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To be healthy at seventy, prepare at forty, is sound advice, because in the strength of middle life we too often forget that neglected colds, or careless treatment of slight aches and pains, simply undermine strength and bring chronic weakness for later years.

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THE OBSERVER

Fred. H. Stevens, Editor and Managing Director.
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I have said in this House before, and I say it again now, that I am willing to vote any amount of money required to carry on the war, provided the money will be kept properly. I hope no one will accuse me for not enrolling under the flag; I am too old for that. I myself would not criticize any one for not enlisting, but I take off my hat to the soldier, and say he is a man.—Sir Wilfred Laurier

AN IMAGINARY GROUCH

Two weeks ago "A Boy in Khaki" writing to The Observer from Woodstock made among other complaints the assertion that "separator milk" was being sold the boys at the armory for 10 cents a quart. While he did not say so in his letter, he told the editor he knew his assertion to be true and could prove it. He may have what he only thinks is proof, as is common with novices writing for publication. Learning a certain dairy firm in Woodstock felt the article reflected on their integrity, The Observer has interviewed other boys in khaki who all declared the milk supplied to be "excellent for the time of year."

The editor welcomes brief communications on timely subjects but resents being led into printing misrepresentation of facts. Those having grouches against individuals, especially imaginary grouches, should get them off their chest some other way than through the newspapers. Better to have it out "behind the barn."

HEAVEN HELP THE FARMERS NOW!

Attempting to garble some utterances of Hon. J. D. Hazen to suit his weak defence of B. F. Smith, The Woodstock Press puts into the mouth of the Minister the following words, as though Mr. Hazen was referring to a present day transaction instead of one 14 years ago:

"The greatest interest was being taken in the Carvell hay contract matter, and there was the greatest indignation in the country at the proposal of Mr. Carvell that the farmers would be penalized and punished if they sold hay for over \$8 per ton."

The farmers of Carleton county should know, as B. F. Smith and F. B. Carvell, and others, know that what is spoken of as the "Carvell hay contract" was a document practically dictated by Mr. Smith.

B. Franklin Smith, when entering into the contract with the company of which F. B. Carvell was a director, was the man who suggested and insisted that all merchants who were supplying hay should be bound—"penalized and punished"—if they paid the farmers more than \$8 a ton. The other merchants asked for no written contract and made none. Mr. Smith insisted on the contract and the price and the pen-

alties in document form. Mr. Smith had more to do in the wording of that contract than any other one man.

But The Press makes Mr. Hazen say that Mr. Carvell proposes to punish and penalize the farmers if they sell hay for more than \$8. That is an awful charge, and worse still if true. The Press probably knows what it is talking about, but it expresses itself with the ambiguity that it habitually uses in defending its masters, Messrs. Smith, Flemming, et al.

Mr. Carvell proposes to penalize and punish the farmers if they sell hay for more than \$8!

The Observer has read and printed the sentence three times, and is still bewildered. Wonder if it would trouble the Press too much to repeat the same meaning in simpler, or different, words for the sake of its humblest country exchange that fails utterly to get its drift?

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THE PATRIOTIC POTATO SCANDAL

The members of the Farmers' and Dairymen's Association devoted a portion of their time to discussing the culture of potatoes. The present price of tubers is so attractive that the subject has more than ordinary interest. A year ago the farmers were glad to sell their potatoes at one-fifth of the price they are worth to-day. New Brunswick secured quite additional importance, however, as a potato province, because its government decided to express the loyalty and patriotic sentiment of the people by a gift of one hundred thousand bushels to the Mother Land.

Instead, however, of following the noble example of Prince Edward Island, whose people donated one hundred thousand bushels of oats from their abundant crops without one cent of payment, the government of this province proposed to add one hundred and fifty thousand dollars to the provincial debt to pay for the gift and for some further purchases for the relief of the Belgians.

