

The Chatham Daily Planet.

VOL. XIII

CHATHAM ONT., SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 1904

NO. 187

Ladies' Jackets

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To-Night and Monday.

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To-Night and Monday

10 pieces American Muslins and Batiste, in very pretty colorings and patterns, for waists and dresses, regular price 12 1/2c. and 15c. a yd., on sale special at a yd., **10c.**

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A COMPLETE CASE OF PETTY POLITICAL INTRIGUE

Mr. Fisher First Denies then Admits Lord Dundonald's Charge—Admission Forced From Him by the General's Damaging Arraignment—The Earl Takes Nothing Back.

Ottawa, June 10.—Discussion of Lord Dundonald's charge of political interference in the organization of the 13th Scottish Light Horse, which has been the talk of the Dominion for nearly a week, was discussed for five hours in the House to-day to the exclusion of all other business. The galleries were thronged to hear the debate of the Government's statement of defence was looked forward to with general interest, prominent in the speaker's gallery being Major Maude and a party from Government House. Mr. Fisher's statement left the House rather under the impression that Lord Dundonald had been the victim of a misunderstanding, and had made his charges hastily and under a misapprehension of the facts. But when the general's memorandum was read by Colonel Hughes, the tables were quite turned upon Mr. Fisher, and the case against him was made complete when, in contradiction of his formal denial, he admitted, in the heat of debate, that he had objected to certain of the officers named by the responsible military authorities because they were Conservatives in politics.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE G. O. C.

Mr. Fisher, in entering upon a defence of his conduct, read the letter sent by the Minister of Militia to Lord Dundonald, enclosing a newspaper clipping from the Morning Citizen, in which the general's alleged statements were recorded, and asking if the clipping recorded, and asking if the clipping correctly reported His Lordship's utterance and the attendant circumstances. Replying to this communication, Lord Dundonald said that though he made some notes for his speech at Montreal, he did not refer in these notes to the 13th Light Dragoons or to Mr. Sydney Fisher, and had, therefore, nothing to refer to with regard to the portion of his speech beyond memory. He quoted that portion of the newspaper clipping which represented him as saying that a most flagrant instance of political interference had come before him in connection with the appointment of officers of the 13th Light Dragoons, and explaining how, because of his political color, Dr. Pickell had been struck off the list of officers recommended by the commanding officer of the corps by order of H. N. Sydney Fisher. "The above," General Dundonald's letter continued, "is substantially what I said, except that I also stated that Mr. Fisher interfered with the organization of the corps and with the names of other proposed officers as well as Dr. Pickell."

MR. FISHER'S POSITION.

Having read the foregoing letter from the general, Mr. Fisher proceeded to define his position in regard to Dr. Pickell, whose appointment as major was recommended by the commanding officer of the corps. It was noted on the recommendation, he said, that Dr. Pickell would be required to pass the qualifying examination. Mr. Fisher said he knew Dr. Pickell personally, and, being aware that the doctor had never been connected with the militia, and had never shown any interest in military matters, he (Mr. Fisher), suggested that the appointment be not made. "Further investigation," said Mr. Fisher, "confirmed me in this, and also proved to the commanding officer, who recommended his appointment, that I was right. Dr. Pickell himself so appreciated this fact that he was reluctant to accept the position." Mr. Fisher then told the House how he had been pressed by Col. Smart to pass the general order, authorizing the appointment. Col. Pinault, the deputy minister of militia, also argued that the order be rescinded without delay. At the same time Mr. Fisher said he received a letter from Col. Smart, colonel of the 13th Scottish Light Infantry Dragoons, to the effect that he had discussed matters with Lt. Col. Whitley, of the Eastern Townships Cavalry Brigade, and he had received a communication from Dr. Pickell, in which that gentleman gave up all connection with the squadron. "In accordance, therefore, with Dr. Pickell's request," Col. Clark's letter continued, "I can now, as commanding officer of the regiment, request you to kindly make the change in the Gazette by leaving Dr. Pickell's name out." To this letter a note was added by Col. Whitley, recommending that Col. Clark's suggestion be followed. Mr. Fisher signed and sent the recommendation to the clerk of the

privy council, calling attention to the elimination of Dr. Pickell's name from the list of officers.

