

House of Assembly  
Proceedings

## OFFICIAL SYNOPSIS.

THURSDAY, July 17.  
The House met at 3 p.m. pursuant to adjournment.

## NOTICE OF MOTION.

Hon. Minister of Finance.—To move that supply be granted to His Majesty. In the absence of the Hon. Minister of Finance the Hon. the Prime Minister moved that supply be granted His Majesty.

## ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

Mr. Warren asked the Hon. Prime Minister (a) if the Railway was being operated under the supervision of commissioners as heretofore; (b) if so, who are the commissioners; (c) if it is the intention of the Government to continue this system; (d) have any steps been taken to provide for any other mode of operation.

Hon. Prime Minister replied that the Railway was being operated by Mr. Russell, and that no commissioners have been appointed; also that it was the intention of the Government to continue this system for the immediate present, and that no steps had been taken as yet for different system of operation.

Mr. Grimes asked the Hon. Prime Minister (a) when the new Normal School would be open; (b) how many teachers would be employed; (c) if any teachers would be engaged outside of Newfoundland; (d) if so, how many and from where.

Hon. the Prime Minister replied that it was proposed to open on September 1st; he could not say how many teachers would be employed, probably about the same number as formerly. He informed Mr. Grimes it was not proposed to employ or engage teachers outside of Newfoundland. He also said that if the Carnegie Fund of \$15,000.00 was available a junior college could be run in connection with the Normal School for a further sum of \$40,000.00 whereas now the cost was about \$60,000.00.

Mr. Grimes asked the Hon. Prime Minister if it was the intention of the Government to act on the findings and to put into force any or all of the recommendations of the Royal Commission appointed 1921 to enquire into the workings of the Prohibition Act.

The Hon. the Prime Minister replied that the question was receiving the consideration of the Government. It was only yesterday that he had seen the commission's report, and he was surprised that nothing had been done although the report was presented in 1921. The report contained some excellent suggestions and well worth consideration.

Mr. Randall asked the Colonial Secretary to lay on the table of the House the answers to the following questions:—What amount of coal has been brought or contracted for by the management of the Newfoundland Government Railway since the first day of March of this year to date? If tenders have been asked for such coal? What price is being paid or agreed on by the management of the Railway? The names of the Companies or persons through whom the purchases or contracts had been made? What are the prices, terms and dates of such contracts, if any, and if the coal has been brought c.i.f. St. John's? If other than Sydney coal has been contracted for?

The Hon. Colonial Secretary tabled reply.

Mr. Brown asked the Hon. the Prime Minister if it was the intention of the Government to operate the steamer Watchdog on the Bonavista Mail Service this season.

The Hon. the Prime Minister replied that at present it was not the intention to operate the Watchdog on Bonavista Bay, but that as soon as certain repairs which are now being effected on the Government wharf at Port Blandford were completed the Malakoff would take up the Clyde route.

Mr. Hallyard asked the Colonial Secretary to lay on the table of the House copy of the latest agreement made between Dominion Steel Corporation Ltd. and Newfoundland Government for the operation of the iron mines at Wabana; also if it is the intention of the Government to introduce legislation during the present session for the continuation of the operation of the said mines after the 31st December 1924, so as to avoid Minute of Council Government which was so strenuously objected to by certain Members of the Legislature during past sessions.

Hon. the Colonial Secretary replied that since the advent of the present Government in power there had been no agreement. He also said that when his Hon. friend was Colonial Secretary an agreement was entered into; the present Government had made no decision regarding the policy which it intended to pursue.

Mr. Scammell asked the Hon. Minister of Posts and Telegraphs if the S. S. Earl of Devon had been engaged to undertake certain cable work, and if so, to state (a) for what work in particular she has been engaged (b) at what rate per day had she been engaged.

The Hon. Minister of Posts and Telegraphs replied that the S. S. Earl of Devon was employed on cable work in Notre Dame Bay, and Green

Bay, and that the steamer was being paid at the rate of \$450.00 per day.

Mr. Scammell asked the Minister of Justice to lay on the table of the House the report of G. N. Read, Son & Watson, chartered accountants into the affairs of the Controller's Department for the financial year 1921-22 and 1922-23.

The Hon. Minister of Justice replied that he was not prepared to give the answers to these questions as it involved certain proceedings which were undertaken elsewhere.

## ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Mr. Grimes spoke in the motion of the Address in Reply to the speech from the throne. He congratulated the speaker upon the high office conferred upon him. He said that when he first entered the House as a Member in 1914 Mr. J. R. Goodson, Carbonear, was the speaker, and that he himself always looked upon the office of the Speaker with respect and dignity. Mr. Grimes felt no doubt whatever, but that Mr. Fox would conduct his office in a dignified way, and he felt certain that the House had made a wise choice when they chose a man with the education, experience, training and legal ability possessed by Mr. Fox.

