McQueen Slander Hurled Back On The Foster-Veniot Crowd By Men Who Were So Falsely Accused

J. A. MURRAY IN A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE POTATO TRANSACTION, KNOCKS THE BOTTOM OUT OF McQUEEN'S REPORT

Threatened Vengeance of a Discredited Politician, Dismissed from Office by a Former Conservative Government, Fails of Its Effect—Manly and Straightforward Statement from the Leader of the Opposition Gives People of New Brunswick Their First Real Opportunity to Learn All the Facts in Connection With the Purchase and Shipment of Potatoes.

Other Work Which Prevented Personal Attention, Adverse Conditions, by Which Many Private Dealers Lost Money and Faulty Judgment in Endeavoring to Make Good a Legitimate Loss Are the Outstanding Features of the Transaction in Which Honesty of Purpose and of Conduct Was Everywhere Marked.

I rise, Mr. Speaker, to make some reference to matters contained in the McQueen Report so far as they relate to myself. In doing this, I cannot refrain from referring to the character of this report. It is, to my mind, bitter, partisan and unjust, casting reflections on my character not justified by the facts, ignoring evidence and by insinuation seeking to show dishonesty on my part.

It is generally recognized that this investigation was not conducted so much for protecting the public interests as for the attempted destruction of political opponents of the party in power. The actions of the government at every turn afford proof of this statement.

In the railway matter they appointed Mr. John M. Stevens, K. C., a man of at least reasonably fair standing at the Bar. I believe that at that time it may have been difficult or perhaps impossible to get a judge of the supreme court to act, but because Mr. Stevens' report did not go to the length which the Government desired, because it manifested some evidence of impartiality, it was practically discarded.

The government might have selected a man such as Mr. James Friel, K. C., who conducted the enquiry into the Currie charges. Mr. Friel is well known to have insisted that he would not be controlled by political or other considerations except those of his duty in exercising his powers, so they turned to an obscure lawyer to conduct the potato investigation. His report has had to be prepared for him. Even then it is well known that it had to be sent back for amendment.

Under his nominal presidency details of private business were enquired into, details which had no part in the matter under investigation, and which no fair minded lawyer would have permitted for an instant.

The Real McQueen.

Satisfied that they had at last got a man suited for their purpose instead of a judge, the government sent commission after commission to their subservient follower knowing that they could get his signature to any such report as they might desire.

In confirmation of the statement I have made, let me quote from a letter written by Mr. James McQueen which appeared in the Moncton Transcript of Monday, August 10, 1908. Mr. McQueen had been Police Magistrate at Shediac. After the Hazen Government came in power, he was removed from office for having taken an active part in the election. Mr. McQueen had appeared on the public platform and otherwise worked openly in favor of the government preceeding the Hazen Administration of 1908. The concluding paragraph of the letter written by Mr. McQueen and published in the Moncton Transcript reads as follows:

"And now I ask you to watch the finish, for I am prepared from now on to dance politically as well as the daughter of Herodias ever danced before her kingly uncle, and if I do not succeed in capturing the head of some political 'John the Baptist' it will not be for the reason that the music furnished me is deficient."

This is the man selected to conduct the potato enquiry. This is the man over whose signature a report more bitter, more partisan, and less in accordance with the evidence than ever in the history of judicial procedure, has been submitted to the public of this province; a man pledged years ago to take advantage of the earliest opportunity to do every possible injury to his political opponents.

Mr. Murray's Record.

Let me, Mr. Speaker, refer briefly to my public career. I was first elected to the Legislature of this Province on the 3rd of March, 1908. I became a member of the government without portfolio on October 16, 1911. I was made Minister of Agriculture on January 22, 1914. I was appointed Acting Minister of Lands and Mines in April, 1914, and held the position together with that of Minister of Agriculture to the end of that year.

In all my public life I have never had one dollar of public money to which I was not entitled. In all my public career I have endeavored to maintain a standard of honesty and I want, Sir, to leave to my children the good name to which my conscience tells me I am entitled.

Reference has been made by honorable gentlemen on the other side of the House to the fact that they have had sons fighting in the great struggle for freedom and liberty, which has recently been brought to a close. I do not blame them for making reference to this fact, as it is one of which they may well be proud. I am not accustomed to parading my patriotism, my loyalty, or my sacrifices for the country, to the public gaze. I want to say, however, Mr. Speaker, that I too, have an only boy. For the last three and a half years he, too, has been engaged in the defence of the Empire and today as he leaves the cradle of the world, far off Mesopotamia, journeying towards Egypt with his face to the Homeland, I desire to place such a statement before the people of this province as will enable him to realize, as I realize, that on his return he will meet me with the same unsullied public character as that I bore on his departure.

