

man who can accustom himself to probe, and probe, and then again—and tell every man the truth in the interests of the whole people.

Now, then, is W. J. Hanna, K.C., that kind of a man? If not, we shall put him in the same class as the various Commissions in this country, who have never "commised." How are we to tell? Partly from experience; somewhat from character.

In the first place, Mr. Hanna has accepted the post without pay. This is not necessary. The servant is worthy of his hire. However, in doing so, Mr. Hanna knows he is able to afford the generosity. He is, we take it, a well-to-do man. He did not make his well-to-do-ness out of politics; neither altogether out of plain law. In both of these spheres of influence he has been very successful. He is not a millionaire and does not expect to be. He is a very plain, unpretentious, square-Gothic sort of man who

began life on a farm when it cost very little to live, and when the idea of any one man controlling the food of this country as to price would have been considered ridiculous.

I have a vision of Hanna, when he was a youth, husking corn on his father's farm near Sarnia; a bone husking-peg and a bundle of basswood bark; a swarm of blackbirds and an old dog rummaging mice out of the stumps; twenty shocks and more to husk for a day's work.

THEN he picked up and went to Sarnia Collegiate, where he learned the dangerous fallacy that to get \$340 a year for teaching school was better economics than clodhopping on his dad's farm. He boarded at home, three miles and a half from the school-house, and carried his dinner in a basket; very likely tended the fires and swept out the school.

He was a Methodist and knew how to remain popular by attending upon the means of grace prevalent in that neighbourhood. He kept the same school until his third-class certificate ran out.

And then right here we are accosted by a miracle. Pedagogue Hanna, Third Class County certificate—saved in those three years exactly nine hundred and some odd dollars. So he said. It must be taken as evidence. Remember that he boarded at home, and therefore let us suppose paid for his board by doing chores and working Saturdays and holidays. If his clothes and trips to Detroit and life insurance and other petty items of economy cost him, say, \$60 a year, he must have got a salary of about \$375 per annum.

This is very crude guesswork to apply to a man who, until further notice, will regulate, as far as possible, the cost of eating to the rest of Canada; but it is on such simple frugalities that the lives of great men are based. Hanna admitted that he was what he called "a pretty close young shaver" to have saved so much in that time; also that he had a big temptation when he got his thousand dollars to invest it in—

I conjectured oil well stocks—since oil was the biggest commodity in his part of the country. But he said,

"No, if I could have got another thousand anywhere I think I would have bought a farm. I was glad afterwards I didn't. There was a big slump in land values after the completion of the C. P. R. A lot of the farmers' sons went out west. I saw a farm that in 1883 was worth \$7,500 go down to \$5,000 in three or four years."

He yawned as he said this; seemed to be half asleep in his chair, a mass of apparent inertia—but he was far from being asleep. Suddenly he yawned himself out of his torpor, gave a swift wrench to his careless necktie and remembered that there were farms close to his old homestead now worth scores of thousands of dollars; one he quoted at \$100,000—a fruit farm.

Hanna spent his \$900 in going on to school. He got into law. From that time he continued to carry out his ideas of practical success with at first no immediate ideas about politics. His particular application of law was more profitable than dabbling in deeds, wills and mortgages.

However, he took politics as a side line. He was fond of public speaking and of argument. He afterwards grew very sceptical of the value of argument on the platform. He told a story of an orator who went out stumping for reciprocity in September, 1911.

"I had all the arguments for reciprocity," said this man to Hanna, "as pat as A B C. I trotted them out to audience after audience of farmers. They listened when they knew very well I was right. But I found out there was just one thing in the back of those people's heads all the time. My arguments hadn't the slightest effect in getting that thing to budge. Admitting all my arguments they were waiting for a chance to give Uncle Sam one good big swift kick."

HANNA tried to make me believe that he believed this; that he was himself as cynical about people and politics as any case-hardened old Tory that ever lived. He vented a lot of practical philosophy in answer to the question,

"What makes a man stay in public life?"

