

Legislative Council

OFFICIAL SYNOPSIS.

TUESDAY, Aug. 19.
House met at 10 a.m. pursuant to adjournment.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Morine and by unanimous consent, Bill to amend Revenue Act of 1905 and amendments thereto, was put through all stages and passed without amendment.

Bill respecting the United Towns Electric Company Limited, was read a first time, by consent, a second time.

Hon. Mr. Morine explained the object of the Bill was to allow this Company to extend in various parts of Placentia District and St. John's East. It did not give any exclusive rights, but allowed the usual privilege of free entry of material for original construction.

Hon. Mr. Ellis recalled that last year on a similar Bill, the matter of the charge for electricity was brought up. Everyone knows we are charged far in excess of what is paid elsewhere. We are granting privileges session after session, and apparently no effort is made to reduce the price of electricity.

Patrick McGrath said when this Company was first projected the idea was they would come in to St. John's and supply power in competition with the Reid Company, then in existence. Now they have made an arrangement whereby they supply the City Company with a certain amount of power, there is to be no competition and citizens are still paying tremendous rates, at least twice as much as in Halifax and Sydney, and three times as much as Montreal and Toronto. He believed water power rights on the Southern Shore had been given, but we did not seem to be deriving any advantage.

Hon. Mr. Morine said that in any case the Company had not made matters any worse, but had conferred a great blessing on the people in many of the outports. It was his opinion that a Public Utilities Tribunal should be appointed to deal with such matters as this. The whole question of the rates to be charged in St. John's should have been provided for when the Bill went through. This Bill did not have any bearing on that position, but is a matter that will have to be dealt with in the near future.

Hon. Mr. Ellis said he thought the Public Utilities Tribunal idea a good one. Some years ago the City Council had made an endeavour to acquire some water powers within and area of 60 miles of the city. It was their intention to try and reduce the cost of electricity but their application was turned down as some one had made a previous application, although the Council had expended some five or six hundred dollars in surveying the ground.

The Committee reported the Bill without Amendment, and by consent it was read a third time and passed.

Hon. Mr. Morine moved the first reading of the Loan Bill and by consent the second reading. He stated that it was proposed to spend an amount not exceeding \$5,000,000 on repairs to the Dry Dock, the improvement of the Railway, etc. He had heard the criticisms in the main of two items only, first the construction of a plant for fuel and coal in St. John's. It seemed fairly general, he said, among people who ought to know that the coal plant for the bunkering of steamers would not be necessary. It appeared attractive at first but on examination it would not be essential it would not be embarked upon and care would be taken to get expert advice on the matter. The money could be directed towards the other purposes stated in the Bill. Then the rails between Brigus Junction and Clarendville have been getting worse and worse and it is proposed to lay new rails. The sum stated for repairs was said to be too low. If that proved to be the case Mr. Morine thought that if the money were not needed for the coal plant it could be spent in re-laying a longer distance. Mr. Morgan had stated that the whole line needed to be re-laid. The condition of the railroad was a very important factor in the success or otherwise of an undertaking such as the Humber. The rails very often have to bear loads which are too heavy for them. The rolling stock also is insufficient. Quantities of wood cut some months ago, he continued, had not yet reached the mills. The only matter he had heard much discussion about is the tourist traffic. He said he was an enthusiast on this matter and that anyone who had doubt about it

