

HON. MR. HAZEN IS GENEROUS

Will Not Permit Contractors to Lose Money — Pays Concern in West \$10,000

Ottawa, April 24.—That no contractor shall suffer loss is the policy of Hon. J. D. Hazen, according to evidence given to the common public accounts committee today. Application of the principle was worth at least \$10,000 to the Pacific Construction Company. The committee's general view is that the view of Mr. Hazen was also demonstrated to the committee.

Four firms tendered to build a buoy station at Prince Rupert and the contract was awarded in January 1911, to the Pacific Construction Company. They started work, made progress and at their own request changes were made in the specifications to allow them to use shapes of iron they had, instead of those planned. The chief engineer specified that the changes were to favor the government in no extra expense.

A year after they got the contract the company complained that the work was costing more than they expected and asked the minister of marine for relief, saying that if they completed the work at the contract price they would be in the hole about \$10,000.

The minister of marine instructed his engineers to make inquiries as to the cost of this work and when the chief engineer wrote the instructions for inquiry to the Victoria agency he stated in his letter: "It is the policy of the government to protect contractors from losses in the performance of work."

The agency at Victoria which had been instructed to examine the Prince Rupert job for extra work reported that they could only find \$800 worth that could be so classed. Having failed to get in a bill for extra work the contractors asked that instead of being paid the contract figure and compelled to take a loss they be paid the amount they had expended in doing the work and an additional ten per cent for depreciation of plant.

On March 8 the deputy minister of marine wrote declining to vary the contract. Pressure was put on Col. Sam Hughes, for some reason, interfered by letter and telephone on behalf of the contractors. Messrs. Barnard and Clements, two British Columbia members were heard from. On the very day that the letter of refusal went forward, a telegram was despatched from Ottawa directing the Victoria office to make another examination of the Prince Rupert job.

As a result an order-in-council was made by the government for payment to the Pacific Construction Company of upwards of \$10,000 for extra. The money was paid.

It appears that the payment was a violation of the practice which requires the approval of the auditor-general to be obtained for such payments. The auditor-general made an explanation, which did not appear to satisfy him, and he refused to approve of the government's action. However, the contractors had the money.

In his examination, the chief engineer admitted that with the possible exception of \$1,600 worth of work there was no justification for paying the contractors for extra. It was also shown, during the examination, that the government had bought plant and equipment from the Pacific Construction Company and paid about \$9,000 for it. The second hand stuff cost the company only \$10,000 when it was new. It was bought without consulting the purchasing agent of the department and in spite of his protest, when he learned what was proposed, that the stuff was not required and the price extravagant. Again, however, the company got the money.

For some reason Mr. Hazen appears to have a soft spot in his heart for this company. The inquiry is not yet concluded.

GRANTED RESTITUTION OF CONJUGAL RIGHTS

London, April 24.—In the divorce division today the undefended petition of Lady Girouard against her husband, Sir Edouard Percy Girouard, for the restitution of conjugal rights, was granted.

It was stated that the marriage took place in 1908 in the Pretoria (South Africa) Cathedral. The applicant went to live with her mother at Howe near Brighton, last January, when and where her husband told her he was not going to live with her any more.

On Jan. 10 last Lady Girouard wrote to her husband: "I need not tell you what an impossible life this has been for me. We have been practically strangers for the last two years. We have never been really happy together. I am sure you will realize that in my case something will have to be done. I beg you, for the sake of our boy, to reconsider the position. I pray you to come back to me or let me join you so that we can start life together again."

On behalf of the respondent, Messrs. Lewis, his solicitors, replied that Sir Percy did not propose to return to Lady Girouard.

The petitioner had stated in the witness box that there had been no differences between them for some time. As already stated, there was no defence offered, and the order for the restitution of conjugal rights was granted.

HARD BLOW TO FOX COMPANY

Charlottetown, April 24.—There was a big sensation in the market today when it became known that the Charles Dalton Company lost twelve litters within a short time. As the litters average about four each, the total loss is about \$800,000, the worst individual loss in the history of the industry in this province.