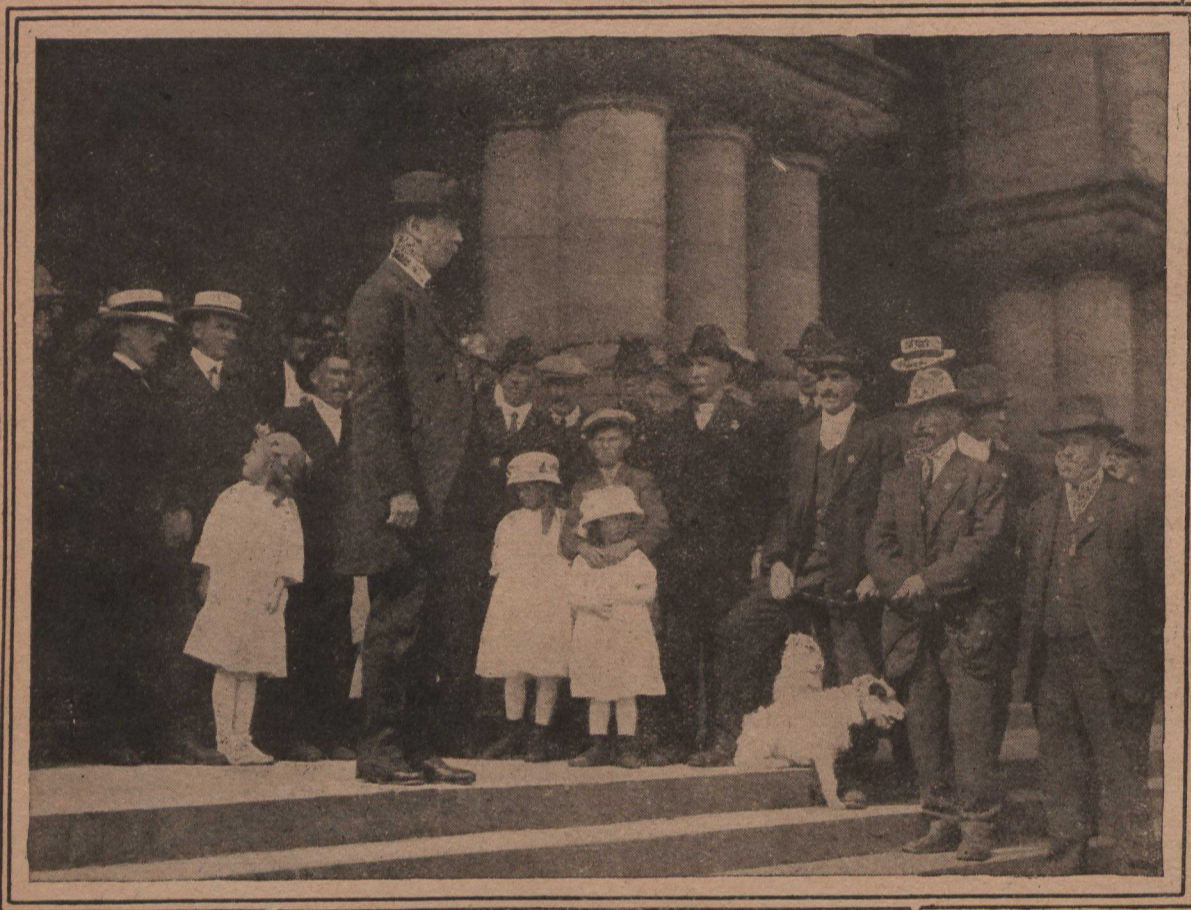
"Largely because he is afraid to get out," was his terse way of summing it up. "I say that it takes more courage for a man to get out of politics than it ever does to get in. I'm not out. No, not yet."

What was he waiting for?

At that time Sir James Whitney was still the dictator at Queen's Park. He had no lieutenant so able as Hanna, who learned from Sir James a good many things about public life and character. When Mabee, chairman of the Dominion Railway Commission, died, it was said more or less publicly that the Government offered the post to Hanna, who refused it.

Was his refusal to leave politics and go into railway regulation caused by his lack of courage to quit politics? He did not say. He declined to discuss the Railway Commissionership. I have never been told why he declined the post. But he must have had what is called a very cogent reason. Of course it must not be forgotten that during his term as Provincial Secretary Hanna did sometimes consider-

LAND FOR RETURNED SOLDIERS



ONTARIO realizes, along with the Western Provinces, that there are a lot of returned soldiers to settle in the business of making a livelihood. These men, as soon as they are able to get about, soon get tired of being entertained in town. Industrial pursuits don't suit a lot of them. They prefer to be out-of-doors. The land's the thing. Ontario has set aside a large tract of the famous clay belt up in the Abitibi region as home leads for these heroes. Each man who wants to go farming is given 100 acres, of which 10 acres are already cleared. The Govern-



IN these pictures some of the applicants for homesteads are seen with their children, ready for the trail to the Abitibi country. In the lower picture, Premier Sir William Hearst is seen shaking hands with one of the new homesteaders. In the top picture, Provincial Secretary W. D. McPherson is the principal figure.

ment will advance him money to pay for his buildings, tools, implements, general outfit. The Government will give each man a free course of farm instruction at the Matheson Experimental Farm. A new era begins for every homesteader. Done with war, he settles down to the simple smoke of the clearing, the placid tinkle of the cow-bell, the quiet clack of the wagon on the new clay-turnpike, children at the new school. Lonesome? Oh no. The houses are built in little villages from which the farms radiate out within easy reaching distance.