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MAKES CHILLY PLAY OF WASH DAY.
44

OPPOSITION ARGUMENTS ARE ABOUT PLAYED OUT

With No Real Platform Behind Them Liberal Orators are Merely Threshing Old Straw in Debate--Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux Voices His Party's Sentiment -- Hon. Mr. Monk's Effective Speech -- Mr. Hartt Making Good.

Ottawa, Nov. 26.—"But, Mr. Speaker, What's the use?" It was Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux who was speaking. He had just concluded a general arraignment of the government, having paid particular attention to Mr. Monk along the stereotyped lines—disloyalty and lack of patriotism—when looking across at the smiling enemy in no way disconcerted the thought seemed to strike him "What's the use," and out it came. As a matter of fact Mr. Lemieux voiced the feeling of the opposition, who are beginning to realize that their arguments are played out. They have rung the changes for a week now on disloyalty, the benefits of reciprocity, and the navy question without in any way shaking the standing of the government. Several ambitious gentlemen have had the opportunity to get off maiden speeches, but the net result is that through the speeches of Mr. Borden, Mr. Hazen and Mr. Monk, the government have clearly defined their position. They have left no doubt that this is a businesslike administration well able at all points to deal honestly with the affairs of the country.

When Mr. Monk resumed the debate on Thursday, there were few vacant seats in the House. The minister of public works is evidently the bete noir of the opposition, their attacks have been mainly directed in his direction and there was a good deal of interest to see how he would deal with the enemy. Mr. Monk is a deliberate speaker with a deep voice—Mr. Lemieux referred to it in debate as "cavernous," which is, of course, an exaggeration—he is not what one would call aggressive, but he makes his points tell.

Beginning with a reference to Sir Wilfrid's contention that the liberal defeat was due to "emotionalism, sentiment and prejudice," Mr. Monk pointed out that there were many other causes and proceeded to enumerate a few of the scandals which marked the latter years of the Laurier regime and could not fail to have their effect on public opinion. The Quebec Bridge, The North Atlantic Trading Company, the over expenditures on the Transcontinental and the activities of the Dark Lantern Brigade, of which Mr. Macdonald and Mr. Caryell were courageous members in the public accounts committee, were among the causes which came under review.

Then Mr. Monk passed on to discuss a subject which he remarked was particularly disquieting to the opposition, the existence—according to them—already of dissensions in the cabinet. Sir Wilfrid thought he had made a point when he qualified the cabinet as a cabinet of coalition. "Well," continued Mr. Monk, "I don't know that a cabinet of coalition is, per se, a very bad one," and proceeded to carry the war into the enemy's camp by reminding Sir Wilfrid of the inclusion of Mr. Dobell, of Quebec and Mr. Tarte, supposed to represent discontented Conservatives, in his cabinet in 1896.

"But in the peevish mood, the scolding mood, in which our friends opposite are," he went on, "they think that they see dissension. My hon. friend from South Wellington (Mr. Guthrie) as I am informed an aspirant minister of justice—during a certain time—stands on the watch tower. He scans the desert before him, and thinks he sees dissension. 'Sister Ann, Sister Ann,' they say to him, 'do you see anything in the distance?' There is nothing to see, Mr. Speaker. We have not yet even reached the stage when they 'fight like blazes' as we are told they did by a member of the late government." The House hugely enjoyed the joke which was distinctly on the opposition.

The "Disloyalty" Charge.

Taking up the charge of disloyalty which the opposition had made against him, Mr. Monk referred to the unanimous resolution passed by the House of Commons in March, 1909, expressing Canada's willingness to bear her share in naval defence. "The moment of danger for the British Empire," he said impressively, "will never be the moment which I and my friends will choose to discuss our relations with the Mother Country. That was a moment of emergency, that was a question of fact. It was a moment of danger, and I gladly gave my adherence to that resolution, as I would, and as every true Canadian should under similar circumstances."

And then, warming to his subject, Mr. Monk gave utterance plainly to the position in which he stands on the navy question. Leaning forward across his desk, facing the opposition with a slight tremble of emotion in his voice he went on:

"No matter what you say, no matter what you call me, I was born and bred a Liberal-Conservative, and I never varied in my allegiance to that party. I intend dying in that faith because I believe it is the party that has built up this country, but what I desire to accentuate is merely this, and it confirms what my old friend the leader of the government stated here. We never took up any ground in Quebec, in the campaign, in the doctrine, call it what you like, that we preached, than this one: We are loyal subjects of the Crown; we do not approve of this plan and of this navy; we use our right to criticize it; it was adopted without any mandate from or consultation with the people; we pledge ourselves to accept unreservedly the verdict of the people consulted on this question."