The Gift of Potatoes.

Referring, Sir, particularly to the transaction, let me say that in the Province of New Brunswick the potato crop of the year 1914 amounted to ten millions of bushels, the largest in the history of the province. In the summer of that year began the terrible struggle which we then little dreamed would lead to so much agony, suffering, and death. The people throughout the Empire were aroused by the needs of the Motherland. In Canada, province after province made contributions. After consulting the British government through the Government at Ottawa, we learned that a gift of potatoes would be thankfully accepted and gratefully received. The government decided to contribute 40,000 barrels 100,000 bushels, and at the same time to send to Belgium in her need, a further gift of 16,000 barrels. An order-in-council authorizing a governor's warrant was passed, first for $75,000 and later a second authorization for $75,000 more, making a total of $150,000, to cover the expenses of this contribution.

The responsibility of the shipment lay in the Minister of Agriculture, a position which I at that time had the honor of holding.

I immediately took the matter up with the Secretary of Agriculture, Mr. J. B. Daggett, and my instructions to him were to fix a fair and reasonable price, afterward decided on at $1.00 per barrel to the grower, with a commission of 10 cents per barrel to the seller. I instructed him also to distribute his buying as largely as possible throughout the province. Having given him full and detailed instructions as to the carrying out of the matter, I left it largely in his hands.

Was Handling Two Jobs.

I have been accused of neglect of duty or incompetence in handling this matter. I want it borne in mind, Mr. Speaker, that during the period these potatoes were being purchased, I was actively engaged for the greater part of my time not in the Department of Agriculture, but in that of Lands and Mines, a Department which all must recognize needs constant attention and close supervision. This was particularly true in the year 1914 when, owing to events which had transpired, the work of the Department was behind, matters demanding attention had accumulated and during that year I spent the greater part of every week in the City of Fredericton attending to public business in two departments without any extra remuneration.

It has been stated that I was constantly informed of the potato transactions from day to day. This is true in a general sense, as I made it my duty to enquire from time to time as to the progress of the matter, but the details of the transaction I had to leave with the officials of my Department, in view of the tremendous amount of work with which I was burdened at that time.

Now, Sir, as to the facts as I know them:

This potato transaction has been given much notoriety and publicity. In the hands of our opponents everything which could be misrepresented has been set in its very worst setting. No effort has been spared to keep the fundamental facts from the public and to cloud the issue.

Unfair From the Start.

First, let me point out that from the day this transaction was undertaken, the Press opposed to the Government of the day began to ferociously attack and misrepresent it, and that attack has continued to the present hour. Just one incident which was characteristic of the attacks which we had to meet. While the cargo was being prepared the St. John Telegraph day after day kept repeating the statement that the stock was being handled in a most incompetent manner, that stock was not being properly racked, sorted and packed; that it was being tumbled into the ship in bad condition, and went so far as to call upon the St. John Board of Trade to interfere for the honor of the province and to prevent a cargo of rotten potatoes being dumped on the hands of the British Admiralty.

Now no more untruthful statement could have been made. Every care was taken. Of this I will speak in a moment; sufficient for now to say that a cargo was sent across the sea and landed in England in first class condition and was pronounced by potato brokers as the finest cargo they had ever seen landed in the City of London.

Many expressions of appreciation and gratitude were received from the Homeland, expressions indicated that the step we had taken in making this gift to the Motherland was a wise one. As an example of this, let me refer members of this House to a framed document hanging in the Speaker's room from the Borough of Hackney in the County of London, testifying to the value placed upon the contribution we made.

The shipment to Belgium was an equally good one, and reached the other side in splendid condition. Notwithstanding this fact, during the Carleton County election, the St. John Telegraph reproduced two pictures, which had been published in the Montreal Star for the purpose of stimulating contributions to suffering Belgium, stating that the people shown in these pictures were suffering because political graft had deprived them of the food and assistance which the people of New Brunswick desired to give them. Could political spite and political venom go farther when it was common knowledge that the full quantity given both to England and to Belgium had gone forward, and that the potatoes had arrived both in England and in Belgium in the very best condition, thus affording the full measure of relief which was intended when the gift was made.