This was the signal for political profiteering, and the gentleman most prominent in this respect was B. Frank Smith, of Carleton county. The farmers were to be paid one dollar per barrel and Mr. Smith and all other dealers who purchased from them received ten cents profit on every barrel. Some seventy thousand barrels of potatoes were purchased, and the loyalty of the buyers was worth some \$7,000 in profit to them.

But that was a small part of what the people of this province was burdened with in this expression of loyalty. These potatoes, fresh from the hands of the pickers in the field, apparently had to be "sorted" and the job was given to business associates of B. Frank Smith in West St. John, A. C. Smith & Co. They "sorted" and barreled or bagged these potatoes and charged the outrageous price of 30 cents for

NO ALUM



each barrel and 20 cents for each bag! Over twenty thousand dollars of this burden of loyal debt was spent in this way.

Everybody in the potato export business knows that the charge was exorbitant, but the Minister of Agriculture permitted his political friends to thus profit by the "loyalty of the people of New Brunswick," as Governor Wood expressed it in his warrant for the money necessary to pay for this flagrant piece of graft.

But, worse than this, nearly \$26,000 worth of potatoes, or over 13,000 barrels, were permitted to remain in St. John and were not sent forward at all. Many of the cars of this lot were condemned by Inspector Shipp. They reached St. John West sweating so badly that they were not fit to forward. But the government had paid not only for the excess supply, but the profit on them, and after they were condemned they "sorted and packaged them at the enormous price charged by A. C. Smith & Sons.

The hog pens in the neighborhood had plenty of potatoes for months. A schooner load was hawked from port to port in Cuba; street hawkers and many friendly grocers in St. John got potatoes for next to nothing and sold them at prices that kept the local market down. There were fat jobs for months watching the rotting tubers, keeping them from freezing and trying to get rid of them.

In the Legislature last session the information given the Opposition was of a meagre character. The excuse of Minister Murray was that his deputy, Mr. Daggett, was sick! It was evident that the responsibility was to be placed upon Mr. Daggett, bosom friend of B. Frank Smith, but no minister of the crown can hope to escape his responsibility in that way.

In the report of expenditures brought down at the opening of the Legislature, the sum of \$25,800 appeared for "patriotic potatoes" in addition to \$27,400 for "Belgian potatoes." Up to October 31st over \$90,000 had been spent for the potato gift to the Mother Land, and the total was about \$143,000 of the \$150,000 provided by Governor Wood's warrants.

Now, the remarkable feature of this business is that in the Auditor's statement published in

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ALEXANDER LA DUE, Watertown, N.Y.
Get a box at all Druggists. Sample free upon request to National Drug & Chemical Co. of Canada, Limited, Toronto.

the Royal Gazette in December last of expenditures during the fiscal year ending October 31st there is no mention of the sum of \$25,800 which appeared in the expenditures brought down in the House in March last.

The explanation is given that this \$25,000, less about \$2,999 for expenses, has been refunded! By whom, and for what?

No one will believe for one instant that the 13,000 barrels of condemned potatoes hawked around St. John, or sent to Cuba brought any such amount. Good potatoes were selling at very low prices, fifty, sixty and sixty-five cents per barrel. The price in Cuba was low, and freights were high, and no such amount as \$20,000 and more could have been secured from the sale of the condemned government tubers.

How, then, will Hon. Mr. Murray account for wiping out this \$25,000? He did get, we believe, a demurrage refund of about \$600 from the C. P. R., but that is a small item.

Is there any truth in the story that the profiteers, afraid of angry public opinion, had to disgorge part of their extravagant gains?

It is to be hoped that some pressure was brought to bear upon them, but in what position does the whole transaction place the agricultural department and its minister, Mr. Murray? The public will await a full and detailed account of the potato sales, to whom they were made, and the prices the potatoes brought.

Mr. Daggett is not ill this year, and the excuse made last session will not serve again. Let the people, whose children and grandchildren will pay for this "expression of loyalty," have all the facts—every item on both sides of the account.—Fredericton Mail.

Miss Jessie Tedlie left Feb. 28, for Vinton, Alberta, where she has secured a position as teacher.

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