

Josh Billings

once said: "I have seen several articles on milk, I have read some facts written on milk, but the best thing I ever saw on milk was cream."

If cheerful Josh B. were alive today and he saw the well-dressed men leaving our store, he would say:

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POTATO ENQUIRY ENDED SATURDAY AFTERNOON; HON. J. B. M. BAXTER ON STAND TESTIFIES IN REGARD TO LOAN OF \$40,000 TO MR. TENNANT

Let Him Have the Money on the Understanding That It Was Only for a Few Days to Tide Him Over a Business Difficulty—\$20,000 of the Amount Has Been Repaid by Mr. Tennant—Mr. Baxter Knew Nothing of the Potato Transaction Until Long After It Was Over and Then He Counselled Telling the People the Facts.

The closing session of the potato enquiry was held Saturday afternoon before Commissioner James McQueen. The evidence is all in, the argument of counsel has been heard and now the public will await the findings of the commissioner. The only witness examined on Saturday was Hon. J. B. M. Baxter, who took the stand in his own defence and told freely and frankly all he knew in connection with the potato enquiry and the contribution of Mr. Tennant to the fund of \$40,000 for the Nova Scotia Construction Company.

Mr. Baxter's evidence refuted generally the insinuation—that he had anything to do with either transaction. Mr. Baxter also made it clear and produced documentary evidence to support his statement, that he loaned to Mr. Tennant \$40,000, not \$30,000, and this amount had been repaid by Mr. Tennant on the plea that his credit was impaired at the bank and he needed it to tide him over a difficulty for a few days.

Mr. Hughes in his review of the evidence contended that the enquiry had been justified and had resulted in uncovering a lot of political wrong doing. He said that the main part of his argument was that a false return had been made to the auditor-general. He admitted the money had been received but claimed because it was credited to the men to whom the potatoes were sold in the first place, a party, out of the \$100,000 received by him from the Nova Scotia Construction Company.

Mr. Powell in his address freely admitted that the potato enquiry had not been from the parties it was credited to but contended that as the province had not lost any money by the transaction it was not such a serious offence after all. Commissioner McQueen called the court to order at half past two and Hon. J. B. M. Baxter took the stand.

Hon. J. B. M. Baxter. Mr. Baxter said he had been a member of the legislature from December, 1911, and was still one. He had been attorney-general of the province from December 17, 1914, to the present moment went out of office. He was not a member of the government during the time of the buying and shipping of the potatoes. He said that he had had the house and as such knew nothing of the details of the transaction.

Witness said he had given or loaned \$30,000 to Mr. Daggert as his recollection of this transaction was that it was to be applied to Cuba. He understood that something had gone wrong and a loan sustained which was important to keep quiet, but he had paid very little attention to the details at the time. He understood Mr. Daggert to say that some man would be ruined unless this loan was made up. Witness thought at that time that the \$30,000 represented the entire potato, less and he had let Mr. Daggert buy the money without any security of which he was not getting it back. He said that he had no recollection of the potato transaction being the night he was sworn in as a member of the executive and at that time there was some talk of the difficulty in getting tonnage to Great Britain and it was suggested that the surplus be sent to Cuba. He said that he was not at every meeting of the cabinet from that time until the government went out of office and so far as he could recall there had been no further mention of this matter.

Some time later he had learned from the late Premier Clarke that did not know the exact amount of the loan but placed between \$30,000 and \$40,000. Mr. Clarke stated the situation was serious and asked witness what he thought ought to be done. To this witness replied that with all the trouble the government had fallen heir to this might prove the last straw which would break their political backs, but he thought that it was to come out with a frank statement of the facts and let the people know just what had happened. At that time Mr. Clarke had agreed with the witness but later had changed his mind.

To witness knew nothing of the influence which kept Mr. Clarke from taking the public into his confidence and so far as he could remember the matter had never been discussed between them again.

Mr. Hughes then questioned witness about his political relations with W. B. Tennant. Mr. Baxter said that Mr. Tennant had never acted as his agent in the country, but had worked in his interests. He had never given Mr. Tennant any money to spend and if Mr. Tennant had put up any money in any of his campaigns he (witness) did not know it and had always been under the impression that he had paid the campaign expenses himself.

