

The Herald

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Provincial Legislature

When the Legislative Assembly adjourned on Saturday last, the debate on the address, in reply to the Lieutenant Governor's speech, had not closed. There is ample evidence that the capacity of the members for speaking has not lessened since last session. The mover of the address, Mr. McNevin admirably discharged his duty and delivered a logical and comprehensive speech. Theseconded, Dr. A. A. McDonald, of Souris, also delivered an excellent speech.

Mr. McNevin, in the course of his address said that if ever our Island Province had a right to be thankful to the Giver of all Good it is for the past year. God in his all kind Providence bestowed upon our Province for 1916 an abundance of prosperity. Agriculture being the great mainstay of our people, the result of their labors depend a great deal on the elements. The weather conditions during Spring Summer and Autumn months were all that could be desired. The very heavy rains during Spring and again in the Autumn, that were so keenly felt particularly by farmers occupying low lands, were not experienced last season. So from one end of the Island to the other come the glad tidings of an abundant crop safely harvested. This, with the very profitable prices obtained has wonderfully added to the wealth of the Province. His Honor has paid a very fitting tribute to the Duke of Connaught, who a few months ago bade farewell to the Dominion where he had so well and so acceptably filled the office of Governor General. A Governor of Royal connection, his presence during a critical period went a long way in strengthening the ties between the Motherland and the Dominion. By his great zeal and interest in our Canadian life, civil and commercial, he won a place in the hearts of the Canadian people that will not be soon forgotten. In his successor, the Duke of Devonshire, we have a Diplomat that we can look to with full confidence. His record in officialdom is one of achievement, and that he will prove worthy of the high office he has been called upon to fill in our country is not a matter of conjecture. Continging Mr. McNevin discussed the question of the great war in which we are engaged, and pointed with pride to the glorious part Canada was taking in it. In eloquent terms he referred to the manner in which our Canadian soldiers covered themselves with glory in the numerous fierce battles in which they were engaged. In this connection he alluded to the course pursued by the Provincial Government in summoning the Legislature in extra session to make provision for war and health. He said the \$20,000 extra taxes levied by the Government for these purposes at that session were most cheerfully paid. The Dalton Sanatorium, as most beneficial institution, came in for high praise. Mr. McNevin then graphically described the great progress and advancement made under the present Government in Public Works, Agriculture, Education and Fisheries. In conclusion he alluded with pride to the favorable trade conditions in the Dominion, where the balance was so strongly in our favor.

In seconding the address Dr. McDonald referred to the deep significance of the advent of the new Governor-General to the shores of Canada. He spoke in eloquent terms of the privilege which Canadians had of being members of the great British Empire and the priceless gift of liberty which they enjoyed to the fullest extent and of the consideration and appreciation the Motherland had always given the Colonies. He went on to state that, with very few exceptions, Great Britain had always sent out to Canada, before and after Confederation, as Governors-General men of the greatest ability and highest integrity. In this connection he referred particularly to Lord Durham, the man who first urged responsible government and the expediency of Confederation. Confederation, said the speaker seemed to be incomplete without Newfoundland and the West Indies and he showed the great advantage it would be to Canada, and the boon to this province particularly, if these colonies were a part of this Great Dominion. "We are as free as the air we breathe," said the speaker, "and this great Dominion of Canada, of which we are so proud, is unfettered and untrammelled to work out its own destiny, and it is in the interests of every individual in the country to see that the honour and the welfare of the nation are upheld. The words of Kipling are eminently applicable to Canada today. "I am a daughter in my mother's house but mistress in my own." The Duke of Connaught continued the speaker undoubtedly won in a great degree the sympathy and respect of the people of Canada, not because he was near the Throne but because he took an unbounded interest in all Canadians; and it was singularly fortunate that at the outbreak of the war Canada should have at the head of affairs a man of such large experience and military training as the Duke of Connaught. Referring to the terrible conflict now raging and of its terrible consequences he said, he was proud to claim that the greatest triumph of this war was in the realm of medicine. "Take away medicine," he said, "and her handmaids sanitation and hygiene from the battlefield, and the belligerent armies would waste as the dew before the sun." He thought we should have "stay-at-home clubs," Hundreds of people leave this province every summer to come back sadder but wiser men. Others develop a wander-lust and never come back till they are of little or no use to the province. The annual exodus to the West is a discrimination against this province. The Dr. next took up the question of providing for returned soldiers. "Today we can give them our thanks and show them our appreciation, but in the near future we must give them something more substantial. We have no public domain, but there are thousands of acres of unused lands in the province which can be utilized for our soldiers. So far as education is concerned he considered all was going well although the Department felt depletion from its ranks owing to enlistment of the Superintendent and teachers in the Army to fight for the cause of the Empire. "After the war, however," said the speaker, "when peace will have been restored, the good work will be taken up again." Referring to Agriculture he considered our farms are making great improvement, better crops are raised and the tiller of the soil generally is coming into his own. All this was brought about largely through the highly organized Department of Agriculture, which extends a helping hand to every farmer in the land. There never was such prosperity on the Island as there is today. Harvests have been abundant and the prices high. There is peace and contentment

