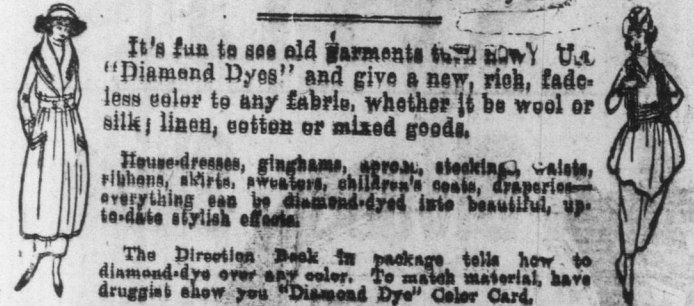


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House of Assembly.

(Yesterday.)

The Opposition held the floor in the Assembly proceedings of yesterday afternoon and evening, largely and fully criticizing the Speech from the Throne, and disposing of its stereotyped phrases in a manner which left no doubt of the obvious insincerity of the Government to introduce any beneficial legislation during the present session. While Opposition speakers tore into shreds the baldest of addresses ever presented, Government members squirmed in their seats, or crept silently and quietly out of the Chamber. The Prime Minister devoted himself furiously to writing, while the ministers came and went, walking like cats on hot bricks, both looking and feeling decidedly uncomfortable.

After the Speaker had taken the chair, 3:30 o'clock, orders of the day were given consideration. Mr. McDonnell (St. George's), presented a petition from Codroy and Grand River on the matter of a gasoline ferryboat. Mr. Warren (Fortune), presented a petition from Pass Island and other settlements in Fortune Bay, asking for connection with the telegraphic system of the Dominion. Mr. Jennings (Twillingate), presented a petition from Northern Arm, asking for telephone extension to that settlement. Messrs. Jones and Sampson supported the petition.

Mr. Sullivan's question re the chartered accountants here from New York, will be answered to-day.

The Minister of Education (Dr. Barnes), informed Mr. J. R. McDonnell that the matter of the organization will be explained in detail when the bill came down. There was no staff employed in the department.

Mr. M. S. Sullivan (Placentia and St. Mary's), now took up the Speech from the Throne and for upwards of an hour dealt with it section by section. He characterized the speech as meaningless and flat and devoid of any legislative programme other than that forced on the Government through political expediency. The war was somewhat reviewed and the Government's duty to the returned veterans commented on extensively. The Fish Regulations were, to say the least, ill-advised, and did not meet with the support of the people

of the country. There was a great diversity of opinion as to the necessity of enforcing regulations at all, especially by people who knew nothing about the foreign markets. He read the message from Mr. Walter Monroe, wherein he predicted almost blue ruin to the markets if they were not immediately cancelled. Those who believed in them first when promulgated were now trying to crawl in out of the wet and sell their fish wherever they could. The merchants are curtailing supplies to a minimum and the outlook is not bright all because of the ill-advised regulations. Our best market last year was Lloy's Insurance Scheme. Comment was made on Mr. Nangle's work and the purchase of Beaumont Hamel, and he regretted that the ladies did not meet with the response that should have been theirs. "The creation of a Department of Posts and Telegraphs does not impress me as being vitally necessary," said Mr. Sullivan. "It is a retrograde step if we take the position, and I now take it that the independence of the legislature is weakened by the addition of another Departmental Head, who under any circumstances will feel bound to his party and is purchased by position. The conditions imposed on the late Postmaster General, which compelled his resignation, are to be deplored. The country had in him a man of great ability, unimpeachable character and great experience, whose work in connection with the reconstruction of the Postal Department as well as the Postal Telegraph Department reflected the highest credit on him and proved the wisdom of his appointment. The Government, for political reasons, saw fit to remove him from this office, and it is evident the Government did not consider the interests of the Dominion in making this change, but was guided by political expediency."

Touching on the matters of Transportation, the speaker thought that at least fair play might be accorded the R.N.D. Co. The Government should be working in harmony with the railroad company, which manages a public utility. The company was not always given that. Regret was expressed that nothing was seen in the Speech re the pre-election promises of the Government, such as increased grants for public charities, old age pensions for women as

well as men, educational grants increased, reorganization of the tariff, reduction of the high cost of living. Instead of the latter being reduced it is still soaring—\$18.00 for flour, \$19.00 for coal—terribly. Tery times are hard times. Mr. Sullivan also twisted the Prime Minister about his promise through his organ, the Morning Post, of modification of the Prohibition Act. He had promised a bottle a week in St. John's Week, and he (Mr. Sullivan), had done the same in Placentia. Mr. Sullivan made a slip by substituting a bottle a day for a bottle a week, which gave rise to considerable merriment and some applause in which the Prime Minister joined heartily, and was accordingly complimented by Mr. Sullivan as still being in favor of more freedom in procuring liquor. Other paragraphs in the Speech from the Throne were severely criticized by Mr. Sullivan in a very able speech.

Mr. P. F. Moore (Ferryland), said that he would criticize the sections which were not in the Speech from the Throne. Mr. Moore delivered some extremely caustic remarks against the filling of Governmental jobs by civilians, instead of returned soldiers. He congratulated Small and LeGros on the gallantry they had displayed in going across the water and fighting for himself and Mr. Archibald, the member for Hr. Grace. Mr. Moore kept the House in roars of laughter as he recited the valiant deeds of "Blue Puttee" boys, such as Mr. Carter, the Second Clerk, Mr. Barron, the Supervisor of Debates in the Lower House, and Mr. Leslie R. Curtis, the Supervisor of Debates in the Upper House, and Mr. Winter, the Law Clerk, who had been appointed over the head of a veteran who had applied for the position simply because he had a pull with the Minister of Justice. Then there was Mr. Foley, "Blue Puttee" of St. John's West election, and who was defeated in the contest and re-treated from the Hun, but who afterwards joined them and was rewarded with a Customs position. Mr. Coaker was asked to explain how he allowed Dr. Campbell to be appointed to the Agriculture and Mines Dept., when he was not elected in the House when Squires and Blandford were appointed similarly in 1914.