In regard to Mr. Tennant's connection with the Valley Railway and his contribution to campaign funds Mr. Tennant had told him about the same as he (Tennant) had told at the enquiry. Mr. Tennant had always claimed to have put up \$51,000. In regard to the statement of Mr. Tennant that he had told everyone in sight that he would not give evidence at the Stevens' enquiry unless this amount was put back in his business, witness said he must have been out of sight for he had never heard the remark until Mr. Tennant had made it on the stand. Mr. Hughes then took up the loan to Mr. Tennant and witness said he had let Mr. Tennant have \$40,000 in cash about June 17 or 18, 1917. Of this amount Mr. Tennant had paid back \$20,000 and \$20,000 was still unpaid. Mr. Tennant had come to him and stated that owing to his financial condition his credit had been impaired at the banks and he needed this amount of money for a few days to tide him

over a difficulty. Witness told him that if he wanted the money for trading on the margin he did not like letting him have it but was assured it was not for that purpose and he gave him his cheque for \$5,000, and raised \$35,000 on securities making a total of \$40,000, which he loaned Mr. Tennant. In the raising of this amount Mr. Tennant had not one cent of his own money.

On November 10, 1917, Mr. Tennant had paid \$30,000 and witness had paid the bank the balance himself. He had not taken any note from Mr. Tennant but had an acknowledgement from him of the indebtedness dated June 18, 1917.

Mr. Tennant had come to him and said it was impossible to repay the money and witness had to sign an order after witness learned of the audit of Mr. Tennant's books he had come to the conclusion that the money had been borrowed to cover up the payment made to campaign funds.

Witness was asked if he knew what Mr. Tennant meant when he said that Mr. Baxter and Mr. Jones knew better than to ask for a repayment of the money borrowed and replied that he did not and was not aware of any reason why his \$30,000 should not be repaid. He was not aware until after he had made his loan to Mr. Tennant that Mr. Tennant was getting a loan from Mr. Jones as well.

Witness knew that Mr. Tennant had always claimed to be a partner in the Nova Scotia Construction Company but could not remember that he had ever told to Tennant that he got \$100,000 in advance. He never done anything to get the contract for Mr. Tennant.

He had made a loan to H. Cobly Smith of \$1,200, but this had not been connected with the potato matter. Witness had tried to find out who was responsible for the potato transaction but had not been able to do so as no two stories agreed. He thought it was unfortunate that Mr. Daggert had given the letter of credit to Mr. B. J. Smith and felt sure that if Hon. A. Murray had not been so busy with the lands and mines at that time things would have come out all right.

The knowledge of the letter of credit had come to him long after the transaction had taken place and he was inclined to think it was the foundation of the trouble.

Witness could not say when he first learned of the payment of \$61,000. He could not say the money borrowed from Mr. Jones and himself was used for the purpose of misapplying the money to the potato matter. He was an auditor at the Stevens enquiry although it might be open to that inference and he would not like to say the report was founded on perjured evidence.

He did not remember discussing the Stevens report in the House because he thought it showed very plainly that the cost of the railway was not excessive and whatever contributions were made would be repaid. He said that he was not a member of the government when the money was sworn in as a member of the executive and at that time there was some talk of the difficulty in getting tonnage to Great Britain and it was suggested that the surplus be sent to Cuba. He said that he was not at every meeting of the cabinet from that time until the government went out of office and so far as he could recall there had been no further mention of this matter.

Mr. Hughes, counsel for the government then addressed the commissioner. He said it had been a hard matter to get at the facts in many instances, but for many of the necessary documents were missing and some had been falsified but he was sure enough had been brought out to justify the enquiry and to show that there had been wrong doing on the part of the government, who had charge of the potato shipments, and some of the parties who gave testimony had been guilty of perjury, either at this enquiry or the Stevens enquiry.

He contended that the government should when they found themselves with a large surplus of potatoes on hand, throw them back on the hands of the shippers, then to have kept them and tried to dispose of them on their own account. When the potatoes had gone bad they had made up a false return and sent to the auditor-general and this he contended was an indictable offence. As a result of the shipments to Cuba the government found itself facing a serious loss and this had been made up by a corrupt bargain between the premier of the province and the contractor for the Valley railway.

H. A. Powell, K. C. In his address Mr. Powell said: Although this investigation has taken a wide range and a great deal of time has been consumed in the examination of witnesses, it is not my purpose to go into a minute examination of the testimony of the numerous points to which the attention of the commissioner has been called. It is only necessary to discuss the salient ones as there are only two or three features of the case which are of sufficient importance for public consideration.

Our province is small, its population sparse, its wealth limited; our resources, however, left as the glorious inheritance of a good name; but since the Northumberland road our province has justly or unjustly been a by-word among our sister provinces for political crookedness, graft and dishonesty. There is an old rub in surgical science: "Where there is pus evacuate it." This rule, according to the great body of enlightened popular opinion in the province should be vigorously applied to our body politic.