everywhere. The harvest of the sea has also been abundant. It is an industry that has been much neglected. We are right at the front door of the greatest fishing ground in the world. He urged the building of boat harbors, and the bonusing of small schooners for the encouragement of the fishing industry. Less than ten thousand dollars comes to this province in the shape of bounty every year. He referred also to shipbuilding and showed what Canada and all great countries of the world owed the Mercantile Marine. He regretted to learn that the shipping tonnage of Canada today is less than it was for the Maritime Provinces thirty years ago. In conclusion he spoke of the problems that would arise after the war and the standing the Dominions beyond the seas would have in regard to the Mother Country. Would they be linked together by stronger bonds than sentiment in one grand imperial unity?

Mr. Bell, Leader of the Opposition, congratulated the mover and second of the address; but that was all the congratulation his long speech continued. It was a trade of fault finding with all the operations of the Government.

Premier Mathieson, followed the Leader of the Opposition, and very soon placed Mr. Bell in a pretty awkward position by showing up the utter and absolute untenableness of the position assumed by that gentleman, and showing his statements to be false and misleading. The Premier's speech was a most able, eloquent and comprehensive presentation of the attitude and position of the Government which punctured the sophistry of the Leader of the Opposition at every point. Our limited space will not permit us to give even a comprehensive summary of this discourse. We shall have to content ourselves with presenting extracts from the speech.

"The fishermen and what their fortunes are and what the duties of Canada and of this province are to them he never thought of mentioning in all the three hours or more that he poured forth his oratory. The prosperity of this province and our thanks to Providence for all the good things we have enjoyed he ignored; and when I read his speech this morning I must say I felt it struck a lower note and kept a lower level than anything we can possibly find in our time. Sometimes we have had strong partisan speeches and overlooked matters of first importance; but in his speech the hon. gentleman started low and never grappled with a single one of the mighty questions that lie before this assembly. I will say this Mr. Speaker that in my conception of our duty and of the opportunities and difficulties that lie before us, no assembly has ever met in this historic Hall that was charged with matters of more grave concern, more heavily fraught with responsibilities and possibilities of the future; and I regret most sincerely that custom of duty should render it necessary to follow the hon. Leader of the Opposition along the line he has chosen. I shall endeavor to cover the ground as quickly as possible and return to some more profitable discussion."

I will first take up the statement which I read in his speech—a statement made by other members of the Opposition who perhaps believed it was true—that I had promised as a part of our platform, that taxation should be abolished. And the hon. gentleman has been good enough to refer to a speech of mine at Georgetown in 1908 in which I set forth various planks of the platform of the Conservative party. He will not find that alleged promise as a plank of that platform. It never was put into our platform. Always I put the case as it is put in that speech; that when this province entered Confederation the intention of both parties to the contract was to make such provision, by way of subsidies, for this province that it would not be necessary to resort to direct taxation. That was the keynote always and the foundation of the claims which we on our side prepared for presentation against the Dominion of Canada. It was the underlying strength of

the claim which we finally presented with success, that in consideration for our giving up control of our customs and excise, a sufficient provision should be made, by way of subsidy, to enable us to run our local affairs without resort to direct taxation. Everyone of intelligence, following the political history of our province for the last twenty years, can verify what I am saying. There never should have been a tax imposed, and the fault began very early with the imposition of the tax. Instead of imposing that tax, they should have represented our case to Canada and said: When we entered Confederation, we were subject to a duty of only 5 per cent. We went in and became responsible for a duty of more than twice that amount. Now you have raised it higher again and we find that our income by way of subsidy and otherwise is not sufficient to live upon. They could have presented their claim, and presented it with effect; but they did not do it. They put on a tax instead."