Difficulties of Shipping.

I want to say, and say without fear of successful contradiction that the cargo of potatoes sent across the Atlantic at that time was the best that ever left the shores of Canada, and was an advertisement for this product from the Province of New Brunswick such as had never been made before.

When one realizes that we were unable to procure a ship with artificial ventilation and had to take a ship with nothing but natural ventilation, and that this was a very large cargo, forty odd thousand barrels, packed fresh from the fields, this accomplishment has been recognized as one which displayed unusual skill and judgment. In fact the largest potato handler on the Continent of America, the Traffic Manager of the line of steamers running out of Boston to Southern points, warmly congratulated the officials of the Department upon the fact, and made special inquiries as to how it was done. Now, when it became known that the cargo was a particularly good one, and the evidence was indisputable, what was the Telegraph's attitude? Immediately ignoring its false and malicious statements it took another line and began an attack upon the cost of preparing the cargo. These statements were as false and malicious as their previous statements.

The Ruling Price.

The price paid was $1.00 per barrel to the farmers and 10 cents per barrel to the agent for buying, loading and meeting the out-turn at St. John. This price was rigidly adhered to and no buyer received one cent more. This phase was gone into at the McQueen enquiry, everything was done by the counsel for the Government to break down the fact, but he failed. Everybody knows that the farmers could not in 1914 produce a barrel of potatoes, delivered at the car for less than $1.00 per barrel with any reasonable profit, and 10 cents per barrel was a very reasonable margin for handling the stock. Moreover, the price paid was the market price at the time the contracts were made. It is true that before the ship sailed the market price had dropped and there were offers at a less price, but we had contracted for the stock as it was arriving, so I make no apology for standing by our contract and paying the farmers of this country $1.00 per barrel for their potatoes.

Handling Stock in St. John.

When stock arrived in St. John it had to be racked and sorted. Everybody who knows anything about handling potatoes knows how uncertain an article they are. Dealers frequently buy from the fields and before they arrive at their destination they go bad. This is one of the most difficult phases of the potato business and is often a cause of serious loss to the shippers. We arranged with the firm of A. C. Smith & Co., of West St. John, to receive stock on arrival, advance money for payment of freight, look after setting and unloading cars; every barrel to be carefully racked, piled, allowed to stand a reasonable time, then to go over a certain number of barrels or bags from each day's pack, these to be examined and if there was evidence of anything going wrong, the whole day's pack to be gone over. They were to deliver stock at ship's side all for the sum of 20 cents per package, bag or barrel. No man who knows anything of the work entailed, unless he is bitterly prejudiced, would criticize the charge. In fact, A. C. Smith & Co. claim they lost money on the contract.

Sorting of Stock.

It was desirous to send a cargo that would not only stand up and arrive in good condition, but also a cargo that would be in every way creditable to the province. A standard of size and form was set for the inspector. All rough, mishapen potatoes or stock that was not of a good bright color was sorted out. The stock which showed signs of decay was taken out and held for the account of the shipper and was deducted from the invoices. Stock that was not up to the standard in size, shape and color was held for account of the government. Much of this stock was sound and accounts for a fair percentage of surplus.

Surplus.

I have referred to the fact that it has been stated that I was constantly informed of the details of this transaction from day to day. Let me say, however, Mr. Speaker, that I knew nothing of an unusual surplus of potatoes until after the Belgium shipment was made. I was told by the officials of my Department and by our agents at St. John that when the Belgium shipment was completed we would be practically cleaned up of all the stock we had bought. This, I believe to have been an error on their part, but nevertheless it came as a great surprise to me to find that after the Belgium shipment was made, we had an enormous quantity on hand, which has been shown. Everybody knows, who knows anything of handling potatoes, that it would be impossible to prepare a cargo such as this and buy only the exact number of barrels required. It was absolutely necessary to over buy and to have a surplus on hand. What Mr. Daggett states is that by an unfortunate misunderstanding with some shippers a number of cars more than were required came in.