In speaking of the Speech from the Throne he pointed out that the theme of Mr. Lake's speech was harmony and good will, and he also said that if we were to have harmony and good-will in the House there should be harmony and good-will between the Government and the Opposition. Continuing Mr. Grimes said that the second of the Address in Reply announced the fact that he was the representative of Labour. He expressed himself as being pleased to see a representative of Labour with a seat in the House. He agreed with the Member for Twillingate that we should have more and that we need more representatives of the labouring and artisan classes. We must recognize that not only have the Labouring and artisan classes rights, but the merchants, the tradesmen, etc., have rights as well, but that the one class was as much entitled to representation as the other. Continuing he said that it was not only the Labour, and artisan classes that had been productive of good, but the other classes as well. He pointed out that if one looked over the history of legislatures, one would find that the more wealthy and prominent classes among the legislators had been productive of a great amount of good and benefit to the labouring class. He pointed out for instance the fact that shorter hours had been advocated by manufacturers. He also referred to it having been expressed that we were entering on an era of prosperity, but he said that we had not yet got the results of our shore fishery, and conditions pointed to the unfortunate result of a smaller catch than was expected at the beginning of the season. He said that it was necessary to make some provision to cope with the unemployment which would undoubtedly experience during the coming winter. He said that the Humber would be closing down in November, and there would be four thousand men without work when that time arrived, and also that the Construction work at Grand Falls would be closing down about the same time and that it was necessary that some arrangements were made to contend with conditions after that time.

Mr. Grimes thought the Government should learn by the experience of previous administrations and not deal haphazardly with public affairs but bring in legislation while and according to the prevailing conditions, which, it is true, are good at present. The Labor bureau at present in existence is not giving satisfaction, but this is not due to Captain Byrne but to the Government limiting his efforts. Abroad there are bureaus where all unemployed register so that the employer can easily locate those seeking work here there is no way or means of discovering this or the nature of the work offering. This is a situation that should be remedied by the Government. It is true that many imposters seek employment and obtain it, but by a proper bureau the truth of their claims would be discovered. In connection with the establishment of new industries such as the Gander proposition and the flour mill, the Government should make provision as to labor. As to the salaries of civil servants Mr. Grimes felt the giving of extras caused trouble for the heads of departments and tended to the detriment of that spirit of co-operation that is so necessary to the proper working of the service. To deal fairly with the civil servants a commission should be appointed to oversee their work and apportion the salaries. These employees should be dealt with fairly to ensure the proper working of the service. He wished the Government success in the efforts at reform in this connection and suggested the establishment of examinations to show the qualifications of applicants for positions. Unless this is done the Prime Minister, as thought, would not be carrying out the programme which he presented to the electorate. He hoped that economy would be practised in the right direction and doubted the wisdom of abolishing the Mounted Police as very little saving would be effected thereby. He was also dubious as to the advisability of having the Government printing done by contract as after the cost of a responsible

head and assistants for the work there would be very little saving. He would like to see the figures tabled showing where the economy would come in. The abolition of the Hansard will prevent outport members from keeping in touch with the affairs of the House or informing their constituents of what transpired during the sessions while no saving will result and necessary information will be withheld from the representatives of the districts. As to amending the Prohibition Act there is no authority to do so without consulting the people who put it on the Statutes and the whole question should be submitted to a plebiscite. In any steps the Government may be taking they would find valuable suggestions in the report of the Commission appointed in 1921 to enquire into the workings of the Act. That Commission suggested the appointment of a board to take over the control of liquor—a board free from political influences—whose ideas would be helpful in the carrying out of the Act. He had noticed from the Prime Minister's remarks that none but those who actively canvassed against the Government in the election were to be dismissed from the civil service but he knew men who had not been partisan and had conducted themselves as servants should but who had been discharged. He quoted the case of George Roberts of Port de Grave District, a light keeper at Labrador, who had been removed to make room for Mr. Chalker. This was unjustifiable he thought. Doorkeeper Connolly of the House had also been dismissed and this was not in keeping with the promises of the Prime Minister. The heads of departments should be consulted in the matter of dismissal. The employment of men living on the Labrador coast in the war would be a saving in connection with light-houses. In reference to Customs affairs, local business men have been up against unfair competition the last 4 or 5 years and any effort of the Minister of Finance to remedy this would receive the strongest support of the Opposition. It is claimed that certain merchants here have a better knowledge than local men of the market abroad but Newfoundland buyers are just as capable of bringing in goods as cheaply as the others. Imports have been questionable in nature and he hoped the Minister of Finance would do this duty to those who have been doing a legitimate business. Dealing with the establishment of new industries, Mr. Grimes, hoped to see herring oil factories opened not only in the northward but in Placentia and other bays and every effort was given this industry is done in Norway. Great benefit would be derived from the opening of such factories.

