

HON. J. A. MURRAY HAD GOVERNMENT ON DEFENSIVE

(Continued from page 2)
Having come to the rescue he now had the satisfaction of finding his feet firmly planted on the floor of the House and he (Murray) believed sincerely that he would do his best in the interests of his party.

"Safety First" Government.
In making up his government, the premier appeared to have acted on the principle of "safety first" and several counties which might reasonably have expected to be represented were left out in the cold. We might instance the counties of Queens and Sunbury, both of which were now represented by gentlemen well qualified for cabinet rank. The city of Moncton also was represented by a minister without portfolio. The member for Beauséjour who had so ably seconded the address was a gentleman also well worthy of cabinet rank. The honorable member from Moncton in one of his election speeches in 1908 had expressed the view that the government which had been in power at many years at that time was "old, broken down, knocked down and spoiled." He (Murray) trusted that the present government not already rot into that pass, but he must confess to having been somewhat surprised a week or two ago at an announcement appearing in the Royal Gazette, that he usually so far as his experience went been the custom for the premier of the province to submit any recommendations which he had for appointment to the lieutenant-governor who did not act upon any other recommendation, but in the Royal Gazette for the 11th April a notice appeared in which was said that his honor upon the recommendation of the Dominion Alliance had been pleased to appoint Mr. D. J. Wilson as chief inspector under the prohibition act. Did that mean that his honor had lost confidence in himself or did it mean that he had lost confidence in his advisors and was therefore driven to accept recommendations directed from the interested? No doubt some members of the opposition would feel it their duty to make some enquiries on this subject.

Will Hold Them to It.
Prior to the election of February 24, the then opposition had for years been going up and down throughout the province using all sorts of methods creditable and otherwise in an effort to get hold of the reins of power and today as a result they had honor and privilege of governing the province, but they also made a great many promises as to what they would do when they got into power and the promises must now be fulfilled. People throughout the province would look anxiously at the speech of his honor, the lieutenant-governor for some indication of what the government's programme was in the way of constructive legislation and he felt sure that all classes of people would be duly disappointed when they would no sign of any such thing in it.

Previous speakers who had fulfilled the duty which he was now fulfilling had frequently made the remark that the speeches they were discussing was more remarkable for what it omitted than for what it contained, but never in the history of the province was there a speech delivered which was so barren in matters of public interest and relating to the advancement of the province as that delivered yesterday. True, there were in it some things with which all would agree as for example the reference to His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught who a few months ago retired from the positions of governor-general of the dominion after filling that office with the greatest honor and dignity. It was with extreme sorrow that everyone learned that shortly after his return to England he should have lost his wife.

The honorable gentleman from Sunbury who had moved the address yesterday had informed the house that he had not much use for royalty but he surely would admit that the late governor-general had performed the duties of his office in a way that no one could successfully criticize. His career showed the truth of the remark that "blood will tell." The monarchical system of which the great British Empire was governed had the greatest test the world had ever known and was still standing it, and as the representative of that system, the Duke of Connaught had performed his duties with the greatest honor and he had been followed by another worthy representative of His Majesty, in the person of the Duke of Devonshire. It had been his (the speaker's) pleasure to meet the Duke personally and he found him to be a man of high ideals and with a wide knowledge of this country and he took great interest in learning conditions in all the provinces.

The Great War.
Another reference in the speech was to the effect that the country was standing in the shadow of a great war. The speakers yesterday referred to the growing intensity of the war and the growing casualty lists testify that that growing intensity, but notwithstanding this casualty list, the number of men for the front must be kept up. One of the speakers said yesterday that the army walked on its stomach and for this reason it was imperative that every step would be taken to increase production but whether there is increased production or not the strength on the firing line must be kept up. Unless it were so kept up and maintained he had been informed by a competent authority that Canada would have no army at all on the firing line by the end of 1917.

The sacrifices the people would be called upon to make might be severe but they must be made. The war was increasing in intensity and no man can foresee the end. The Allies would win certainly but only by united effort. Reference had been made in the speech to the military hospital. That matter had been before the government for a long time as the hon. member from Moncton knew very well. The commissioners for the Jordan-Sanatorium, of whom he was a member, had had the matter under consideration and there was no reason that could be avoided why plans which had been discussed had not been completed.

Greater Production.
Reference had been made to the greater production meeting held in Fredericton last week. He had been unable to find out from the press reports what part the department of agriculture was going to take in the matter and he hoped the hon. minister for agriculture would enlighten the house on that subject at the earliest possible moment.

With regard to the Valley Railroad he was glad to learn that the government proposed to complete the work as quickly as possible. As to investigating the finances of the railway he and his friends in the opposition did not fear any enquiry that the government chose to have made and the same might be said of the audit which

he understood was taking place with regard to the general financial state of the province. The hon. member from Moncton when he was premier prior to the 1908 election also had an audit made but he did not give the full report of it to the public. He (the speaker) hoped that on the present occasion the full report would be brought out no matter whether it justified or condemned the late government.

The government also he noted intended to do something with the roads they had held a meeting some months ago in St. John at which a plan was formulated and they were going to take the highways out of politics and put them into the hands of the people in the various school districts. That would make a beautiful patchwork system. One district with good roads, the next with bad and the next with something that was neither one thing nor the other. If the minister of public works were wise, he would adopt the policy followed by his immediate predecessor and then the people would get what they had been wanting for years—good roads.

With regard to the crown land department, there had been some talk of putting these under a commission and thus relieving the government of any responsibility. That policy had done a great deal to defeat the present government in the counties where they were defeated. Not one word was mentioned in the speech about the reclassification which is one of the most important works ever undertaken in the province.

He was surprised to find no reference whatever in the speech to the agricultural department and what was supposed to be done for the farmers. The present minister had the greatest opportunity of his life to help on the development of the farming industry take advantage of it.

He was disappointed that there was no reference to the problem of cheaper power or to the workmen's compensation act. A commission would soon report on this subject of workmen's compensation and it would be for the government to accept that report and work it out. The subject of immigration had received no attention in the speech. In this connection he would say that Mr. Sumner, the present agent general had served without remuneration and had rendered splendid service in London to New Brunswick's soldiers.

He regretted that the government instead of preparing to carry out the promises made while in opposition had been busily engaged in cutting off the heads of government officials. He had expected better things from a modern premier who had been hailed as a modern Moses. He had confidence in the ability of the premier and trusted he would cut away from ministerial influences and work in interest of the province. He could promise the loyal support of the opposition to all measures designed for the public good, but they would reserve the right to offer criticism. He believed they could differ in their political views without carrying their differences into their social life.

Hon. Mr. Foster followed.
Mr. Potts moved the adjournment of the debate which was made the order of the day for Monday at 8.30 p.m.

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