Rumors and whispers have been current for some time that there has been wrong doing in connection with the construction of the portion of the Valley Railway between Gasquetown and Westfield. The construction of potatoes for donation to Great Britain and Belgium. No right thinking man will say that the government is justified in investigating these rumors and suspicions. In fact public opinion in the province regards it as the duty of the government to conduct such an examination and bring to light any wrong doing that may have existed. The interests of the public men whose names have been associated with these rumors and suspicions also demand the fullest investigation into them. The remarks that I shall make, therefore, I do not wish to be understood as intended to be in any way offensive to any man, high or low, who may have been engaged in pilfering the public treasury whether his acts come within the scope of this investigation or not. In the administration of provincial affairs the line of demarcation between right and wrong is somewhat sharply and clearly drawn, and every one in the execution of a public trust should conduct himself so that there would be no reasonable doubt as to the purity of his motives or the integrity of his conduct.

To come immediately to the object of this investigation, the pockets of Mr. Tennant received from the Nova Scotia Construction Company which received the contract for the construction of the Valley Railway, among other amounts, \$100,000 in advance. It is difficult to let the public know the details of the transaction, and the ostensible object of the investigation is to determine what disposition was made of this money. It is not my purpose to discuss the members of the Clarke government, or of its supporters in the House. The subject must be clearly grasped. It is not my duty to investigate the facts and circumstances under which Mr. Tennant obtained the money that he received from the holders of previous investigations. Whether, incidentally or as a primary object, however, these facts and circumstances have been investigated to a certain extent, I will not say unnecessarily, by the present commissioner. Connected with the disposition of this money have come to the front the names of Mr. Tennant, Mr. Sunner, Mr. Clarke, Mr. Daggert, Mr. George Jones, a member of the legislature.

There has been so much evidence given piecemeal, and so much newspaper comment, much of it a by-product of the public interest, that I have been misled as to the nature of the investigation, and the nature of the charge implied. Public attention has been attracted to the purchase of an excessive amount of potatoes, to the claims that were made against Mr. Clark, to the charges against Mr. Daggert, and to the attempts to take over the ships to the West Indies, and the attempts to cover up these losses; to the alleged misapplication of the money to the potato matter of A. C. Smith & Co., and the Department of Agriculture; to the claims for \$51,000 to political funds, which was distributed to the Premier and his cabinet; to the Westmorland; in Canada, the campaign to make good the loss on the shipments of potatoes to the West Indies, and to the attempts to make good the loss on the shipments of potatoes to the West Indies, and to the attempts to make good the loss on the shipments of potatoes to the West Indies.

Heaven. If rigid principles were applied to the politicians of America, there would, with the exception of a few exponents of Puritan idealism, be scarcely a man left in any legislative assembly or cabinet in the Pacific, or the Gulf of Mexico to the North Pole.

But they will say, "It is the law." If the transaction, however, falls within the second class, conscience could not be so easily put to rest. Mr. Clark, if he had not adopted this view, I like many other men in public life, he vacillated in his view, hesitating to adopt a course of earnestness in carrying out his decision when arrived at, and was too much inclined to act on his own view independently of the advice of his colleagues, but he was a man characterized by clear thought, large views and a high sense of duty.

So far as the second class, conscience could not be so easily put to rest. Mr. Clark, if he had not adopted this view, I like many other men in public life, he vacillated in his view, hesitating to adopt a course of earnestness in carrying out his decision when arrived at, and was too much inclined to act on his own view independently of the advice of his colleagues, but he was a man characterized by clear thought, large views and a high sense of duty.

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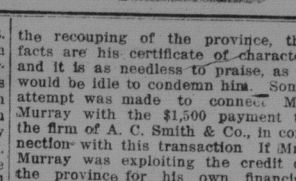
After a Trial

Consumers are possessed with a faith and enthusiasm entirely lacking before the quality was actually demonstrated.



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actions in the surplus of potatoes. Judged by standards of absolute truth and sincerity, the course of Mr. Murray would be generally regarded as the course of a man who was not of the course of Mr. Smith. If Mr. Murray is judged by the standards of a conventional standard of morality, it will be found quite equal to that of politicians in Canada almost universally.

The public will be more interested in this fact, that after all the light that has been thrown upon this transaction by the calling and re-calling again and again of witnesses, one thing stands out clearly and distinctly, that whatever lack of business judgment was displayed by the Government in respect to this potato transaction, the province did not lose a solitary cent by it. It may be said that the province was only getting its own money back when Mr. Tennant contributed this \$30,000 odd to liquidate the deficit on the potato transaction.

This is a matter which depends upon the real understanding on which the contract was let to the Nova Scotia Construction Company. As I have said Mr. Tennant and Mr. Clark alone are responsible for such an understanding, if there was one. And through the potato transaction, at least about \$30,000 was returned to the public treasury and the evil, if any there was, was remedied to at least this extent.

