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NORTH PERTH BY-ELECTION.

On June 10th a by-election, made necessary by the acceptance of the collectorship of Customs by Mr. J. J. Torrance, who had represented that riding for a number of years, was held in North Perth, Ontario, where a Conservative majority of 1,117 at the general provincial election in 1914 was turned into a Liberal majority of 567. Inasmuch as the campaign preceding the election was very short and as North Perth is largely a rural constituency, the farmers being in the midst of their hay harvest, with little or no time to devote to politics, their vote may be taken as a spontaneous expression of dissatisfaction against Conservative governments at Toronto and Ottawa.

Mr. F. Wellington Hay, the Liberal candidate, during the campaign dwelt particularly upon the extravagance and incompetence of the Ontario government which in eleven years has increased the provincial debt from less than twelve millions to over forty-nine million dollars; its expenditure of over a million dollars on a Government House, which when authorized was to cost \$400,000; the unnecessarily large increase in the number of civil servants employed; the employment of highly paid commissions to do the work which properly belonged to the government; its failure to collect the \$360,000 due the province from the Canadian Copper Co. last year; and the government's failure to keep pace with the public demand for advanced legislation in regard to agriculture, education, tax reform and social problems.

During the campaign Mr. Hay made a slashing attack upon the conduct of Major-General Sir Sam Hughes, as Minister of Militia, which though extremely severe, evidently expressed public sentiment in regard to this gentleman.

The government made Herculean efforts to hold the seat. The Premier, with practically every cabinet minister as well as a flock of private members assisted by several M.P's. was in the riding. The Conservatives tried to make prohibition, bilingualism and loyalty their issue, each of which the electors were able to see through as cleverly devised schemes to detract their attention from the government's incompetent administration of public affairs, and

the result of the election is a severe rebuke and warning not only to Mr. Hearst at Toronto, but also to Sir Robert Borden. Nothing but honest and competent administration of public affairs will be tolerated by the electors.

PROFITS ON SHELL CONTRACTS.

The action of Mr. F. W. Baillie of Hamilton, in returning to the Government in behalf of his Company, the Canadian Cartridge Company of that city, the sum of \$750,000 representing the profits made by the Company over cost of manufacture on cartridge cases, is worthy of the highest commendation. Incidents of this kind are a real inspiration, and make us renew our faith in human nature. The excellent example set by Mr. Baillie might very well be followed by other munition manufacturers, many of whom have become unduly rich through their contracts.

An interesting phase of the matter is that the three-quarters of a million dollars refunded by Mr. Baillie represents a profit of 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % on the transaction. For this Mr. Baillie is, of course, in no sense to blame, but it serves to show that the prices paid for munitions have been, as the Liberals have contended all along, unfairly and unnecessarily high.

Another illustration of this is the enormous profits earned by the Montreal Ammunition Company who have paid out in dividends to its shareholders within a year, no less than 750%.

There is something "Rotten in the State of Denmark" when such stupendous profits are realized from War contracts. It is nothing more or less than a crying shame, and a bare-faced robbery of the Treasury. Men in office who granted contracts through which these enormous profits have been realized are utterly unfit to govern.

NICKEL.

In recent weeks the public mind has been considerably exercised about the question of nickel, produced from Canadian nickel ores, reaching the enemy, and a serious agitation has arisen for the adoption of a policy which will effectually prevent the Hun from getting any of such nickel.

The situation became acute when the commercial submarine the "Deutschland" succeeded in reaching the United States and the announcement was made that it would take back nickel to Germany. Prior to that time with Great Britain in command of the traffic on the surface of the seas, there was little danger of any nickel reaching the land of the Kaiser. Whether or not the Deutschland did load up with nickel or whether she may or may not be successful in reaching Germany with it, the fact remains that the possibilities of commercial submarine vessels being successful, have altered the situation and made it necessary that the Government review their policy so that they may conform to the generally expressed wishes of the people that not one pound of nickel made from Canadian ores will be used in the destruction of our own kith or kin. It is squarely up to them to act, and the people will not be satisfied with any policy which is not absolutely effective.