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## **Letter to the Editor**

Louis-Philippe Gagné

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## Mr. Gagne Again

To the Editor:

As an undersized critic or better as a short lobster I was thrown overboard by my dearest friend, Con Callahan, to grow and develop to lawful size, according to his story printed in last Saturday's Sun. What an ingratitude! No doubt that his ship is going to the rocks and that mistaking me for a heavy weight he wants his boat to be more in safety.

My friend has contracted such a severe attack of "cold feet" when he read what he terms my "epistle" that as the lone officer of the fictive *Lame Ducks* he has decided to give me no further attention. Just too bad, my dear man! I am afraid you will have to change your mind very soon and apologize for your Mayor again.

By the way, Con Callahan, you seem very good on "fish stories." Let me congratulate you. But when you are about to leave your boat and swim ashore you will agree with me that small lobster meat still is the best on the market. Even crab meat is too refined for you and you better keep on talking about pigs and....good manners. Follow my advice, infuriated man, keep your head and cool off if you are to mix into politics; do not be so modest with your polished vocabulary when you write against gentlemen even if they do come from the woods of Canada.

I assume that you have never been in Canada. That is the place where they know how to be polite. You know what I mean, my dear friend, do you? You say that for 25 years you held an important position at the Androscoggin Mills and that when you retired you left in an honorable manner.

Is it another of your "fish stories"? No bait, sir.

For 15 years after you left the mills, you have been tolerated to roam at large on Lisbon street, scheming schemes, clamming and trying to throw mud at anyone until you were relegated sometime ago to the most remote corner on the second floor in the City Hall as a political reward by your wonderful Mayor or better your life-saver. That is how you became a searcher, a new Sherlock Holmes. Can you imagine! No doubt that after your audit is over in the Water Works Department it will become necessary to appoint another one to look over your own books.

My friend has a very sensitive epiderm; he is very very ticklish to say the least. He now wants to quit in order to be beyond the reach of even a small lobster's claws. Con Callahan is so great, so courageous so smart, so witty a MAN that is only argument against me is that Louis Philippe is a short man and a recent "new comer" from some isolated hamlet two weeks from Quebec. How splendid it is! How bright it is!...yes, "bright" disease. Please never ask to become a lawyer; it would be a farce!

Say, Con., you might laugh at any short man, but if I wanted to be personal I would ask you to explain how you became a giant. I thought that you were a MAN and that you could discuss political matters as they are, but you have shown to the readers of this paper and even to your friends that you are very small. I am ready to stand any attempt on your part to disparage me because a "politician should be made of steel" as you ought to know. Go to it, Con Callahan, give me all the undesirable publicity you want; you will not stop me to tell the world about Mayor's POLITICAL wrong doings.

You might insinuate anything you want without proving it. As the *Lame Ducks* lone officer you should have known all the facts about the accounts of the first snowshoe convention in Lewiston. For your own information and to show how well informed you have been, I want to tell you what were the remarks made by Mr. Lambert and which you were top "cold feet" to quote. He accused me of embezzlement in regard to that first convention and stated that "I took over \$400 out of Le Montagnard's money." Mr. Lambert made a mistake. He should have said \$521 which was the amount he spoke about and at any time you are at liberty, my dear Mr. Callahan, you may come to Le Messenger's office and I will show you the receipt for that amount, also the signature of the responsible party and what goods Le Montagnard Club has received for that amount. Furthermore, it may be interesting for you to learn the following detail: A few days ago the executive committee of Le Montagnard voluntarily voted a "complimentary active membership" to Louis Philippe Gagne for services rendered. Yes, my dear man, the same Club and the same man! How do you like that one? ...not a fish story though

Say, Con Callahan, how many conventions have you ever brought to Lewiston, to that same city where you were born? As the promoter of that first convention in the United States, I have a right to ask that question, to anyone whose mission it is to find black spots in HIS city.

You might write in your next *Lame Ducks'* chronicle that Louis Philippe is a short man, born in Quebec City (by privilege) thirty years ago and that seven years ago he chose Lewiston to live in, first because it was his business and also because he knew that Maine is the best State in the Union in which to live and do business. Keep saying it; keep believing it; ever practice the belief, my dear man. I might also state that I was naturalized an American citizen in January 1923 because a Supreme court judge was satisfied that I could be useful to this country and because I was qualified. Seven years ago I could not speak English and to-day I know enough to let you know what you are. I can say that I am as much an American as you pretend to be even if you were born in Lewiston.

Rather than reading all about jokes and funny sayings you would do well to read the papers. You would know that on November 24, 1929, Edwin J. Foster, of Worcester, Mass., commander in chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, delivered an address in Portland at a dinner attended by 250 persons and declared that the American born citizen gets his "Americanship" too easily. "It would be better, he said, to try to Americanize some of our Americans than the foreigners who come to our shores. Yes, sir, "some of our Americans" including those who say: "I was born in Lewiston but you were not."

Con Callahan, always keep in mind that you were born in Lewiston by a mere accident...and what an accident, my Lord! You should bless this city for having tolerated you ever since. What a great responsibility on your part, my dear man, when you were born! How courageous, how witty you were to be born here rather than in a hamlet or in the woods of Canada! How phenomenal it was of you! Please help me find some better words to give you justice and vindicate your glory. Born in Lewiston and a tall man! You should have a copyright on that, Con.

You have made a biography of your majestic person. You said: "When the late George W. Bean was about to retire he said that he wanted to recommend me as his successor as Agent inasmuch as he considered me qualified for the position in every respect."

It sounds very funny, Con Callahan, that Mr. Bean forgot all about you and that you are to be content now of a small political job. Please tell us another one. By the way, how is it that your article was supposed to be the report of a meeting of your famous *Lame Ducks* and that in the last part of it you made a frequent use of the pronouns "I" and "Me"? That was a very good way to let the world know that the *Lame Ducks* are Con Callahan. The next time do not forget to sign your articles. No difference to me though.

Do you want more information about me? Let us speak about the Snowshoers' activities, will you? After having promoted the first snowshoe convention ever held in the United States I was elected president of Le Montagnard Club one year later. Then I became first president of the American Snowshoe Union and I was awarded a gold medal as such two years later. I am also an honorary president of the Red Devils Snowshoe Club. The only thing I would not suffer would be to hear someone speak against our snowshoers and their organizations. Furthermore, I still have my snowshoer's uniform, one of the first three made in Lewiston and I will wear it next year when our boys go to the International convention in my native city, Quebec. Of course we do not want you there because you are too fresh and there are too many woods in Canada. You do not even appreciate the fact that those woods provide the paper on which to write all about your *Lame Ducks* and...pigs. Le Montagnard snowshoe Club

has always had good auditors since it has been founded and when there is an audit to be made, believe me, Le Montagnard will not ask YOU.

You will agree with me that you did not answer one of the charges I made against your Mayor. What about the contract he awarded in the amount of \$400 without any bid? What about his spending \$30,000 of the taxpayers' money to reward politicians and have them made an audit? What is taking the interests of the past administrations' officials against any disfiguring in that audit? Why spend \$30,000 to hire so-called accountants that are not certified ones? When were those so-called accountants sworn in? How much are you paid for your public office, and how much anyone of the so-called accountants are paid for their public work? Who pays? What about the promised monthly reports on the city expenditures and receipts? Come down to business, Con Callahan, and tell the public about figures. It is a public business; it is the public's business. and it must be known if there is no mismanagement.

Louis Philippe Gagne