After the cargo was complete the question was, what would we do with the surplus? After seeking the advice of buyers all over the province we found that they were practically unanimous in their opinion that the market, which was very much depressed, would rally and by the new year the surplus could easily be disposed of. It was also reported that there was a good demand for potatoes in Great Britain and as the Secretary for Agriculture was to accompany the cargo, he was instructed to endeavor to sell as many potatoes as possible in the Old Land, not only to dispose of the surplus we had on hand, but to relieve conditions then prevailing in the province by reason of the enormous crop and the unusually low prices. The surplus stock was stored. The judgment of the potato men was found to be in error, the market went steadily lower until as everybody will recall the price went down to nothing and tens of thousands of barrels of potatoes, both here and in the United States were shovelled into the dump. Buyers in this province met with heavy losses. In England Mr. Daggett was able to easily dispose of 100,000 barrels, subject to obtaining tonnage and hurried home to look after the shipments, but in the meantime the submarine campaign of ruthless destruction had broken out and freight rates were soaring. The Imperial Government was commandeering ships every hand. We immediately took up with Messrs. Wm. Thomson & Son of St. John, the matter of the rechartering of the same ship which had taken the first cargo over. The Charter party was for the sum of $15,000 for under-deck cargo, or for 40,000 barrels. For a second Charter the owners asked $65,000—a raise of $50,000 in less than two months from the time of sailing. At the price which the potatoes would bring in the Old Country the freight rate made shipments impossible. Had we succeeded in obtaining a charter at even $30,000, double our first charter, we could have come out of the transaction with a fair profit, and greatly relieved the potato situation in the Province.

I myself went to Ottawa to enlist the help of the Federal Government in procuring a steamer. They were sympathetic but powerless.

To dispose of the surplus we then turned our attention to the Cuban market. We succeeded in making a sale of the surplus. And I wish to say that every sale as given as sold in Cuba was a bona fide sale at the price given. In the Auditor General's Department are signed contracts for every bag or barrel. Again we were met with transportation difficulties. It was impossible to obtain a direct steam boat at a reasonable rate. We undertook to ship by rail to Boston and thence by steamer. We got started and were met with a car embargo. Stock was side tracked and held up in transit. Arriving in Boston we were met with great difficulties in getting cars moved to ship's side. The difficulties were so great that we finally abandoned the route and chartered two sailing vessels. Both of these vessels were delayed by bad weather and were late in arriving and did not get in on contract time. The Cuban market in the meantime had become over stocked. Stock was so long in transit it had deteriorated, and buyers refused to take delivery. It was thrown upon our hands and we had to dispose of it to the very best advantage. I would point out that the shipments for which we succeeded in getting prompt dispatch through Boston arrived in good condition and were promptly paid for by the buyers, which proves that all the stock was in good condition and had it gone through promptly would have turned out satisfactorily. To sum up, we were met with a series of difficulties and misfortunes arising from war conditions that were insurmountable. We made an unfortunate and heavy loss. I am prepared to say right here that this statement should have been made at the time and the loss presented to the country, but it was deemed best to meet the loss from party funds.

In reaching this conclusion I naturally consulted my leader, the late Hon. Geo. J. Clarke. I want to say, Sir, that Mr. Clarke was in my opinion a man of the highest integrity, a man who served his province faithfully, and I do not believe, nor will I ever believe that any act of his was committed which can be in any way construed as casting a reflection on his character. I say, Sir, that I consulted him, and it was his view that rather than have the Province meet the loss, which had been incurred, an amount should be obtained from party funds with which to pay to the province the amount due it based on the sales we had made. After we had discussed the matter, I concurred in this view. It may have been wrong, but it certainly did not appear to me to be an unwise or a wrong thing to do at the time.

I want to repeat what I stated under oath during the enquiry, that I never knew the source of party funds nor did I ever know of their disposition. I have never acted on any financial committee connected with the Party with which I am associated and I was utterly and absolutely ignorant as to the amount that might be in the fund to which Mr. Clarke referred. I make this statement advisedly, I make this statement basing it on the actual facts as they were. I knew nothing of the amount that might be at our disposal, but I did think that under the circumstances no better use could be made of this money than to save the province harmless from the loss which had been incurred.

A statement was made up on the basis of sales actually made, signed contracts for which are in the Auditor General's Department. Also to include the stock which had gone bad in St. John, at the estimated cost to the Government. This was done and the loss met from party funds. This, let me frankly admit, was an error in judgment and party politics.