Mr. N. J. Vinnicombe (St. John's East), referred to the lack of any mention in the speech of the high cost of living and proposal to com-

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bat it. The Premier had promised to look after the high cost of living, but had done nothing since his election to justify the trust placed in him by the country. He was glad that the people of St. John's East had not been caught by the flimflam of his opponents had preached in the East End. Living now was getting to the stage when the middle and lower classes have a hard time to be able to live at all. Molasses to-morrow will be \$1.50 per gallon, flour \$13.00 and sugar 28c. lb. When you mention the price of boots you want high heels to reach the price. People who are now earning \$4 or \$5 per day do not find it as good as the \$5c. they earned some years ago. Sir M. P. Cashin was termed the friend of the profiteers, but what would you call Mr. Squires since he gained office? Is he not the greatest friend the profiteers ever had? As regards the ships that we have received from the Admiralty, he could not figure out as the Star said Mr. Squires was responsible, and the Advocate said Mr. Coaker was the man. Some paragraphs in the Speech he characterized as hypocritical in the extreme. What does the Prime Minister mean by putting such stuff in the Speech when the paper he controls published broadcast to the world the records of two or three of our returned soldiers, a thing never done before in the history of this or any other country.

Mr. J. R. McDonnell (St. George's), took up the matter of Education and discussed the newly-created Department. It looked as if there was a mystery attached to the whole business, so tardy was the Government in imparting information concerning it. The Minister of Education saw fit not to give only the information that there was no staff attached to his department. The bill creating the Department was the most important legislation that would be introduced this session and demanded the utmost and most serious consideration of all members. If the Government thought that it was going to be rushed through when it came down, they were mistaken. The Opposition would carefully and minutely go into every detail of the proposed bill, and there would be no rushing. As regards the Agriculture and Mines Department, he trusted that the first thing in reorganization would be to put a Minister in that Department who was responsible to the people, and not a member of the Upper House. Mr. McDonnell discussed the Department of Posts and Telegraphs, and gave some valuable suggestions thereon. The transportation problem was then taken up, and

the member for St. George's gave an extended outline of the difficulties his district laboured under. In closing he could not understand why more information was not given, re transportation, in the Speech from the Throne. He could only account for the patchy manner in which the Speech was put together by the very important things they had to worry them during the past few weeks. He also trusted that the Minister of Marine and Fisheries would see that the famous or infamous fish regulations would work no harm to the District of St. George's when the fresh fish season came on, or there would be trouble. Mr. McDonnell spoke for more than an hour and acquitted himself admirably. His only excuse for delaying the House was the importance of the subjects that he discussed.

Dr. W. E. Jones, (Hr. Main), in making his maiden speech, said that when he came in the House on Wednesday he did so with a great deal of diffidence, realizing that the charge hanging over him was a serious one. However, he felt free after Wednesday's proceedings and the way in which the House endorsed the Prime Minister, who also was under a serious charge. He had been accused of bribing the electors of Harbor Main, but so far no person had gone to the Court and sworn that he had done so, but he was sorry to say that he could not say the same of the Prime Minister. He had no reluctance now in speaking when the Prime Minister was in his seat. The Speech from the Throne was very disappointing and had nothing in it that the people expected from the Govt. He discussed at some length the various paragraphs, and showed up its hollowness and utter absence of anything tangible in the whole Speech. In criticizing the Department of Posts and Telegraphs he said he had sent fifteen letters from Avondale to St. John's during March, and not one had yet been delivered, at its destination. He had reported same to the Minister of Posts, but so far had not been favoured with the courtesy of a reply. When the train service was in good operation, the mail service was simply awful. A splendid address was brought to a close by reference to the prohibition act, which he thought was in bad shape. He always treated liquor as a drug and always would. He did not consider it in the beverage class at all from a medical standpoint. Other items of the Speech from the Throne received attention from the learned Doctor which lack of space forbids our reporting.

The House then rose till 8 o'clock. On resumption Mr. W. J. Walsh (Placentia and St. Mary's) after congratulating the movers of the address in reply, dealt incisively with the Speech from the Throne, which he considered very disappointing from all points of view, and sadly short of the flowery and lengthy manifesto issued to the electorate by Mr. Squires. Many things that had been promised last November had been left out of the Speech. The opening paragraph referred to the gift of two ships from the Admiralty. These were not a gift, but the most costly that were ever purchased by Newfoundland. They were bought by the blood of the best men of the Dominion, and he was sorry if these were the only material compensation we were to receive for our part in the war. When these ships arrived he hoped that the Marine and Fisheries Department would see that they were manned by men of the R.N.R. and the Regiment from the captain to the cabin boy. He was glad that an effort was about to be made to settle the Labrador boundary dispute. This matter had been a vexed question for the last 20 years, and he hoped a solution would be reached. It should be an honest effort, however, and not initiated for the benefit of some professional supporter of the Government in order that he would be given a fat cheque for political services. He was pleased to notice that the Government contemplated the winding up of the Militia Department, but was sorry to say that there was no intimation that sufficient provision would be made for the dependents of those who had made the sacrifice. This matter had been left heretofore in the hands of the pensioning board, and many deserving cases had been neglected. The reason for conscription in the later stages of the war was the neglect of returned soldiers and of the dependents of those who had been maimed or killed. (The remainder of the speeches from the Opposition side of the House will be concluded on Monday.)

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