

committee it is as a rule taken for granted that the one first named is chairman. Genl. Bertram was not appointed in this way. If precedent had been followed Thomas Cantley as the first named would have been chairman. President, however, was not followed and Bertram was appointed chairman by his fellow members. This was stated in the Record shortly after the committee was formed but not generally accepted. We have now a statement from the Minister of Militia which places the point beyond doubt. Speaking at a meeting ten days or so ago Genl. Hughes among other things said:

"Shortly after the declaration of war an order came to the Canadian government for 200,000 shells, and it was to be placed for the British war office in the United States. At that time many of Canada's industries were idle, honest workmen were out of employment, and mouths were in want of food. The results produced at the Quebec arsenal proved that it was possible to manufacture ammunition in Canada. Capital was sensitive, however; business men were fearful, and the women and soldiers alone showed the true spirit of pluck. A meeting of the steel manufacturers of Canada was called to consider the advisability of placing in Canada the 'tuppenny' order for shells. It required two full weeks to stir up the steel manufacturers, but finally it was agreed. Orders came spasmodically for some time afterwards, but the Canadian people were slowly proving their powers of adaptability. Out of that movement grew the now famous shell committee. It was first argued that all steel would have to be imported, that Canada's steel was not adapted to the production of munitions. There was no possibility of using it; neither was there a supply of zinc or copper. Canada had lead, but it was not refined.

"The government sent for Thomas Cantley, and it was agreed that Canada **MUST** produce the steel required for the new industry. And she did so. Hamilton took up the work, then Sydney, then Sault Ste. Marie, and then Toronto, until **360,335,000** pounds of Canadian steel were turned into shells; **329** industries were established for the making of war material, and **250** more are organized, ready in case of need. Ten thousand young men had put their names down on paper as being anxious to make shells and **90,000** workmen were already engaged. Labor easing the situation, because many of us had an inkling that this terrible war was coming. I told Sir John and the other officers about him that, in the event of war, Canada would be able to place **30,000** men in the field in a very short time. They hardly believed that it was possible, but we did it."

## **- Rubs by Rambler. -**

Reading between the lines one is forced to the conclusion that certain rabid political writers are grievously disappointed that the little tiff between D. A. Thomas and the Minister of Militia did not continue and result in revelations which they could have rolled as sweet morsels under their tongue. It is not a pleasant thing to say, and yet with demands that there are certain newspapers to whom scandals are as breath to their nostrils. Mr. Thom-

as' first statement gave these ground for the hope that stronger statements might follow. The insinuation was thrown out that the Shell Committee had been a very partial success. Indeed the impression was intended to be conveyed that some of their transactions were shady. Blaming to find any ground for charges of fraud they were forced to content themselves with charges of favoritism. Let it be granted that there was favoritism. While it is acknowledged it was of the kind that can be justified. When the Shell Committee had decided that shells could be made in Canada there were firms engaged in the production of machinery, etc., who held it to be doubtful. At first the Committee had hard work to induce manufacturers to take hold. After demonstrations had been made that shells could be produced the manufacturers tumbled over each other in their anxiety to secure contracts. The Committee may not have had sufficient orders to go round and if they made distribution among these firms who had first responded, it is scarcely a matter for surprise. With all deference to Mr. Thomas we hold that the Shell Committee did phenomenal work. The British military authorities are indebted to them for more than one pointer, and just what the Dominion of Canada owes them is not easy of computation. Before the committee had demonstrated that shells could be made and well made in Canada, there was general dullness in trade and consequent unemployment. If today there is any industrial boom in several of the provinces, the thanks are due in large measure to the Shell Committee. The Shell Committee, so says the British commissioner is to be reorganized, and no one shall have a place on it that is a manufacturer of munitions. This means the retirement of Thos. Cantley. In retiring he has the satisfaction of knowing that he has smoothed the way and made things very easy for those who come after him. In his parting remarks previous to leaving Canada, Mr. Thomas among other things said he was bound to say that he considered the criticisms that have been levelled against Col. Cantley and other manufacturing members of the Shell Committee had been unfair and unjust. The executive work of the committee had been discharged by Gen. Bertram, latterly with the help of Col. D. Carnegie.

These two gentlemen had been responsible for advising the Imperial authorities in the matter of prices and also for the allocation of orders after the authorization in respect to covering prices and quantities had been received from London.

Col. Cantley and the manufacturers on the committee had acted only in an advisory capacity, and in this way their technical knowledge had been of great service.

Further, Col. Cantley had expended considerable sums in experiments on shell steel, and the results of the experiments had, Mr. Thomas understood, been freely placed at the disposal of other manufacturers.

Another fact should, in fairness to the committee, be made public, and it was this: General Bertram had, in the allocation of orders for component parts, made very substantial savings on the covering prices for complete rounds, etc., authorized by the Imperial Government. These savings already amounted to a little short of fifteen million