With reference to the statement which was presented to the House and which went before the Public Accounts committee showing the receipt of the $32,000, this has been branded a false statement. When this statement was made up I took the view, rightly or wrongly, these potatoes having been sold, bona fide sales having been made and these returns due the province, that if the amount was made good, coming from the source, which I had no reason to suppose was not one with which those in control of it could do as they wished, this statement was not a wrong thing to present, but rather I congratulated myself that the loss had been overcome and the amount due the Province from the sales which had been made, placed to the credit of the Province.

Honesty of Transaction.

I wish to say that after the most exhaustive, bitter and partisan investigation ever conducted in this country or any other, not one dollar of misappropriation has been proven. Not a man, not a friend of the Government, or official of the department profited by one copper.

There are several items which have ben distorted and given a setting absolutely unjustified by the facts. With these I desire to deal.

Prices Paid.

I have already stated that we paid only the market price—and the price was only what a farmer should receive for a barrel of potatoes.

Cost of Preparing Cargo for Shipment.

Let me repeat this was a fair price and equitable, and no man can truthfully say otherwise, and in the investigation no evidence was produced to contradict this statement.

Culls.

Potatoes were racked and culled at West St. John, bad stock was deducted from invoice and remittance made only for out-turn of sound stock. Only a small quantity of culls was sold and these were from the stock held for account of shippers. As the government had not paid for this stock, no account was kept after the transaction was closed. It is impossible to state the exact amount after four years, but it was only a matter of a few hundred dollars.

B. F. Smith's account was handled on a different basis, all other shippers simply invoiced and waited for remittance. Mr. Smith's account was a large one and he was permitted by the Secretary for Agriculture to make drafts. No remittances were made to him on account of culls as his drafts were paid in full except in the case of the cars which were short. In these cases, the government paid for the actual number of barrels in car and his drafts against these cars were paid that much short by the government. His culls were held for future settlement. Potatoes grew steadily lower in the market, and it became impossible to sell good potatoes, much more difficult to sell culls. When his account was made up by Mr. Daggett it showed his cars to have culled about $2,300. Mr. Smith disagreed with the interpretation of the agreement with the Secretary. He states the word used was shortage, and he understood it to mean short in actual out-turn. Mr. Daggett contended it meant culls. Along this line they have always been and are today in disagreement.

The potatoes which went bad during the months held in storage were not sold, but were dumped; there was nothing else to do with them. Good potatoes could not be sold for 30 cents a barrel and there was no market for decaying potatoes.

In the matter of $126.00 paid to Mr. Morton, there seems to be some misunderstanding. Evidently this amount was placed in the cull account and distributed to the shippers. The transaction was never known to me, and it does not seem clear, and at this date it has been impossible to determine whether it properly belonged there or not, or whether it was from a second warehouse cull made after the ship sailed. It must be borne in mind that settlement for culls was not made with shippers until some time after goods were all warehoused. It can thus be readily seen how an error of this kind could occur.

The statement made in the report that Mr. Daggett sold a large quantity of culls for which he failed to account is incorrect in every particular. This he never did, and I am at a loss to know from what portion of the evidence such a deduction could be made.

Inspection.

An effort has been made to make it appear that favoritism was permitted in passing stock. The sworn and documentary evidence proves that this is absolutely false; that the inspector had a free hand, was not interfered with by any official of the Department. In fact some of the closest friends of the Government bitterly complained of the culling they were given and claimed they lost money on the shipment. Statements have been made regarding returns from Cuban shipments being diverted and not sent in to the Provincial Treasurer. Two items, one of $8,000, and one of $800, have been criticised.

An arrangement was entered into with A. C. Smith & Co. for handling the surplus by which they were to act as the Government's agents in sending forward shipments to Cuba; they were to pay all charges of barrelling, rail and water transportation, etc. They were to make drafts upon the consignee in Cuba, sight draft attached to bill of lading. This was the only way in which it could be handled, as there was no appropriations for carrying the transaction through. The $8,000, complained of was duly paid by Cuban buyers through the Bank of Nova Scotia to account of A. C. Smith & Co., and was credited by A. C. Smith & Co., against their expense account and was proper and in order. The $800, was the balance of a shipment which went bad, was collected by J. C. Manzer and instead of being sent to A. C. Smith & Co. was sent payable to the Minister of Agriculture.

That $5,000 Payment.

A. C. Smith & Co., had an expense account against this shipment. The cheque was turned over to them against their expense account. W. W. Boyce had a part of this shipment and in the cheque was included account of his sales for his shipment and the amount was duly paid by A. C. Smith & Co. to W. W. Boyce.