Mr. Duff, member for Carbonear, congratulated the Speaker on his appointment and the Mover and Second of the Address in Reply, and went on to deal with the necessity of improved roads in Conception Bay. He hoped to do his duty to the District which had produced most of the master mariners of the country. As a Labor representative he would take second place to none in the House as his constituents were engaged in every credit to themselves. He pledged his support to the Prime Minister in his efforts to clean up, and congratulated the Minister of Finance on his vigorous efforts to institute economy. He looked forward with confidence to the time in the near future when the affairs of the country will be greatly improved and the present Government will be able to show substantial returns for their efforts. Mr. Lake had referred to the percentage of outsiders engaged on the Humber but he would like to know what was their percentage in the wages being paid. Sons of big men from the other side of the water are being sent there at high salaries to gain experience while the sons of Newfoundland have to go abroad to seek a living.

We are satisfied for them to get their experience, but we are not satisfied when our own men have to go elsewhere to earn their living. He thought that a Commission should be appointed to look into the matter and felt sure that the Government were going to have some grave trouble, if they did not do so soon. He said that it was disgraceful that one man should be working for 25 cents an hour while another got three or five times as much just because he comes from the outside. He had no doubt that Frederick Butler was doing his work in an able and efficient manner, but why should honest working men have to go to the members of the Government to seek for work which they should get on their merits. In connection with the tourist traffic he touched on the enviable position of the island right in the mouth of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the beauty of the climate in the Summer time. He next brought up the matter of women's suffrage. He thought it ridiculous that half-imbeciles should be allowed to vote while intelligent women were deprived of this privilege. Another point which he

brought up was in connection with the running of the trains. In Carbonear where the train is supposed to arrive at 10.30 it did not arrive last Sunday night until midnight. When it is considered that people have to move from one train to another at one, two or three o'clock in the morning a serious accident is bound to happen. Also there is no opportunity given for people to get in to work Monday morning. Regarding the dismissal of officials he cited one instance in Carbonear where a fire warden, a very decent old fisherman had been dismissed and another man 63 years old had been appointed in his place although for all the work that was to be done he could just as well be in bed. And only this morning he had received a message from Carbonear stating that the assistant caretaker at the post office had been dismissed. He questioned the Prime Minister's sincerity as in many places there is no need of fire wardens three being nothing to burn. He also explained how owing to the pensioning of two former janitors for the post office in Carbonear and the appointment of a third there we now have three men getting paid for the one position.

Mr. Hickman said that he felt very proud of his opposition. He had men on this side of the House of ability and good sound judgment. He regretted very much that Sir Michael Cashin was not a member of his House as he had been for so many years past. He felt that his great ability as a business man would be missed. He understood that it was the intention of the Government to use the estimates prepared by the past government. If the previous government had such a record he thought the estimates should be brought in now and if they were not ready the session should be delayed to prepare estimates. He would like to see economy practised but that could not be if the government spends more than its income. If the government continues to borrow money each year to meet expenses the day will come when it will get no further accommodation. The result will be either confederation with Canada or the States. He next took up the subject of prohibition. He said that the prohibition law is just as binding as any other law and no man has any right to break it. If it is to remain as at present it is the duty of the Prime Minister and the Government to see that it is carried out. If it cannot be carried out it is also his duty to change it. This has been in the past a subject that the government were afraid to tackle because certain religious sections were opposed to it while other sections were in favour of it. He said he was not afraid to express his views on the matter.

He said that he was in the Opposition and that he introduced the Bill because he wanted the open bar done away with. It was a curse. Labourers spent their money there, and their children were hungry. There were rabid prohibitionists on the Government side, however, and the Bill that he introduced was not accepted. He did not believe in total prohibition, but in an ameliorated measure, so that the liquor will be distributed evenly and properly. Some people are afraid to express their views on prohibition. Mr. Hickman said that he was not afraid to do so, nor on any subject for that matter. Members of the Government were taught to think that they could bring in any legislation that they liked whether the Opposition liked it or not. There are members on the Opposition side of the House who are able to give help and suggestions and they should get an opportunity to do so. Mr. Hickman also criticized the system of recording the speeches of the House. The members of the House have a right to have their speeches on record. Now there is no reason why members should keep themselves in order. A member can come in here and make the most outrageous charges against any other member and there is nothing to stop him because there is no verbatim copy of his speech. There