SAYS HE HAS PROOF.

As Lord Dundonald's general statement that he interfered with the organization of the corps and with the names of other proposed officers as well as Dr. Pickell, Mr. Fisher declared that the only ground upon which he made any suggestions was the immense importance of the appointment of officers with the military qualifications who knew the country and the people of the Eastern Townships. He asserted that he knew he took no exception to anybody's appointment on political grounds alone, as evidenced by his recommendation and endorsement of many well-known Conservatives. No one, he said, believed more thoroughly than he that the first necessity in the recommendation of officers on the establishment of a new regiment was military qualification and general personal suitability, and that no political considerations should be allowed to interfere with this. Should the recommendation of officers on the establishment of a new regiment be made complete when, in contradiction of his formal denial, he admitted, in the heat of debate, that he had objected to certain of the officers named by the responsible military authorities because they were Conservatives in politics.

THE MINISTER OF MILITIA.

Sir Frederick Borden followed. "I consider the general's statement entirely the statement just made by my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture." He then went on to tell how Mr. Fisher had for several years advocated the reorganization of the militia in the Eastern Townships; when the time came to bring the matter up, the Minister of Agriculture was looked to for advice and assistance. "And," said Sir Frederick, "let me say at once that I recognize the fact that the man upon whom alone the entire responsibility rests in this Parliament and to the Canadian people for the proper administration of the militia."

THE G. O. C.'S STATEMENT.

Lord Dundonald's statement as made in the memo communicated to Col. S. Hughes and communicated by that hon. member to the House was as follows: "In accordance with general orders, approved by council, I gave orders in the customary manner in the month of February last to organize the 13th Scottish Light Dragoons as a cavalry company, with headquarters in the Eastern Townships of Quebec, Lt. Col. G. A. Smart, was gazetted as commanding officer on the 19th of February, and other officers were appointed to the same regiment. Shortly after the promulgation of the order authorizing the organization of the regiment I received an order from Sir Frederick Borden, through Col. Pinault, the Deputy Minister of Militia, desiring him to

STOP THE ORGANIZATION.

No explanation or reason for this step was vouchsafed, but indirectly I learned that the Minister of Agriculture was responsible for the delay which had occurred. I greatly desired to have the organization proceeded with, as the time for holding the annual camps was approaching. I accordingly twice communicated with Mr. Fisher by telephone on two dates some distance apart and made appointment with him in order that his reason for obstruction might be explained. Mr. Fisher did not keep either of these appointments. On the second occasion he thus referred to, when speaking to Mr. Fisher on the telephone, I explained the urgency of completing the organization of the militia without delay; otherwise it would be impossible for it to go into camp. I also enquired what Mr. Fisher had to do with the organization of militia, and to this Mr. Fisher responded by enquiring whether I thought he had no right, as a cabinet minister, to interfere. My answer was that in my opinion Mr. Fisher had

NO RIGHT TO INTERFERE

with Col. Smart's selection of officers, as I understood he had been doing. It was perhaps unnecessary to say here that Col. Smart's duty was to select officers for commissions and submit the names to the General Officer Commanding, through the proper channel, in order that he might make recommendations to the Minister of Militia. I became convinced of Mr. S. Fisher's continued interference with the duty of Col. Smart in the selection of officers. Subsequently I sent in a list of officers for the 13th Scottish Light Dragoons, to be approved by the Minister of Militia and gazetted.

Included in that list was the name of Dr. Pickell, Mayor of Swetsburg, to command a squadron—a local man of prominence, whose appointment would, I believe, have advanced the interests of the militia. Dr. Pickell was not qualified professionally as an officer; indeed only two out of the sixteen of the proposed officers of the 13th Scottish Light Dragoons were militarily qualified. It was impossible, as well as understood, to procure only qualified officers, as the cavalry regiment in the Eastern Townships had been increased since May, 1903, from four squadrons, numbering 800 men and 28 officers, to 28 squadrons numbering 1,600 men and hundred and twenty officers on peace establishment and with a war establishment of 2,700 men. All the gentlemen submitted in the list undertook to qualify professionally after appointment in the usual manner. This course is customary, and

HAS BEEN FORCED UPON US.