"I could tell the hon. gentleman of a man of wealth, a man free to give and give largely, who needs nothing but the patriotic spirit and the generous heart to give and give as largely as any other man in this province could give, and he gave a shameful trifling, doubtless saying: "If I will be raised by the tax." I know that same man, when his tax bill was sent to him, swore the taxable income was not half of what the popular estimate is believed to be and in his defence, trying to shirk his war tax, said it should not be paid on that year but that it should be on another year, thinking that the tax would end in that one year and he would shirk it in the next when it could not be collected. All through the province you will find this true; that the man who gives generously to this Patriotic Fund, who gives freely as well. But the man who wishes to shirk, shirks on the subscription list because, he says "This should not be a tax it should be a voluntary gift." It is the same disloyal spirit displayed by the man who shirks on both of these occasions. Let anyone examine the tax lists in this province as they are being made up and will be completed and he will find what I say is true and the hon. Leader of the Opposition, who calls himself the Liberal party, will not be able to deny it. The hon. gentleman says, in that melody of stuff he has given us, that the way the tax was registered last year was not according to the law as it is understood by lawyers and by Courts. He says there should be a certain fixed sum to be raised for a tax and that fixed sum should be adjusted this way and that way. I don't know where he got the notion from. I don't know what his friends on the Opposition must think of it. I cannot make anything out of his contention in that regard. The law says that the property should be valued and that for every \$100 of value there should be twenty cents of a tax. That is plain enough. Any man of common sense can understand that. There must be twenty cents of a tax on every \$100. The act was passed in 1910, by the Liberal Government, which was then in power and we have been carrying their method through. We did not have a valuation made in 1915. It was a War year."

"The Premier: The hon. gentleman made the statement that there was an increase of \$400 and he sent it broadcast through the province. Of course, 20 cents on \$100 would work out on \$20,000 to only \$40. But we are not dealing with a gentleman who is liable to make unintentional errors. We are dealing with a gentleman who puts himself forward as a financier of the very highest standing. A year ago he made the echoes of this House ring for hours over the horrible fate that would overtake this country unless he could go to the Public Accounts Committee, and yet the nearest he can go, in his statement of fact from the inference of figures, is to have it ten times too much. That gives a pretty good key to the value of the hon. gentleman's statements clean through. I don't think that I am overstating it when I say that in regard to

Mr. Dennis followed on the Opposition side, His speech, like all the rest from that side of the House was all criticism of the Government and its actions."

Mr. Paton briefly and cogently reviewed the speech. He expressed sympathy with the Duke of Connaught in his recent heavy loss and commended the Duke of Devonshire whose magnificent house and grounds are at the disposal of the nation in this time of war. He read Mr. Lloyd George's handsome compliment to the gallantry of the soldiers of Canada, and pointed out that but for the British Navy the price of farm produce would not now be so high nor our farmers so prosperous. He read Sir Robert Borden's exhortation to Canadians to stand under the British flag and behind the Government in its efforts to win the war, and pointed to the example set by Dr. Michael Clarke—a leading Liberal—who had declared that he would support the Government while the war lasts.

After a brief speech by Mr. John McMillan of the Opposition, Hon. H. D. McEwen continued the debate on the Government

side. His speech was a valuable contribution to the debate. If ever there was a time when small politics should be cast aside it is now. The Government has nothing to hide. They want the opposition and the Country to know that every proper opportunity for investigation of the Public Accounts will be given. The members of the Government realize that they are trustees for the people of the Province, and they are doing the public business to the best of their ability. It has been charged that the Premier is an autocrat. No bigger falsehood was ever uttered. Premier Mathieson gives his best to the affairs of this country, and every member of the Government is doing the best he can. Members of the Opposition should not forget they are the fathers of the Land Tax, the Income Tax, and almost every other tax that has been levied upon the people and they should not forget that the Government had made a distinct improvement in the situation of the Province. For one thing alone, the opening of the mine of mussel mud in St. Peter's Bay, and the supply of 20,000 acres of land with this fertilizer, last year, deserved the thanks of the Province.

"It is unfortunate that in this time, when the energies of all should be exerted in dealing with matters of the gravest importance, that our time should be frittered away and our hours wasted by dealing with false and pernicious statements such as these. This is all aimed at what cause and with what purpose? It is aimed at every effort the Government is making to do its duty in raising the necessary taxes to meet the expenses of this war period. He builds his rotten foundation and then erects on that a fabric of slander and falsehood and wonders why it should fall. Then he harks back to the fox tax. I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, taking the taxes generally, they were never so well paid, or so cheerfully paid, in my experience, as in the year 1916. I enquired of the various taxes, and they state that the people are paying more promptly than ever; and always I ask why, and the answer is invariably, that the people seem anxious to pay them so as to pay the war tax."