is no Hansard. If, said Mr. Hickman, he wanted to refer to anything which has happened before he had but to go to the Government library and look up the Hansard, after this, however, this will not be able to be done. The Government is establishing a precedent. Mr. Hickman thought that there should be a Hansard and for the further expenditure of another three or four hundred dollars there should be one. The Government is doing away with the Hansard and establishing a Government Printer with a probable salary from \$2500.00 to four thousand dollars and an assistant and stenographer and an office all of which will amount to a lot of money. There are a few people who can take a synopsis and leave out what they like and put in only what it is up to the Government to take the matter into consideration.

He understood from the Prime Minister that the railway had been run as before under the management of Mr. Russell and a Commission. Mr. Russell is a good man but he should be left alone. Members should not be getting passes for their constituents because if the practice becomes general three quarters of the people travelling by the railway will be going back and forth without paying their way. If Mr. Russell is in charge of the Railway no clerks should be appointed except at his own discretion and not on the recommendation of the members of districts. If the railway is to have a favourable balance-sheet it will have to be left to the management of Mr. Russell, and if the balance is not favourable we are not going to get any corporation to take it over and run it as a good investment. If a man really needs a pass there should be some officer in some department such as the Public Charities who should look into his case. Mr. Hickman said that he would not like the occasion to pass without expressing his views on the Newfoundland War Memorial. This was erected through the energy of Colonel Nangle and is a credit to St. John's and Newfoundland, and will serve to keep in memory those who fought in the War. Mr. Randall spoke of the Dock. It should receive the consideration of the Government. Newfoundland should be the repair shop of the Atlantic, but this is not the case, because of the excessive port charges and the careless manner in which work is done. The system was to employ a certain number of men, to pay them a salary and have them employed a certain length of time. The authorities at the Dock never took occasion to see that the men worked conscientiously, but when the job was done handed a bill to the ship owners stating the charges with a certain percentage for the dock. The result is that only temporary repairs are attended to here and the real work is done elsewhere and we lose both money and labour. There are several ships sailing the Atlantic which have instructions to steer clear of Newfoundland if possible. The Government, said Mr. Hickman, came into office at a time when a change was coming over the country. The fishery was looking a good investment because it was thought that prices were going to be good, the Humber industry and Bell Island were offering lots of employment. The Government has not to undergo the same trouble as did their predecessors. Much squandering had

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been indulged in by the previous Government but much of it had been necessary. In consideration of this then the credit of this recovery will not be due to the Government at it would have happened no matter who was in power. Mr. Hickman hoped however that the wave of prosperity on which the Government had embarked would continue. It would take an old politician to say what was likely to happen but no business man could come into the House of Assembly and run the country's affairs as he would his business. Mr. Hickman remarked that there were three Ramsay MacDonalds in the House of Assembly of Newfoundland, Mr. Brown and Mr. Duff of the Opposition and Mr. Linagar of the Government. He was glad to say that these men would have the support of the Opposition in anything they might do to help the working man. He hoped that the Government would bring down legislation concerning a minimum wage. If the Government did not do so the Opposition would. Men are receiving only twenty five cents an hour for labour and this is not sufficient to support their families, and at the same time foreigners are receiving seventy five cents for the same work. A man needs thirty or thirty-five cents an hour. He cannot live on less. A comparison in wages in the fact that our men leave here, and before they go they have been used only to the roughest work and in the United States they receive one dollar and \$1.25 per hour. In his Manifesto the Prime Minister promised a bounty on fish. If a man is fishing and does not earn sufficient to support his family then there is nothing else to be done but to give him a bounty to help him out. It is the duty of the Government to carry out its promises in that respect. Mr. Hickman said that he understood that there was a statement made in the Upper House. It is a prerogative of the Lower House and he hoped it would not be taken away. Mr. Hibbs spoke of the Tourist traffic. He trusted that something would be done in this connection because it would mean anywhere from one million to two millions of dollars to the country. That would mean that that amount of money would be spent on goods imported into the country, and on which duty was paid. Take the Chateau Frontenac Hotel in Quebec. When that immense structure was under construction people thought it would be a "white elephant," but after it was finished and open for business one could scarcely get accommodation there, with the result that millions of dollars went in to Quebec. According to statistics, he said, the same could be said of British Columbia, due to the encouragement they gave to tourist traffic. When the people of those Provinces made the money in that way everybody got the

(Continued on page 11.)

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