Regarding the payment of $5,000, to A. C. Smith & Co., about which there has been some dispute, this is the only financial transaction relating to the potatoes with which I had to do personally.

Mr. Daggett was seriously ill in the hospital at Fredericton, having undergone an operation for appendicitis, Mr. H. Colby Smith applied to me for $5,000 on account of the amount which he claimed was owing him. I went to the hospital and ascertained from Mr. Daggett that there was an amount due him and that it would be all right to pay him the sum indicated. As I had not at my disposal any statement to present to the Auditor General, and as Mr. Smith was urgent in his demand for the amount, I procured the money for him on the understanding that when his final settlement was made, this sum would be deducted. The settlement was made when Mr. Daggett recovered and on my instructions and in accordance with the agreement which I had made with Mr. Smith, $5,000 was retained from his cheque. There seems to be some forgetfulness on the part of Mr. Smith with reference to this transaction. The facts so far as I am concerned are as I have related them.

A Private Matter.

The report refers to an amount of $1,500 a private transaction between Mr. H. Colby Smith and myself. For this I am severely censured. Let me say, Sir, in my defence, that this was a matter as remote from the potato transaction as is pole from pole. I had never the slightest idea that it could or would in any way be connected with this matter. It was an absolutely personal one and the amount paid into the bank at Fredericton to the credit of A. C. Smith & Co. was my money, paid with the express object of retiring this obligation, one which, as I have said, Sir, had absolutely no connection, nor was it brought about in any particular, by the potato transaction.

I realize that a wrong construction can be put upon it. I know that the commissioner has stated that the facts do not clearly show whether this amount of $1,500 paid to the credit of A. C. Smith & Co. was my money or that belonging to the Government. This, Sir, is only one indication of the lengths to which the commissioner has gone in his report. My sworn testimony was that it was my money, and I repeat again, that this was a private transaction, and when the amount was paid to the credit of A. C. Smith & Co. at Fredericton, it was at the request of Mr. H. Colby Smith himself.

Had I for a moment realized that such a construction could have been put upon the transaction as has been placed upon it, I certainly would not have been a party to it, but I did not realize that how bitter, how venomous, or how unfair, could be one's political opponents.

The Investigation.

Never was an investigation conducted as was this one. Mr. Peter J. Hughes was engaged as counsel. In opening Mr. Hughes made the statement that there were practically no documents in the Department, that there had evidently been a clean sweep. Now what are the facts?

That statement of Mr. Hughes was absolutely untrue, made deliberately to deceive witnesses. Questions which had been clearly framed after a study of the documents to mislead witnesses were put to them in a way and manner to mislead. Afterwards when it suited the government counsel to produce these very documents, they were brought forward without the slightest explanation or apology. Never during the whole period of the investigation did the Commissioner lift his voice or finger to protect a witness. Any and every indignity was heaped upon them.

This is the story in brief of the potato transaction and of my connection with it. I think even my bitterest opponents will admit, that I have been to a very large extent the victim of circumstances. Burdened, as I have said, with the work of two departments, unable to give the close attention to the details of different matters, which under other circumstances I could have done, there were evidence of irregularities, not wrong of themselves, but not in accordance with good business judgment, irregularities of which I had no knowledge, and Sir, let me say that not only did not I, but no official of my Department, nor so far as I know, no person connected with the shipment of potatoes to England and Belgium, ever make one dollar in connection with the gift of the Province to Great Britain and to Belgium. The only persons who made money out of the transaction were those who conducted the investigation.

These are the facts: Error of judgment there may have been. Dishonesty or neglect of duty on my part, I deny. I have served my province faithfully in my public life. I have profited nothing. I have lost much, but no loss can compare to being wrongfully deprived of my good name. One is reminded when assailed as I have been, of the words of Cardinal Wolsey, when he gave expression to his regret that he had served his King more diligently than he had performed some of the more important duties of life.

MANY CASES OF RHEUMATISM NOW

Says We Must Keep Feet Dry, Avoid Exposure and Eat Less Meat.

Stay off the damp ground, avoid exposure, keep feet dry, eat less meat, drink lots of water and above all take a spoonful of salts occasionally to keep down uric acid.

