Commissioner of Public Works and the Clerk, Mr McMillan. If the latter had made a mistake it merely showed the fallibility of the best of officials, for he could honestly say he did not wish to find a more efficient, obliging and painstaking official, and everything that a public official should be than Mr McMillan. Dealing with agriculture, Mr Dewar agreed that dairy-'arming was the best line for this province, and thought the Agricultural Department should do something more towards assisting the factories in paying the inspector without expecting that the management of these factories should be centred in an official of the Department.

Mr McKINNON said so far as he was aware there was no such intention on the part of the Government, and he for one would be opposed to it. He thought the Association should retain the management of the factories.

Mr DEWAR said he was pleased to learn that, as he understood that it had been proposed to place the control of the factories in the hands of an official of the Government. He went on to show the great advantage of farmers producing the finished article in dairy produce instead of selling the raw material, and proved from the reports of the inspector that with few exceptions all the factories in the Dairy Association were doing excellent work. Referring to the automobile question, he said that he would not say that those who favoured them were wrong any more than he would admit that those who opposed them were wrong. They all had their opinions upon the subject and were entitled to hold them. He pointed out that in the old country automobiles had been included among the luxuries and if that were so surely they could rattle away here with their carriages. They had had an excellent speech from Mr McEwen on economy and thrift, and here was an opportunity of automobilists to follow the example of the Old Country and economize in the use of automobiles during the war. In conclusion Mr Dewar made reference to the cases of "soap" which had been sent to Cardigan, and—assured the House that in all the elections he had fought he had never used, nor had occasion to use, one bottle of liquor to secure his return. (Applause.)

Mr A. E. McLEAN followed, supported Mr Dewar's views on dairy-farming, and hoped the Government would see its way to give some assistance in defraying the expenses of working the Dairy Association. He agreed that the schools were doing good work as a whole, but quoted from inspectors reports to show there were exceptions now just as there were under the Liberal Government. Mr McLean was still speaking, when six o'clock struck, and the debate was adjourned till this morning at ten o'clock.

DAILY SELECTIONS FOR GUARDIAN READERS

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THE NEED OF MEN.

It is a mistake to make rest and comfort the sole ends of life.

We need rest, I know, and comfort too, but we must not think too much of them.

This is a world of storms, and the vessels need to be built strongly.

I saw the Fram, Nansen's boat, at Bergen, just before its illustrious voyage.

It was neither beautiful nor grand, and there was no delicate furniture.

Made of Italian and German oak, everything was massive, everything strong—the boat was made for the ice and the storm.

I do not know where our discoveries and liberties, political and religious would have been had there been no men like that boat—built for bad weather.

They were not always lovely and not always beautiful; some of them would have been exceedingly awkward in a fashionable drawing-room, but they were strong, heroic, conquering men.

Thank God whenever he has had a great cause that needed strong advocacy, He has provided strong men for the work.

He has made them storm-proof, stone-proof, stake-proof, scorn-proof, lion-proof, as required. It was by such men our heritage was won.—T. Rhondda Williams.

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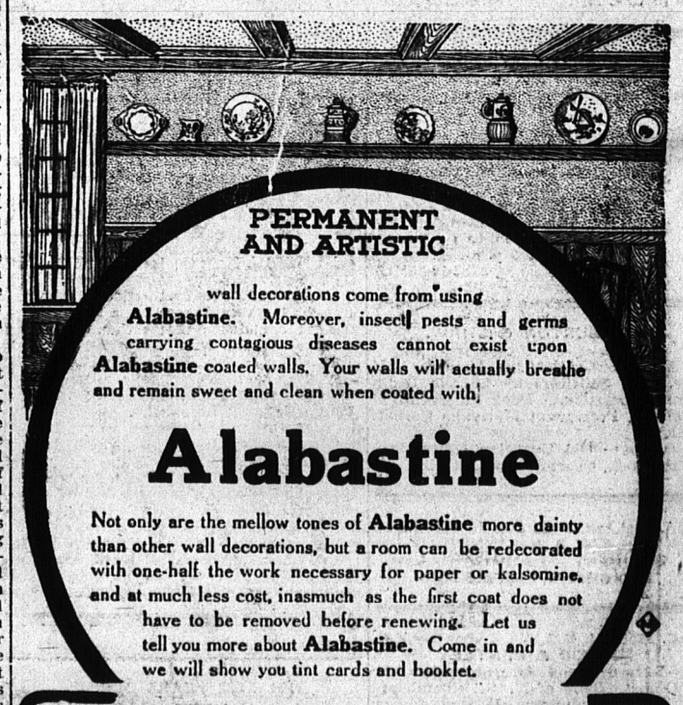

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