

*Tributes to Deceased Members*

incorporated in the minutes of the meeting, and the extending of that minute on the record of the day's proceedings was the basis upon which subsequent action was taken by the British government to remove the embargo.

It will be within the memory of the house, Mr. Speaker, that the government in England was loath to permit our cattle to enter that country. The Minister of Agriculture, afterwards Lord Ernle, took a very strong view against us. I recall the debates in the House of Lords at that time. It was upon the investigation of the matter by a small commission, of which the late Lord Finlay was a member, that Doctor Tolmie rendered such conspicuous service to this country. As a veterinary surgeon he had special and expert knowledge. When he had concluded dealing with the matter it was the judgment of Lord Finlay and those associated with him on that commission that nothing more remained to be said. By these two distinctive services that he rendered to our country Doctor Tolmie has placed us under a debt and obligation that will not soon be forgotten.

He had no desire for the limelight of public life. The Prime Minister has very properly remarked upon his modesty in that regard. He became head of his party in British Columbia and subsequently premier of that province, but it was with a reluctance that was amazing. As he frequently said to me, he felt he would be happier in the discharge of the duties that he was so eminently qualified to discharge as Minister of Agriculture. I think he was happier in Ottawa than in any other part of the world. He was at his happiest at the University club, surrounded by his friends.

Doctor Tolmie will be greatly missed in that part of Canada in which he lived. He will be greatly missed by those who knew him as I was privileged to know him, by those who understood something of his fine qualities of heart and mind. His generous, open-hearted attitude toward life and material things made it impossible for him to accumulate anything during his lifetime. One might almost say of him, as was said of Pitt, that he lived without ostentation, and he died poor.

I wonder if members of this chamber realize how difficult it is for me to speak at any length or adequately of the Right Hon. Sir George Perley. I knew him as a member of parliament, as chief whip of his party, as a minister of the crown, as high commissioner, and as a colleague. An English writer said not long ago that it is very difficult to analyze the qualities that go into the making

[Mr. Bennett.]

of a character. Sir George Perley inherited an instinct for business and for public service. He manifested his tendencies for business by actively entering upon the discharge of the duties that fell upon him on the death of his father, in connection with the properties that he inherited. His love for public service he manifested by offering himself for election, facing defeat on two occasions, and ultimately being returned seven times by a Quebec constituency while he himself was a resident of Ontario. Reviewing many statements that he made to me from time to time with respect to his own life, I think perhaps he found more satisfaction than in anything else in the thought that he had the confidence and support of the electors of a Quebec county while he himself resided in Ontario.

The combination of qualities that distinguished the Right Hon. Sir George Perley is not often met with in ordinary life. It is not a common thing to find a man of affairs, a man of very high attainments in the business world, willing and ready to give such service as he gave to the state. The distinctive attribute in the discharge of his public duties was thoroughness. I have seen him acting as minister for almost every department of the public service, and the thoroughness and method with which he carried out his duties were so commendable and so complete that I sometimes wish that every member of government had had an opportunity to study his approach to public business. He regarded the public purse as one would regard a private purse; he regarded public business as he would regard his personal business; and he brought to bear on the problems he had to meet in the discharge of public business the same consideration that he would have given to them had they been purely a private affair. Obviously that is not and never has been in Canada the most popular method of approach, but Sir George Perley insisted upon its being followed in his dealings with the various departments that he administered.

It is, of course, well known that when Sir Robert Borden formed his administration in 1911 he desired Sir George Perley to accept office as head of a department. That, at the moment, he was unwilling to do, and so he became minister without portfolio; but I know that at one time he was acting minister for five, if not seven, departments. His capacity for work was amazing—simply amazing. Those of my colleagues who recall him as Acting Prime Minister have some appreciation of his capacity for toil, for sustained hard work, for thoroughness and patience in the discharge of his parliamentary and public duties.