There was one other moment while dealing with the navy question which made Mr. Monk's speech a notable pronouncement. He was referring to the position he had taken to accept the verdict of the people: "Is not that fair ground," he asked, "for any man to take under the British flag? Why, therefore, tax us with disloyalty? The question is grave and serious enough, it is important enough for each and every one of us and for the whole country that no man can be blamed for taking that point and should not be charged with disloyalty. I hope we have ended the time when the reproach of disloyalty shall be bandied from one side of the House to the other. I am confident that the leader of the government has taken the view of this question which should be taken. Notwithstanding its gravity, its importance, its seriousness he will know how to solve it for no man is better qualified to do it than he."

It was a manly straightforward declaration, cutting the ground completely from under the opposition's arguments of disloyalty and dissension and the government supporters cheered Mr. Monk again and again.

Development of St. John.

Towards the close of his speech Mr. Monk made an interesting reference to the question of transportation and replied to Mr. Pugsley's enquiry regarding development at the port of St. John. His statement on the latter point appeared verbatim in a despatch to The Standard, and leaves no room for doubt, if there were any serious doubt, that harbor improvement will continue as part of the government's policy to develop the great national ports of Canada.

It is evident that Mr. Monk attaches great importance to the report of the Transportation Commission, which he intimated the late government seemed to have pigeon-holed the moment they received it. It was remarkable, he said, that the present opposition who want the new government, within a day or two of coming into power to declare their policy on most abstruse and difficult subjects, never carried into effect the suggestions of that commission which recommended free ports and canals. He thought there was much in the suggestion of Mr. Bennett, of Simcoe, made earlier in the debate, as to the necessity of taking up again the work of the commission. A general and comprehensive plan for the development of all the great ports of Canada was also clearly indicated in Mr. Monk's statement.

After Mr. Monk's speech comparatively little interest was taken in the debate. Mr. Lemieux spoke at length eulogizing Sir Wilfrid Laurier, defending the late government and attempting to prove that Mr. Borden and Mr. Monk had entered into "an unholy alliance." In conclusion he offered Liberals the consolation that opposition with its duties was "a nobler occupation than the exercise of power with its interests," a sentiment which nobody seemed disposed to quarrel with.

Mr. Mondou, of Yamaska, then delivered his maiden speech, and his first in English. He made a vigorous attack upon the opposition and declared that as far as he was concerned he was not afraid to sit in the House and deliberate on the affairs of the nation with his English confreres. Incidentally denying that he was a political friend of Mr. Bourassa, he declared: "If Mr. Bourassa ever came into my consituency to help me, I am a dead man," which sent the House into roars of laughter. Mr. Mondou was speaking at recess and as there was no night session owing to the failure of the electric light, he concluded his speech on Friday morning.

A Weird Incident.

The sudden plunging of the parliament buildings into inky darkness, was a weird incident which has only happened once before. Candles, lamps and even matches were at a premium, strangers got lost in the long corridors and the whole routine of the big buildings was upset. At 8 o'clock the Speaker, who was due to be in his place in the House if the heavens fell, marched from his apartments preceded by an attendant bearing one small oil lamp, while another with silver candelabra brought up the rear. On taking his seat a voice out of the gloom, which proved to be Mr. Mondou's, moved the adjournment of the debate and another voice, owned by Mr. Monk, moved that the House adjourn. There was a derisive shout from the occupant of an opposition back bench and that ended the proceedings. At a quarter to nine the lights came in again. It was a unique experience.

In the debate on Friday after Mr. Verville, the labor member for Maisonneuve, had spoken, Mr. Stevens, (Vancouver) gave the House an insight into conditions in the Pacific province. He made the startling statement that the fisheries were almost exclusively in the hands of Japanese who were to a large extent reservists of the Japanese navy and had secured complete charts of every hole and corner of the Pacific coast. Under the late government, he declared, fish-

Continued on page four.

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(From Springfield Republican.)

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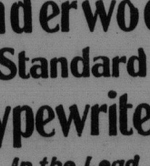
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