was behind the times. There was, he added, need of a highway on the West Coast between Port aux Basques and Bay of Islands. The numerous fishing rivers thus connected and the agricultural district opened up would be a beautiful country for tourists. Then again he thought all around St. John's there were many attractions of scenery and fishing infusions so different from those offered elsewhere, which had only to be thrown open to invite a crowd. He explained what had happened in Canada and the United States during recent years. At one time the rich man and those of leisure only, could afford to travel across the border and visit the new and strange places. Today because so many possess "flivers" the middle and labouring classes are doing the same thing. The rich man who wanted a degree of seclusion is being driven away and is seeking new fields. If Newfoundland could be made attractive and proper steamers and railroads provided those seeking new sights would visit it. This proved the case in Nova Scotia. In Yarmouth and through the Valley of Evangeline, a large amount of money was spent on the roads with the result that they are now much frequented by tourists. He felt satisfied that if the plans to attract the tourist in this way were carried out we should soon not be able to entertain all who would come. Nova Scotia with all its beauty has nothing like Newfoundland to offer the tourist, and if we have a good steamer across the Gulf and can provide a motor road of 150 miles on the West Coast, we shall have that steamer's decks loaded with motor cars of people who want to see our scenery and visit our fishing rivers and pools. And many of these visitors will invest their money here as they have done in Nova Scotia, and leave vast sums in one way and another with our people. With regard to the road building Mr. Morine stated that it was the intention to have the whole scheme in control of a commission and department with probably the Government Engineer in control. The advice of the Motor Association would be asked and an endeavour made to make the movement a popular one. There was no use of having the work divided up into districts and the money dribbled away. Nor was the money only to be spent in building new roads. The object was, he continued, to connect up old roads and repair them, so that motorists could go over the whole length of the country. A number of people, he said, talked of the motor roads as if they were to be constructed for pleasure only, while in reality they were to develop the country and afford to people the opportunity of getting in touch with one another, and of raising them above the level of local affairs. He remembered a time, he said, when the farmer was the bitter enemy of the motor, because of the inconvenience of drawing in their horses when one passed. To-day, he added, the motorists in Canada are the farmers. Their whole method of living has been changed. The farmer's wife is happy. She is no longer isolated but can, by means of good roads, keep in touch with the outer world. This same state could be reached here in a fishing country. He mentioned the case of a son of a fisherman who had a "fliver" in which he and his wife had made a tour through Trinity Bay. Not only did he enjoy the scenery but was surprised to see the various industries carried on in that part of the country. In all places motor roads respond to the call of progress. Fine fishing ponds, he said, were to be found near Port aux Basques and a few thousands would make a beautiful open road to the ponds. If we are to have a big hotel in St. John's and keep people here a few days we must have something to attract them. The hotels and sporting places must be linked together. With the co-operation of the Motor Association and the Rotary Club a Tourist Association could be formed and the attractions of our country widely advertised. A large office might be opened on Water Street and an agent appointed to visit steamers, etc. He also stated that if there were an agent in the United States, competent to meet the motored men and explain what we had to offer, we could sell our country in another sense, to the tourist. Mr. Morine thought that this was the first place of constructive policy attempted for many years and would largely benefit the fishermen. They would get work on the roads, the traffic would increase, there would be greater importation, for the way to import luxuries is to import the men who want them. Increased importations means decreased taxation. Fishermen may not wish to remain such all their lives, he added, and if we could give them something more profitable and improve the place where they live, it would benefit him. A large sum of money had been spent in the past to build roads in the wilderness to no end, but spent in the proposed way it could not fail to be for the advancement of the Colony. The work, while not given as such for the unemployed, will afford employment to many but will be done under tender or contract under the Government Engineer, and men must render good service or be discharged. These were the principles and he hoped that they would elicit public sympathy and enthusiastic support.

Mr. P. T. McGrath stated that he

considered the amount of money appropriated to re-laying inadequate. The cost of the 16 tons of rails would absorb the whole amount as the cost of steel rails in England was about \$40.00 per ton. If for a reasonable figure the rails could be obtained in Sydney, he thought it would be commensurate. Freight, he added, may go to \$10.00 per ton, depending on whether the steamer got a return cargo. If 80 lb rails be used instead of the 50 lb. used at present, the sleepers would have to be put nearer together he said, and if the road bed were to be improved an additional amount of money would have to be expended. In reference to the Gulf steamer Sir Patrick asked whether it were worth while to carry on this means of communication during the winter season? In his opinion it had not proved a success. He suggested doing away with the idea of an ice-breaking steamer and for the four months of the year when ice conditions made the Gulf difficult to cross the steamer could ply between St. John's and Halifax, a route, which, he considered, would be a much more satisfactory one. For this purpose he thought a second-hand steamer could be procured in England for half the amount proposed to be spent on an ice-breaker. He thought that with regard to the bunkering scheme the criticisms had much to commend them but he considered if the Government did not intend to carry out the scheme it would be debatable whether the amount of money should be voted at all, for if it were, there would probably be an irresistible temptation to spend it. Four years ago provisions had been made in the Act for the construction of a new Long Bridge and Freight Sheds but nothing had been done and the money was spent in some other direction. As far as the Government's tourist policy was concerned there was a diversity of opinion. Every one realized the great possibilities which the country affords and we can only hope that it brings the good results looked forward to. The Farmers' Government in Ontario embarked on a road building policy and no doubt it has been tremendously successful in bringing people into the country but some people have doubted whether the return is sufficient to warrant the cost.