Mr. J. J. Johnston, from the Opposition side of the House, followed the Premier. His speech was a criticism of everything the Government did. He accused the Premier of having misled the Assembly, and criticized the Government's policy regarding the oyster industry and the granting of charters to fox companies. He could see nothing good in anything the Government undertook.

Hon. Sir Charles Dalton was the next speaker. At the outset he said some of the speakers in the Opposition seats had taken up the time of the House, in dissertations altogether extraneous to the question under consideration, and instead of being courteous enough to offer even passing comment on the important and far-reaching matters outlined in His Honour the Lieutenant Governor's Speech, they indulged in their usual reckless criticism of the Government, resurrecting old and exploded fallacies which were irrelevant at the present time. In a comprehensive speech, Sir Charles then reviewed the speech from the throne and discussed the various subjects therein referred to. He defended the Government from the unfounded reckless attacks made upon it by Mr. Bell and Mr. Johnston. He upheld the Government's attitude towards the fox business and described the advantages to our Provinces from the Dalton Sanatorium, and rebuked the unfounded statements that had been made concerning it by the Opposition.

Hon. Mr. McKinnon commenced speaking at 5 o'clock. He first referred to the Titanic war going on in Europe. Our Empire and our Allies are waging a most strenuous struggle on behalf of liberty and civilization. Taking up the matter of Agriculture, he went on to show that several branches of farming could be pressed forward, as well as dairying. The products of the creameries and the cheese factories, and personal efforts showed what was doing in our dairying industry. He pointed out how persistently the Opposition kept knocking the Dalton Sanatorium. The Opposition pursued the same obstructive and destructive course regarding the fox business and other undertakings encouraged and promoted by the Government. Referring to the question of feed for dairying cattle on account of which some attempt had been made to blame the Government, Mr. McKinnon pointed out that all the Government had to do with this was an endeavor to bring about co-operation between the Institutions and the wholesale dealers, in the hope of facilitating the securing of cheaper feed. Circulars on the matter were sent out to Institutions by Professor Reek, of the Department of Agriculture. Hon. Mr. McKinnon said he courted criticism relative to the administration by the Department of Agriculture of the Dominion Agricultural grant.

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Hon. Dr. Jenkins delivered a most comprehensive address, specially bearing on the work of the Dalton Sanatorium. He contradicted the contentions put forward on this matter by Mr. Bell and showed from his own experience and from the reports of several most eminent expert physicians that the course followed at the Dalton Sanatorium was the most approved for dealing with tuberculosis in incipient cases.

After Mr. Lee, Opposition, had delivered a lengthy speech on dairying and farming generally, Mr. John A. DeWar delivered an excellent speech. He spoke from the point of view of the farmer. He expressed the opinion that farming was a most honorable and respectable profession. Referring to the Car Ferry between this Province and the Mainland, he considered we should keep constantly in view the standardization of the gauge of the P. E. Island, and sink all sectional differences regarding transportation until this was accomplished. He thought the Government had made an honest effort to improve our educational system; but he regretted to be obliged to state that there was great apathy on the part of parents. As to the time for vacation, he approved the decision of the Government to leave this matter optional with the rate payers. Success is achieved in the profession which one loves the most. This was true of farming as of all other callings. He himself he said, loved farming and that was why he remained on the land. He expressed the hope that all members of the House would work harmoniously together to promote the welfare of our Province.

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He did not think returned soldiers should be placed on the waste farms of this Province. He felt sure they could scarcely make a success in working these farms. He favored creating and building up a trade for our bacon in the British market. Referring to the seed fair, he said he considered the Summerside seed fair, under the circumstances, was as successful as could be expected. In this connection, he explained why the Provincial seed fair was not held in Charlottetown this year. Weather conditions and stoppage of trains rendered the holding of the fair out of the question.

Hon. Mr. McKinnon concluded his speech Saturday. Mr. A. E. McLean, of the opposition, followed. Hon. Mr. Arsenault adjourned the debate and the House adjourned.

The War Loan a Success

The third Canadian war loan has been oversubscribed to the extent of almost fifty per cent. Sir Thomas White called for \$150,000,000 and already subscriptions have been received for \$250,000,000. This is a showing on which Canada and Canadians should pride themselves as it illustrates first that the people of this country have every confidence in Canada and in the Government and secondly that there is no scarcity of money for the purposes of the Empire. Since the war opened Canadian people have been given an opportunity of subscribing to three war loans. Each was larger than the one preceding it, but the larger the loan the more quickly was it taken up. The money subscribed will, in a very large measure, be again placed in circulation in Canada in the form of payments for war materials and munitions. In that way it will return to swell the total of Canada's business and to benefit the Canadian people.

