

the Davies concern, Sir Joseph Flavelle and the Harris company.

Analogous instances exist in the case of other foodstuffs. The flour combine has the country by the throat but the government refuses to move a hand to relieve the people from the extortions of this trust and its ramifications. The simple fact is that the administration which has so long mismanaged the affairs of the Dominion is relying solely upon the patriotic cry, the disfranchising of thousands of loyal electors and the passage of class legislation in favor of such aggregations as the Canadian Northern Railway, and its allied connections, for a return to power and the opportunity of further plundering the tax burdened treasury of the Dominion. There is no pretence at a defence of the outrageous measures which violated every principle of British justice and which committed the people of this country to come to the financial rescue of Messrs. Mackenzie and Mann, and the financial interest behind them, in the dying weeks of the final session of parliament. These things cannot be defended. But the hope of the government is to obscure the issue, to accuse the Liberals of disloyalty, to hypnotize the public into forgetfulness of the scandals of the militia department and the equipping of our troops with shoddy boots, defective rifles and other faulty and useless impedimenta. It is hoped to drown all these facts in a whirlwind of forced and hypocritical patriotism, in a campaign of abuse and slander against the Liberals, and, in a grand climax of rhetorical press and platform fireworks, to sweep the voters off their feet in a hysteria similar to that which characterized the election of 1911.

It is this tendency that the common sense of the electors should guard against. The plan succeeded once, but the Tory party had behind it at that time no such damning record as it has since established, and the effort to out do the success of the last general election will be even more desperate. The Liberals throughout the country should be forewarned. The real issues should be kept before the people—the railway deals with Mackenzie and Mann, and with Forget; the profiteering of the trusts; the treachery of government protected profiteers against the lives and safety of our boys in the trenches; the criminality of an administration that sent Canada's sons against the bloodthirsty Hun armed with defective rifles that refused to work, and left them victims of German efficiency and savagery on the bloody soil of Flanders; the scandalous neglect of the dependents of soldiers at the front and the refusal of the administration to interfere with the unholy profits of the great trusts now fattening on the agony of the nation. These are the vital issues, because they reveal the true character of the administration which will appeal to the voters for a renewal of confidence on the plea of patriotism and on accusations of disloyalty against the Liberal party.

#### SHUFFLING A REPORT.

The people of Canada have a right to suspect the honesty of motive of an administration which attempts to prevent information to which the country has an undoubted right becoming public. It has double reason to suspect the motive of an adminis-

tration which is detected, as the present government has been, in a bungling attempt deliberately to deceive the representatives of the people in the Commons in relation to a matter of vital importance to many thousands of our citizens whose sons, brothers and relatives have taken up arms in defence of the Empire.

No more humiliating spectacle has been presented in recent years in the Commons. A brief history of this matter may not be out of the way at this time. A report on the condition of the Canadian hospital management in Britain was made by Dr. Bruce, of Toronto, one of the most eminent Canadian surgeons, because of many complaints respecting this end of the service. Dr. Bruce's report was drastic; it contained about fifteen recommendations of changes in the administration of the hospitals overseas and pointed out many grave faults in the conduct of these institutions. This report was virtually endorsed by Surgeon General Carleton Jones who advocated the adoption of twelve of the recommendations of Dr. Bruce. The next step in the affair was the appointment of Dr. Baptie, a British medical officer at the instigation, it is alleged, of Sir George Perley, Canadian Overseas Minister of Militia. Dr. Baptie is the same individual who was so severely censured by the British authorities for his bungling of the medical arrangements of the ill-fated Mesopotamian force under Gen. Townsend. Dr. Baptie held an investigation of his own and made a report against the Bruce findings. Dr. Bruce at once replied. But the reply of Dr. Bruce has never seen the light of day. The shuffling of the Canadian Minister of Militia and the Premier on this matter is positively painful. Asked repeatedly in the House for the report the government reply, via the Premier, was that the report had been forwarded to Sir Geo. Perley. Just why such a document, a report in which the people of Canada were vitally interested, should be withheld from the people for months while the Overseas Minister of Militia dealt with it the Premier could not explain. Sir Robert Borden wasn't sure that the report hadn't been torpedoed by a German sub. Anyway, he hadn't heard from Sir George Perley, although a communication had been sent that gentleman several weeks ago. As for the report itself, the Premier had not seen it, or he did not recall it. Nor did he know whether there was another copy. The general impression the house got from the Premier's statement was that the report was either in Sir George Perley's possession or it wasn't and that this was the only copy of the report in existence. That impression may have been wrong but the Premier's shuffling and equivocation gave the house an uneasy feeling that something was being held back. Then along came the Minister of Militia—and blurted out that the department was in possession of the report but that it had decided not to table it until permission had been secured from the Overseas Minister of Militia! That was sufficiently startling. But there is more to come. The opposition forced a promise from the Premier to cable Sir George Perley at once. Next day, in reply to Mr. E. M. Macdonald, the premier stated that he had had no reply to his cable. What is the game and what is behind the evident reluctance of the government to have Dr. Bruce's supplementary report made public in this country?