Hon. Mr. Morine stated it was the intention of the Government to offer a portion of the Loan locally, so that any person who might wish to take it up might do so. It was intended also to float it by tender and contract and take the very strictest care in considering and awarding the contract. The Bill was reported without amendment and by consent was read a third time and passed.

Hon. Mr. Morine in moving the adjournment said he wished to make some comments upon remarks made by Mr. Warren, M.H.A., for Fortune Bay, in the Assembly yesterday, relative to his speech on the second reading of the Alcoholic Liquor Bill. He started by saying that it had been quite unnecessary for me to refer to alleged misconduct on the part of previous governments as a reason for supporting the Alcoholic Liquor Bill. I consider, sir, that the fact that previous governments had not enforced the Prohibition Act was one of the strongest reasons for its repeal; those governments had either tried to enforce the Act and failed, or had been remiss in their duties for a number of years. After a law has been

passed, it is the duty of the Government to see that it is enforced. In the next place, I notice that Mr. Warren referred to the Placentia Island and to the "Cornwall" incident, with a pathos that I think was entirely hypocritical. He referred to the arrest of the offenders, to their being brought "handcuffed" through the streets of St. John's, and to the loss of their living during the fishing season. Now I wish to say that the men brought here as the result of the "Cornwall" cruise would have been tried in the ordinary way in their homes if they had not resisted the police; that I do not believe that they were brought handcuffed through the streets of St. John's but that if they were it was improper and it was the fault of the police; that they were not imprisoned for any length of time, but allowed out on bail, so that so far as I know neither the living of themselves nor of their families were sacrificed. Mr. Warren was employed by me to prosecute these men, and when in turn he became Attorney General his first act was to withdraw the

charges against them. He ought to have brought them to trial, and, if possible, secured a conviction, and then if there had been any hardness on the part of the Government, it should have been considered in connection with mitigation of their sentences. The majesty of the law ought to have been upheld. But Mr. Warren conveniently forgot to make any reference to another fact in this connection, his removal of Magistrate Miffen from Greenspond to Twillingate, at the demand of his colleagues, the members for Bonaville Bay, the now Sir William Coaker and others. Mr. Miffen had done his duty. He was a valued and valuable Magistrate. He had aroused the apathy of lawbreakers by his courage. He was banished at the demand of the lawbreakers, and Mr. Warren consented to and carried out the shameful removal.

Finally, Mr. Warren referred to the appointment of Mr. Meaney as Controller, just before the general election of 1923, and said that it was no more secret than my appointment to the Government of this Colony and to this House. Now, the offence of secrecy about Mr. Meaney's appointment is this, that after Mr. Warren and his colleagues had made a minute appointing him, they resolved that the minute should be suppressed in order that the people should know nothing about it. There was no secrecy about my appointment to this House or to the Government. Who will be appointed to Governments or to the Legislative Council is not usually announced beforehand.

The Council took recess at 11.30 a.m. until 3 p.m. when it resumed and his Excellency the Governor having arrived commanded the presence of the Members of the Honourable House of Assembly, who attended at the Bar of the House. His Excellency was pleased to assent to the Bills passed and delivered a speech of

which a copy was published in our issue of Tuesday.

TO THE LADIES OF ST. JOHN'S.—Having had a year's experience in the U.S., I am now prepared to introduce the Shingle Bob, Semi-Shingle, Children's Haircutting, etc. I am back at my old job at J. T. Nelder's Hairdressing Parlour. J. O'TOOLE.—aug19,21

Fairly Good Jigging on Labrador
A message from Capt. Edgar Hunt to the Marine and Fisheries Department, states that "from Battle Harbour North to Hopedale, trapping is practically over. Fairly good jigging all along the coast, good sign of seal and herring. 75 schrs. south of Hopedale, fishing, average about 300 gals each. Weather fine." Capt. Hunt's report was sent from Smokey.

Pearline for easy washing.—July 17, 17

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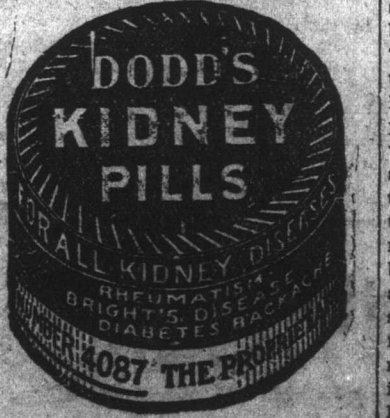
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