By the lack of qualified officers. It is a course which has always met with the approval of the Minister of Militia. This list of officers for the 13th Scottish Light Dragoons was submitted to the minister, and included in the proposed general order, which included other regiments of the militia. This list of officers of the 13th Scottish Light Dragoons was struck out of the general order by Sir Frederick Borden, and was informed of this circumstance by Col. Pinault, the deputy minister, in a letter of which the following is a copy—

FINAULT TO DUNDONALD.

"Ottawa, Ont., May 19.—Dr. Lord Dundonald.—Late last evening I placed before the minister the Gazette draft to you for approval and submission of the council. With the exception of the one part relating to the 13th Scottish Light Dragoons, which the minister held over for further consideration, it was approved, and as the minister intended to leave the city this morning for a week or two rather than delay the submission of the remainder of the Gazette, he cancelled and nullified the appointment to the 13th instead of retaining the draft to you for that purpose. Very faithfully yours, L. E. Finault."

"A day or two after the first list was cancelled, a further list was submitted to me by the Adjutant-General which I was informed would be acceptable and the organization of the corps would be permitted to proceed. This later list of officers to be gazetted, was sent to council, and when returned the name of Dr. Pickell had been erased, and the excuse was given by the Minister of Agriculture, who was acting for Sir Frederick Borden when in Montreal, on the 3rd June fuller details of the interference of the Minister of Agriculture were communicated to me by letter from Col. Smart, which I received on the morning of June 4th, the day on which I spoke at the officers' banquet. Col. Smart's letter read as follows—

COL. SMART'S LETTER.

"Montreal, June 4.—My Lord.—As requested by you last evening I have the honor to submit the following facts in connection with the recommendations for appointments submitted by me, and to which the Hon. Mr. Fisher took exception. I submitted the name of Dr. F. H. Pickell, who is Mayor of Swetsburg and Warden of the City of Missisquoi, to be major in command 'E' squadron. Dr. Pickell is a man of means, can ride fairly well, and was quite willing to take the necessary time to qualify himself for the position of major. Mr. Fisher objected to him for no other reason than that he was a strong political opponent of his, and was quite determined to block the whole organization unless Dr. Pickell's name was withdrawn. This I refused to do, as I had wanted Dr. Pickell in the regiment, and told Mr. Fisher that some one else would have to be responsible for the withdrawal of Dr. Pickell's name. After my last visit to Ottawa I consulted with Col. Whitley, and we came to the conclusion to voluntarily withdraw the organization would be hung up indefinitely. I therefore communicated with Dr. Pickell, and explained to him that owing to a new regulation, objection was made to the appointment of unqualified officers to field officer's rank, and asked him if he would be good enough to allow me to withdraw his name temporarily, to which he consented. I then communicated with Mr. Fisher saying that I would agree to the withdrawal of Dr. Pickell's name in the meantime, and the appointment passed through council. Your Lordship will observe that I have

NOT WITHDRAWN DR. PICKELL'S NAME

absolutely, and have kept the position of major in 'E' squadron vacant in case that I may yet have Dr. Pickell appointed. Hon. Mr. Fisher took exception to the name of Mr. T. R. Pickell, who is also very enthusiastic, and would make a capital cavalry officer. I had submitted Mr. Pickell's name, recommending that he be appointed captain in 'E' squadron, but Mr. Fisher insisted that I substitute the name of Lt. R. Steacie, making him captain and Mr. Pickell first lieutenant. I pointed out to Mr. Fisher that Mr. Pickell, being a resident of the townships and entitled to a senior rank in preference to Mr. Steacie, who lives in Montreal, and moreover, as Mr. Steacie is a relative of mine, it would place me in a false position, and appear as though I was unduly advancing him at the expense of others. Hon. Mr. Fisher evidently had his mind made up on the matter, and insisted on the change, so when I reluctantly agreed, I regret to say that this has caused some dissatisfaction, and I would at the first opportunity

transfer Mr. Steacie to another squadron and recommend Mr. Pickell for his captaincy. With regard to the adjutant, Captain Converse, whom I selected for this position, has served in the militia for about 15 years, and for a long time served as sergeant-major in the Duke of York's Hussars; Mr. Fisher

