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## DAVIDSON COMMISSION DEALS GENTLY WITH PARTY PATRIOTS

(Continued From Page Two.)

eighteen-dollar binoculars to the government for an average price of fifty-eight dollars. The government acquires merit with the public for having abstained from doing any more business with the Keystone Supply Company since Birkett put that one over. Incidentally, the patriot, Ellis, appeared once again before the commission and explained how he was paid ten per cent. right off the top to break the ring, and prevent men like Birkett milking the market. Ellis explained that he took Birkett's word for it and neglected to demand the original invoices for the binoculars. All of which goes to show that even a Sam Hughes patriot can be ten per cent. careless about these little matters.

The commission has demonstrated the fact that second thoughts are best. For example Honorary Major Thomas Russell, having had a long time to think it over, appears with a revised version of the motor purchases which puts him in a far better light. It seems that he paid the catalogue price for motor trucks because he didn't want the Germans to get on to the fact he was violating neutrality and putting President Wilson in wrong by purchasing in the United States. What's more, Major Russell gave his services for nothing and often "wonders why he did it." In which



**LIEUT.-COL. R. A. PYNE, M. D.**  
Ontario's minister of education now in England in connection with Ontario's gift of a hospital. He has been made a Lieut.-Col.

respect he is not alone—the auditor-general also wonders.

On the other hand Honorary Major Thomas, an imported patriot from New York, has been obliged to tune himself down. At the Public Accounts Committee he took credit for saving Canada \$120,000 on motor purchases for the first contingent. It transpires now that what he meant was that he could have saved that much money on the prices paid by Major Russell if he had bought as many motors as Major Russell did. This hypothesis involves a difference of \$100,000, but does not interfere with Major Thomas' claim that when you want to save money you've got to bring a man from New York to do it. The Major, according to his own evidence gave up a \$25,000 job in New York to come over and save money for Canada. He also "wonders why he did it." Perhaps the Major ceases to wonder when he looks at his contract. He gets one and a half per cent on all motor purchases, repairs and renewals, which ought to be considerably better than \$25,000 a year if he attends to business.

The Commission opened up one new field—oats. But not enough to hurt. The fresh fact disclosed

was that R. H. Pringle, son of R. Pringle, K. C., ex-M. P., was a tenderer for oats, but not a seller to the Militia Department. Mr. Pringle is not a farmer. He does not grow oats. He is, perhaps, even ignorant of the fact that barley has whiskers and oats have not. But that did not prevent the government inviting him to tender for the oats. Most citizens have sown oats by one hand or another at a younger period of their lives, while other citizens have felt their oats, so that gives them a technical knowledge of the subject and enables the government to select a number of good Conservative as oat merchants to the Crown. The least you can do for a friend is to ask him to make a hearty oat meal, as it were, at the country's expense. Mr. Pringle seems to have been too moderate in his demands. Other tenderers, who were similarly invited, charged the government thirty-three and one third per cent more per bushel than oats were selling for to private customers. The only reason Mr. Pringle could have been turned down was that he didn't bid high enough.—H. F. Gadsby.



**MAJOR CLARKSON JAMES**

Secretary to Lieut.-Col. Pyne, minister of education in Ontario, who has been given the military rank of major. He is in England with his chief in connection with Ontario's gift of a hospital.

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