

Mar. 25.

SIZZLING COMMENT WAKENS UP PRICE TO POLITICAL DANGER

Outspoken, Indignant Protests Foil Seizure Legislation

BILL IS WITHDRAWN

Attorney-General Announces That "Other Claimants" Have Appeared

Womanhood—indignant, outspoken womanhood—asserted itself in the political arena yesterday. And there were happenings—speedy, upsetting happenings. There was no dramatic invasion of the Legislative halls by femininity, but the women made themselves heard, in the homes, over the telephone, on the streets, in the stores—and elsewhere. They talked emphatically and persistently till the town seethed with their sizzling comment. And, by-and-by, in fact quite early in the day, the tidings reached the Big Building in Queen's Park. Then—

The Attorney-General, Hon. W. H. Price, withdrew his bill to escheat the estate of the late Charles Millar, K.C., and saved himself and his Cabinet from the lava and fire of a political Vesuvius.

It was indubitably the accumulation of indignation among the women which forced this volte face on the part of the Attorney-General. They were the quickest and most vehement to resent the implications in the bill proposed by the Government.

The Talk of the Town.

Both yesterday and the day before the articulate indignation of women could be heard in every phase of daily life. On the street cars they could be overheard as denouncing as "thievery" the proposed action of the Government in "escheating" the half-million-dollar estate designated by the testator for the mother of the largest family in Toronto and devoting that to a Provincial purpose. In the department stores and from the small corner grocers the feminine customers raised their voices in an equally protesting vein. Newspaper offices were bombarded with salvos of feminine protestations against the proposed action by the Government. One broker explained that his wife, though a loyal Conservative, would never again cast a vote for the party if it carried out what she thought was an absolutely unfair and discriminating law.

Price Goes Into Reverse.

On the ground that the considering and settling of the many claims to the Millar estate which had sprung up since the introduction of the bill to escheat the funds in favor of the University of Toronto, would be too great an onus on the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, Attorney-Gen-

eral William H. Price announced in the Legislature yesterday that the bill would be withdrawn.

The bill came up in committee stage toward 1.30 p.m., when almost every member had left the House for luncheon, and it was some time before the news of the withdrawal was generally known and conversation on the matter could be heard in the lobbies.

Other Claimants Appear.

"I told the House that the Government had acted at the suggestion of the trustees," Mr. Price stated, referring to the complaints which had been made since the introduction of his bill. "It now appears that there are claimants in addition to people who live in California, and who say they are relatives, in this Province, coming forward to make claims on the estate."

"I am afraid," the Attorney-General went on, "that, as a Government, we cannot take the responsibility of settling the claims of these people who have come forward now that the Government has suggested that the money should be given to the University of Toronto."

Then, remarking that the burden of this responsibility was too large to be placed on the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, the Attorney-General said, "We propose to withdraw the bill."

May Now File Claims.

In view of the statement of the Attorney-General for Ontario made in the Legislature yesterday in connection with the proposed escheatment of the residue of the estate of the late Charles Millar, it is now open to any person who can establish relationship or claim to relationship to file his or her claim and prove it. This will have to be done by an action in the Supreme Court of Ontario "to revoke or set aside the probate of the will in the Surrogate Court."

Mode of Procedure.

This would be done, among other things, by attacking the clause in the Millar will giving the residue of the estate to the woman having the greatest number of children during the six years following the death of the testator and endeavoring to have it set aside as contrary to public policy and void for uncertainty. Should it be decided in the Supreme Court that this clause was invalid the residue will be distributed among those entitled to it who can prove their claim and their relationship to the deceased Charles Millar in accordance with the rules for the distribution of bequests in such cases.

The question of the validity of the particular clause in the will now being discussed may be decided early in connection with the action of James A. Noel of Pasadena, California, who claims that he holds an agreement made with the late Nancy Vance Millar, a grand-aunt, by which he was to share in any bequest received from the estate of Charles Millar.

Claimants Near Aylmer.

According to E. Blake Miller, one-time member of the Ontario Legislature, representing East Elgin, who arrived in the city yesterday afternoon in connection with claims to the Charles Millar estate, the late Charles Millar was born on a farm adjoining his in the Aylmer district. An uncle of the late Charles Millar was Albert Millar, also deceased, and a resident in the Aylmer district. He had two children, one of whom left a family of eight. These grandchildren of Albert Millar are, in E. Blake Miller's opinion, the rightful heirs to the Millar estate—and are now residing on farms in the Aylmer area.

In addition Albert Millar also left a daughter—Miss Roxy Millar—still living near Aylmer, who is also claimed to be interested in the estate. A member of this same family is said to have been employed in the late Charles Millar's office, and it is stated that she is still employed in the city. Miss Roxy Millar's home is in Malahide Township, a few miles southeast of Aylmer.

In E. Blake Miller's view, "there is not the slightest doubt but that these members of the Millar family are the rightful heirs."