Rheumatism is caused by poisonous toxin, called uric acid, which is generated in the bowels and absorbed into the blood. It is the function of the kidneys to filter this acid from the blood and cast it out in the urine. The pores of the skin are also a means of freeing the blood of this impurity. In damp and chilly, cold weather the skin pores are closed, thus forcing the kidneys to do double work, they become weak and sluggish and fail to eliminate this uric acid which keeps accumulating and circulating through the system, eventually settling in the joints and muscles causing stiffness, soreness and pain called rheumatism.

At the first twinge of rheumatism get from any pharmacy about four ounces of Jad Salts; put a tablespoonful in a glass of water and drink before breakfast each morning for a week. This is said to eliminate uric acid by stimulating the kidneys to normal action, thus ridding the blood of these impurities.

Jad Salts is inexpensive, harmless and is made from the acid of grapes and lemon juice, combined with lithia and is used with excellent results by thousands of folks who are subject to rheumatism. Here you have a pleasant, effervescent lithia-water drink which overcomes uric acid and is beneficial to your kidneys as well.

Murray Re F

B. F. SMITH SHOWS T SHIPMENT WAS P AND

Purchases of Potatoes Were Mad Dangers of Loss Were Grea Expected the Market to Adv Cents Per Barrel Paid to H Commission Than Dealers sion Purchases—Claims He ince for Over-payment and to Take Action Against Him Methods Characterized the erences to Him.

Fredericton, N. B., Mar. 27—Mr. B. F. Smith said he desired to trespass upon the time of the house in order to give consideration to some of the references made to him in the McQueen report touching matters relative to the potato investigation. "It is not my intention," he said, "to take up much of the time in answering the references to myself as I do not feel, nor do I think that the members of this house feel that I should have been dragged into this matter and referred to in the report by the commissioner in the way that he has seen fit to do.

Was Not a Member.

"The honorable members wh have taken the trouble to rea the report will notice that I am referred to on every page wh re my name is mentioned as "the honorable B. F. Smith." It is a fact, however, that when this transaction occurred, instead of having that title I was not even a member of the legislature, but a private citizen of this province. There is an apparent desire therefore, in my judgment, on the part of the commissioner to convey to the people of this country and to those who may be interested in the reading of this report that I was at the time of this transaction united with the Government of New Brunswick. The St. John Globe in an editorial comment under date of October 10, 1918, refers to me in common with other gentlemen who were involved, but afterward it corrected the statement and said that B. Frank Smith was not a member of the legislature. Evidently the St. John Globe thought in its editorial of the 10th that I was a member of the legislature but when it learned that I was not that paper very properly and rightly too called attention to the fact through its editorial columns that I was not a member of the legislature and the inference is plain that there was nothing irregular in my engaging in a business transaction with the government of the province of New Brunswick, not being a member of the house. Contrast that, if you will, Mr. Speaker, with the report of Commissioner McQueen, who was sworn to consider the evidence laid befor his court in a fair and impartial manner and to bring in a report based on the finding of the evidence without favor. Is it not clear, I again repeat, that there was a desire, yea the intent, on the part of Commissioner McQueen to send broadcast throughout the length and breadth of this country a false impression in this regard.

About That $2,375.70.

As I read the report, Mr. Speaker, there are contained in it two items which are of interest to myself and while they are not questions which involve my honor in this house, I desire to give the house and the country a true explanation of the matter involved. It is stated in the final conclusions of the McQueen report on page 43 that the Hon. B. F. Smith was advanced by the late government $2,375.70 on the purchase of potatoes which the province never received, and the province also paid $71.85 as interest on his drafts in connection with this potato transaction which he should have paid. He is, therefore, indebted to the Province of New Brunswick in these two amounts." That statement, Mr. Speaker, is inaccurate, is misleading and false in every particular. I never received a single dollar in advance from the department of agriculture in this transaction. The arrangement which I entered into with the deputy minister of that department was that I was to buy from the farmers potatoes for this shipment, I was to pay them $1.00 per barrel and that the department was to allow me ten cents per barrel commission for gathering in this stock and loading the same. The payments were to be made to me through the Bank of Nova Scotia when they were presented with documents attached to bill of lading duly signed by an accredited official of the Canadian Pacific Railway. There was never a single dollar advanced nor is there a word to be found in all the pages of that voluminous evidence given before the commission that would substantiate any such finding on the part of the commissioner. Therefore, in this conclusion I am forced, as I believe every honest and intelligent reader will be, to conclude that the commissioner has again deliberately sought to convey a false impression to the people of the province.

His Agreement.

"It is true that the evidence