ASKED ME TO DROP THIS MAN

and substitute Mr. Adams, of the 6th Hussars, a man who is very deaf, and whom I consider physically unfit for the position. I absolutely declined to consider this at all, and Mr. Fisher waived his objections. He then asked me to recommend Mr. Adams for major to command 'E' squadron, and this I also flatly declined to do. Out of five men whom Mr. Fisher recommended for commissions three have absolutely declined to come into the organization, so that after all the trouble and worry inflicted on the regiment, Mr. Fisher has only been able to find two officers, both of whom are unqualified, and not in any way to compare with Dr. Pickell, whom he rejected. The above are the main facts in connection with this unfortunate matter, but if there is any further information desired I would be pleased to submit it. I am your Lordship's humble servant (signed, Chas. A. Smart, Lt.-Col., June 4th, 1904).

"I may here state that I have just communicated with Col. Smart, and it is by his permission and desire that I included this letter."

TAKES BACK NOTHING.

Lord Dundonald's memo concludes with the statement that the extract from the Montreal Gazette of June 9th, except for a few slight omissions and inaccuracies gives a very fair report of what he said at Montreal on the subject in question. The word "education" should read "education," and the word "champion" should read "warden." The reference to lack of education at Ottawa, His Lordship concludes, "had no application except to official matters connected with my duty."

This memorandum, which was commented upon by Col. Hughes as he read it, took the House generally by surprise, putting, as it did, an entirely different face upon the matter from what it bore at the conclusion of Mr. Fisher's statement.

THE TRUTH OUT.

Mr. Fisher replied at some length. He was evidently in bad humor, and declared he had objected to Dr. Pickell and others because they were Tories, and relatives of Senator Baker, and that their appointment would make the new regiment a Tory organization. Mr. Borden contrasted this with Mr. Fisher's first statement, in which he denied having taken any action whatever for political motives.

LAURIER CALLS DUNDONALD.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier said the result of Dundonald's speech would be discussed at another time with prudence and deliberation. He said the trouble with Lord Dundonald, who was a foreigner, or rather a stranger, was that he considered his recommendation like the laws of the Medes and Persians, unalterable. But we were not accustomed to being dragged into this country, Lord Dundonald would have to learn that there was responsible Government in Canada.

THE DISCUSSION WAS CONTINUED UNTIL 11 O'CLOCK WHEN THE HOUSE ADJOURNED.

SIXTH WELL SHOT

Leamington, June 9.—The Leamington Oil Company has shot its sixth well at a depth of 1,047 feet. The well is flowing and promises to be a good one. The company now has four flowing wells and two pumping. The seventh well is down about six hundred feet, and the eighth is to be started at once.

ALL WANT 'EM

George J. Mitchell writes The Planet to-day from Toronto:—"Sorry indeed was unable to participate in the rare old fun of last week. Trust every person enjoyed it, in fact from my many pleasant remembrances of the Old Town, feel assured the Old Boys went the limit. Would you kindly forward to my address copy of the handsome Planet Souvenir edition, for which I remit. Everyone is admiring it and all want copies."

ENTRANCE CLASS STUDY

The last of the Friday afternoon series of lectures for the Central School Graduation class took place yesterday. Dr. Thornton gave a most interesting and instructive talk on the teeth, which was accompanied by blackboard illustrations by Kate L. Taylor, one of the pupils. H. W. Anderson also gave a talk on the character of "Shylock," from Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice."

Both speakers received votes of appreciation. Piano solos by Misses Gaimage and Shillington, and choruses by the school, lent variety. Miss Ida Hillman, the entrance teacher, presided, and it is to her that the idea of securing extra educational means for the pupils and its successful culmination are due. The manner in which pupils moved and second resolutions showed that the method of correctly conducting public meetings is receiving proper attention.

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