Every care possible has been given to these foxes, and the management of the ranch was minutely inquired into and not a flaw was found. It was proved by catching the females that the young had been sucking their mothers, and by the conditions of the females it is surmised that the young had all been lost at one time; and it is thought that one of the many storms, either snow or thunder which have occurred since the pups were born, may have so frightened and excited the parents as to cause them to carry the pups out and bury them. But this is only a surmise, as nothing definite is known except that the pups were born and have disappeared since. There are still some pens to be examined and the company expect to pay five to fifteen per cent dividend this year.

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NO COMMISSION YET FOR FLEMMING PROBE

Fredricton, April 24.—No announcement will be made today and not likely any tomorrow, was the reply of Hon. J. Clarke today to a query as to when the personnel of the royal commission on the Dugal charges would be announced. The matter is entirely in the hands of the lieutenant-governor, and it takes some time to get in touch with those who will serve on the commission. It is possible that nothing will be known definitely until next week.

The Fredericton school board, at a special meeting this afternoon, released Contractor Moses Mitchell from his contract to erect the new Smythe street school building, and returned to him his check for \$1,500, put up as a deposit.

The board also decided to award the contract to R. A. Corbett, of St. John, whose tender was next lowest to that of Mitchell.

In the Fredericton, majority election case, judgment was given in the appeal court today. Judge White read the judgment to the effect that a rule absolute for an investigation by the city council into the majority election of March 1st had been granted; but the investigation is to be confined to objections set forth in the protest filed with the city clerk on the day of the election by ex-ald. W. J. Farrell, candidate who was defeated by Moses Mitchell. The allegations in the protest were that some ballots counted in the election were illegal. The judgment further stated that no costs would be allowed.

Other judgments followed: Mercereau vs. Swin, verdict for defendant set aside. The judgment in this case will affect about fifty settlers in the parish of Ludlow, Northumberland county. **Buld vs. Johnston**—Appeal dismissed with costs. This was a Charlotte county trespass case. Court adjourned till May 6.

SAYS GOVERNMENT SHOULD RESIGN

J. H. Burnham, Conservative M.P., Disgusted With Incompetence and Inaction of Administration

Ottawa, April 24.—"Surely the government is not going to throw up its hands and say it can do nothing. If it finds it can do nothing, it should resign and give place to another government. Speaking in a general way, if the government finds it cannot do things, it should give way to others."

It was with such frank vigorous comments as those that J. H. Burnham, the Conservative member for Peterboro, emphasized tonight his opinion of the government's inaction in regard to the control of ocean freight rates, and of Hon. Geo. E. Foster's failure to respond with a favorable reply to the demands made upon him by liberal members, and by Dr. Steele, Conservative member for South Perth, for aggressive steps to break the power of the ocean combine.

Tonight's discussion took place when Mr. Foster was seeking to put through the estimate of the department of trade and commerce, and H. H. Buckley, Liberal member for Gaspereau, declared that coastal rates had increased by the maritime insurance waters, and that the packets driven out of business by vessels in receipt of dominion subsidies.

As for transatlantic rates, he urged that action should be taken to counteract the effects of increasing traffic being down coasting rates.

Hon. Frank Oliver also drew attention to the fact that though the dominion paid large subsidies to steamship companies, Atlantic rates kept steadily increasing.

Then came Dr. Steele with the suggestion that a government-owned service should be established.

Mr. Foster, however, gave little satisfaction to his critics. He did not speak favorably of a government service, and devoted most of his statement to outlining the difficulties of the rates problem. Then came Mr. Burnham's plain, emphatic advice to the premier and his colleagues.

"The difficulties are great, but not insurmountable," he said. "A great government can do great things. Surely, the government is not going to throw up its hands and say it can do nothing. The government must not quit simply because it finds the problem difficult. It is a sign of weakness to give up. It is a sign of strength to stand firm. It is a sign of a great government to do what other countries do. The demand of the farmers is that some person or government rise up and solve these things. They must be solved."

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