The Honorable Mr. Murray, who is particularly my client, has I am pleased to be able to say, passed through this enquiry without the slightest suspicion of any taint of corruption resting upon him. With a large portion of the political work of the province, he was in poor health, devolving upon him, with the care of two departments on his shoulders—the departments of lands and mines and agriculture. He left the work connected with the potato transaction largely in the hands of Mr. Daggert, and when the loss occurred, he suggested, or was anxious that the loss should be made up by the province, as assented to by Mr. Clarke's suggestion, which should be met out of the party funds. If this is all, and it appears to be all that can be said about Mr. Murray's connection with

the recouping of the province, the facts are his certificate of character and it is as needless to praise as it would be idle to condemn him. Some attempt was made to connect Mr. Murray with the \$15,000 payment to the firm of A. C. Smith & Co. in connection with this transaction. If Mr. Murray was exploiting the province for his own financial ends, his action would be extremely reasonable, but the case, if it was contemplated to make cases a law, Mr. Murray in connection with this \$15,000 transaction, absolutely broke down. This was a matter of pure personal accommodation between Mr. Murray and the firm of A. C. Smith & Co., which was no way connected with the potato transaction. The most that can be said in criticism of him in connection with this \$15,000 transaction (and it must be admitted that the criticism is proper), is that it was very indiscreet in him to receive favors from a party with whom his department was dealing. This indiscretion, however, is a long way removed from fraud or corruption and is one which many a man commends whose conscience is unpurged as the radiance of heaven.

Mr. Hughes has assumed Mr. Murray in most violent language for being a party to, or assisting in, the preparation of the statement I have referred to compiled by Mr. Daggert. Mr. Murray need blush but little over this matter. The province profited by the transaction and no one was injured by it. But reprehensible as I deliver my verdict, I afterwards made to make political capital, would twist and distort the facts of this transaction so as to bring down a well earned reputation for honesty and integrity. An attempt was made to show that Mr. Frank Smith, member for Charlottetown, unjustly profited by the sale of potatoes. Mr. Daggert, as I have said, claimed from him between two and three thousand dollars, and Mr. Smith's answer in this respect, as potatoes frequently do, deteriorated. I am not accountable for the deterioration of the claim Mr. Daggert made against me." (Continued on page 4)

THE WEATHER.

Toronto, Ont., Dec. 29.—Since Saturday morning an important disturbance has passed northward over Nova Scotia, accompanied by rain and snow, and in the western provinces the weather turned colder. In Ontario and Quebec it has been mostly fair and moderately cold.

Table with 2 columns: Location, Temperature (Min. Max.)

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Prince Rupert ... 29 34
Victoria ... 26 44
Vancouver ... 22 40
Calgary ... 8 20
Quebec ... 4 14
Moose Jaw ... 12 18
Winnipeg ... 2 12
Port Arthur ... 12 23
Toronto ... 10 20
Kingston ... 4 18
Ottawa ... 0 18
Montreal ... 8 16
Halifax ... 26 30
Forecasts—Maritime—Moderate to fresh northwest winds, fair and colder.

International Court To Try Hohenzollerns

Had our soldiers been ordered to invade Belgium they would have died. We do not thirst for blood. What we wanted was victory and we have got it. And Germany has got it in the neck. What we want now is justice. We must not forget that our allies have suffered far more than we have.

TO LEAVE SPAIN

Madrid, Dec. 28.—(Havas Agency)—Negotiations concerning the departure from Spain of the German Ambassador and his staff have been concluded. Prince Von Ratibor, the ambassador, and his assistants will leave Madrid on January 9th.

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IMPERIA O GIRLS, GIRLS! Don't Miss This Rare Treat

Piquant and Pretty MADGE KENNEDY In the Delicious Goldwyn Comedy "FRIEND HUSBAND"

She Hated Men and Matrimony But Paid a Stalwart Chap \$5,000 To Marry Her SHE THOUGHT SHE KNEW IT ALL, BUT—

Lyons-Moran Comedy Mutt and Jeff The New Brand of Fun In Their Latest Scheme

MORE VIEWS OF GERMANY'S DOWNFALL FRI. Sweet Little Viola Dana in a Heart Story of the Country

UNIQUE A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL LYRIC

Repeated Today By Special Request LYRIC MUSICAL STOCK CO. COLLEGE DAYS

Mildred Harris, Now Mrs. Charlie Chaplin In Lois Weber's Most Talked of Production

THE PRICE OF A GOOD TIME A Play of Irresistible Appeal Put everything else aside until you have seen this feature of features!

NOTICE—On Wednesday (New Year's Matinee) at 2.15, 3.30, Evening 7.20 and 9.00.

IMPERIAL JAN. 1ST

New Year's Mat. and Night ALSO THUR. EVE. JAN. 2

3—Great Performances—3 The World's Most Famous Entertainer

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SEAT SALE NOW ON! All Downstairs Floor \$2.00 2 Front Rows Balcony 2.00 2 Front Rows Rear Balcony 1.00 Remainder Rear Balcony75 Box Reservations 2.50

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