The Canadian people and the Finance Minister are to be heartily congratulated upon the success which has attended this Canada's third and most ambitious attempt at war financing.

Progress of the War

London, March 20.—"Despite the less favorable weather conditions," says the official report from British headquarters in France tonight, "we made considerable gains again today along the greater part of the front of our advance, south of Arras, and a further fourteen villages have been cleared of the enemy. Our troops have now passed the general line of Canizy, Estre-en-Chaussée, Nully, Vulu and St. Lomer." "Our machine gun fire drove off an enemy attempt to counter-attack south of Arras. We successfully raided last night northeast of Neuville-St. Vaast and brought back a few prisoners."

Paris, March 23.—The French forces operating to the northeast of the St. Quentin Canal have pushed the Germans between one and a quarter and two miles and also have gained additional ground on the heights northeast of Tergnier, overlooking the Oise Valley, according to the French official communication issued tonight. The German attacks near Tilly, northwest of Rheims, were repulsed. The communication says: "Between the Somme and the Oise in the course of the day our troops carried out with decision a spirited offensive, which was completely successful. The enemy, despite stubborn resistance, was pushed back on a large front for distances varying between two and four kilometres, to the southeast of the canal of St. Quentin."

Bulletin—London, March 21.—The capture of forty more villages on the front in France is announced in the official statement from British headquarters tonight. The communication says: "South and southeast of Peronne we have advanced rapidly during the last 24 hours and reached points some ten miles to the east of the River Somme. We have occupied another forty villages in this area. "Between Nully and Arras the enemy is beginning to develop considerable resistance at a number of places. Nevertheless his rear guards are being steadily driven from their positions, and our

progress continues. "We carried out successful raids during the night east of Arras and northeast of Neuville-St. Vaast were repulsed. "The enemy blew a mine this morning southeast of Ypres, damaging his own trenches. "There has been considerable artillery activity during the day by both sides in the neighborhood of Armentieres and Ypres."

Paris, March 21.—The official communication issued by the war office tonight reads: "North of Ham the situation is without change. Our light forces remain in contact with the enemy between Rosny and St. Quentin. "East of Ham we forced this morning, at two places, a passage of the canal on the Somme, despite lively resistance by the Germans. The operation, conducted vigorously, enabled us to clear the north and east margins of the canal and drive back the enemy as far as the outskirts of Chartres and Montescourt. Incursions have been caused by the enemy in this region. "Most of the villages before our lines in the neighborhood of St. Quentin are in flames."

"We have advanced north of Tergnier (which lies southwest of La Fere). In the valley of the Ailette there have been skirmishes between patrols. The enemy, who occupies in force the east bank of the Crozat Canal and the Ailette, has subjected our lines to a lively bombardment. "In the region north of Soissons we made considerable progress and fought several quite spirited engagements. Most of the conquered villages are entirely destroyed. "East of the Meuse the enemy delivered several surprise attacks against the Colonne trench, but these failed under our fire. The day was relatively calm on the rest of the front. "Belgian communication: "A bombardment on both sides occurred at various points on the Belgian front, particularly in the direction of Dixmude and Steenstraete."

London, March 22.—"The enemy's resistance is increasing along our whole front, from west of St. Quentin to south of Arras," says the official report from British headquarters in France tonight. "Heavy snowstorms during the day added to the difficulties of our advance. "We carried out a successful raid yesterday afternoon northeast of Arras and took a few prisoners. The enemy endeavored to counter-attack across an open and suffered severe casualties. "A small hostile party succeeded in entering our trenches early this morning north of Ypres. The raiders were driven off by our garrison, after sharp fighting. Another hostile raiding party was dispersed by our machine gun fire southwest of Lens. "Our airplanes were active again yesterday in the area of the enemy's withdrawal. Much valuable reconnaissance work was carried out. One German machine was brought down behind our lines."

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The Report of the Provincial Auditor on the Public Accounts of the Province for the year 1916 was tabled in the Legislature last evening. The report shows that the total ordinary receipts for the year were \$462,534.51, and the total ordinary expenditure \$451,476.99, leaving a surplus of \$31,057.52. If we add the capital expenditure of \$17,344.86, the net surplus over all for the year will be \$12,712.66. This is a very good showing.