

Monetary Times

Trade Review and Insurance Chronicle
of Canada

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CANADA'S WAR MINISTER

Sir Robert Borden, as premier, should insist that Major-General Sam Hughes as minister of militia should cease his irresponsible chatter. If that is impossible, the minister of militia should be asked to resign, and resign. When the talkative minister attended the directors' luncheon at the National Exhibition, Toronto, in September, he addressed probably a hundred newspaper men. Tactfully, they gave his utterances scant notice in their journals afterwards. One remark then was that he had heard that German-Americans from Buffalo might invade Canada. "Let 'em come," said the minister. "We have 10,000 men here who will trim them to a finish." At a public meeting in London, Ont., last week, the minister is reported to have said: "My critics will stop their yelping as a puppy dog chasing an express train gives up its job as a useless task," adding that the engineer did not stop to throw stones, and promising himself some day to stop and "shy a rock." Interviewed by Toronto reporters later, the minister is reported as saying: "Shut up! that is about all I want on that. . . . I warned you to shut up about that. Shut up! don't try to explain." His public reprimand of Major-General Lessard at Toronto was also inexcusable.

Major-General Sam Hughes is supposed to represent in the cabinet the people of Canada. But he does not represent them, because there is not a citizen, except partisan-blinded politicians, who approves of the minister talking in this undignified way. Sir Robert Borden, Sir George Foster, Hon. W. T. White, and other ministers have a high and proper appreciation of the dignity of cabinet office in the Dominion. They appreciate also the gravity of the times. Major-General Sam Hughes may be a military genius, but he seems to lack entirely any conception of the dignity of his position. Instead of creating confidence with a quiet and business-like manner, he acts as a disturbing firecracker. The way to repair matters is for the minister of militia to stop talking as do some spoiled eight-year-old schoolboys.

The alternative is to appoint a war minister for Canada who is not too proud or too clever to emulate the ways of the war minister for Great Britain.

If we are confident, the inevitable stays; if we grouch, it stays.

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In the midst of your comforts, remember the starving, homeless Belgians.

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Keep up courage and confidence. It's hard work swimming against the stream, but the tide will turn.

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Mexico may have four presidents. That would look like a strong Dominion cabinet in good working order.

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We might sympathize with your complaints about business and finance and the situation, as being well grounded, if you lived in Berlin, Germany.

CANADA'S BANK FAILURES

Those who are inclined to exaggerate the indiscretions of Canadian banks may be reminded that in a period of from twelve to fifteen years, the percentage of total losses involved in Canadian bank failures is 14 cents on \$100. An examination of Canada's record elicits a satisfactory result, especially in view of the fact that the country is young and has been passing through strenuous development stages. Eleven Canadian banks have failed since Confederation. Here is a statement, compiled by Sir Edmund Walker, which shows the total loss to depositors has been about \$6,000,000:

1. Total assets of Canadian banks which have failed since Confederation\$ 77,780,419
2. Total assets of Canadian banks as on December 31, 1912 1,526,081,158
3. Total liabilities to the public of Canadian banks on December 31, 1912 1,292,451,137
4. Total losses by creditors from bank failures since Confederation 6,090,357
5. Total losses by creditors through failures of banks which could have been organized under the present Bank Act.. 2,176,966

These losses were sustained by four banks as follows: Exchange Bank, \$574,587; Central Bank, \$7,083; St. Jean Bank, \$296,988; Farmers' Bank, \$1,298,308.

The Farmers' Bank catastrophe represents more than one-half of all the losses by all the banks that have failed in Canada since Confederation which could have been created under the present Bank Act. To return to the table:

6. Percentage of "total assets of failed banks since Confederation" to "total assets of all banks on December 31, 1912" (and I submit that is the correct way to judge the matter)..... 5.09%
7. Percentage of "total losses by creditors" of failed banks to