

DR. BAXTER PRESENTS STRONG INDICTMENT

Of Gov't Policies During Their Administration and Questions Their Sincerity.

MOVES AN AMENDMENT

Which Will Give Them Chance to Show Whether They Prefer to Stick to Principle or Play Politics.

(Continued from page 1.)

"We have had examples of this in the City of St. John when Mr. Williams, a number of western members of parliament to come to that city and investigate the claims and needs upon the spot. These gentlemen were not hostile before, but were simply unformed, and when they came in contact with the facts of the situation they were transformed into champions of St. John."

"Might I suggest to the Provincial Secretary that he should direct to the province the advantage of his personal personality by coming in direct contact with members of the Federal Government and express to them in a friendly spirit the case of the province as he sees it. I am sure by this means much will be accomplished."

"I will content myself by drawing a parallel between the Liberal principles and the actions of my hon. friend and his colleagues in the administration. It used to be accepted as a Liberal axiom that the expenditures should be kept within the revenues, and I have heard many impassioned declarations against deficits by Liberal orators. It may be that times have changed, and this principle has changed with them. If that is my hon. friend's position I am willing to let it pass. It is claimed, however, that Liberal statesmen have wrought out the constructive principles of the British Empire and the country. We must give credit to the eminent and true Liberals for their efforts in this direction without conceding to them the whole of the field. There is no principle for which they have contended more stoutly than that of a responsible government, and fidelity in that principle is the necessity for a minister in charge of a department which expends public money, submitting himself to the people upon accepting office, for endorsement or rejection that Liberal principle is liberally violated by the colleague of my hon. friend who is as Minister of Public Health, spending from thirty to forty thousand dollars a year, without having the courage to go back to his constituency for re-election."

"No taxation without representation is said to be another Liberal watchword, and yet for nearly forty years the County of Carleton has been deprived of one of its members in the House. My hon. friends may say that the old government did not fill vacancies promptly. That is true and the reason was that the energy of the people was entirely devoted during that period to their participation in the great war for freedom. Let us look to record of late government in that respect. Five vacancies occurred. That of Hon. W. B. Dickson, of Albert, occurred by his death prior to session of 1916. Resignation of John Sheridan, of Kent; A. J. Stewart, of Gloucester; and Hon. John Wilson, of St. John, took place after session of 1915; and that of C. B. Lockhart, after session of 1916. On 17th August, 1916, one of these seats had been vacant for two sessions; three of them during one session; and no session had intervened since the resignation of the fifth. The period covered by their vacancies was one of the most serious of the war yet, on August 1917, Hon. Mr. Dugal, a member of the County of Miramichi, Hon. E. A. Smith, then member-elect for County of Westmorland, and Mr. J. H. Pelletier, then member for Miramichi, signed written demands upon D. W. Landry, then Provincial Secretary, requesting him to issue writs of election to fill the vacancies under section 172 of Election Act."

"I have seen these documents. Were the two gentlemen members of the present government in earnest at that time? Did they believe their election law required the issue of those writs? If they did not why did they sign them? If they thought they were right then have they changed their minds since or what excuse have they to offer for not applying those Liberal principles so stoutly advocated by the Provincial Secretary."

"I will give them an opportunity to explain their position in this respect, and for that purpose move, seconded by Mr. Sutton, of Carleton, the following resolution:

(The text of the amendment will be found on the fourth column of this page.)

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Hon. Mr. Veniot—I was taught that by the hon. gentleman. Mr. Baxter, continuing, said that he was reminded of an incident which occurred some years ago when he met in a street car a gentleman from whom he had derived some of his early political ideas. He had remarked that the personally favored good roads, but he believed the people demanded them in excess of what the Province could afford to give. If the Government spent by borrowing instead of current revenue, the time would come when they would be unable to continue borrowing because of the enormous burden of interest. When that

happened, the roads would be less permanent and there would be no money to put them back. He held that it was wrong to put capital into continuing the roads, but not stand the life of the bonds. For doing that the Government might get public commendation for a time, but the day would come when it would be the cause of dissatisfaction.

"Madame Deficit." The Government was the first to express joy over an infatuation from the most ancient times had been in direct opposition to the principles of Liberalism. Yet the House had prepared for taxation to be imposed upon the people of the province, while one seat to which the people were entitled remained vacant. There was also another vacancy. He would ask the Hon. Minister of Health to direct his attention to those germs of disease which periodically became active in the County of Westmorland, and prevented one of the hon. members from taking his seat. Much had been said in a previous session concerning four hon. members opposite, who were removed from the frame and the words "Madame Deficit" were substituted. What had happened afterwards? The report against the Government, the dynasty and Madame Deficit went to a bad end.

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Un satisfactory Accounts.

The Budget debate in former times had been limited to a discussion of the finances of the Province, and under the present-day interpretation a discussion of world events was permitted, and there was no limit as to the scope. The money was voted by the people to the Crown, but the Crown and people are essentially the same. There were always such uncertainties as to the meaning of the hieroglyphics on the tombs of Egypt as there was in regard to the meaning of the man who recorded the "Madame Deficit" accounts. When his hon. friends took office with their mantle of parity, they promised a clean administration and a system of accounts so clear that a man travelling with the witness of the darkness which had prevailed under previous governments. Whatever had been the faults of the old system he could say without respect to party that the accounts of the Province had been fairly and honestly kept. There may have been mistakes, but the people were always able to get from the what information they wanted. The system gave no better results than the one which preceded it. An element of inefficiency appears to enter the picture. That could not be the fault of the hon. Provincial Treasurer. That hon. member in statements to the House had given the accounts of his department as being absolutely correct, and he had been generous in his praise of the system of bookkeeping. He hoped to see that the House would have a flood of light on the mystery connected with the accounts. They on his side of the House were sadly upon columns of figures which could not be made to agree. He had no thought of alleging wrongdoing, but he did not feel that the accounts fairly represented the result of the payments. There was no point in saying that there was fraud in connection with the public accounts, but the accounts did not agree and did not give the information which the people were entitled to and which had been promised by the hon. Provincial Treasurer. The new Finance Act was to remedy all sins of the preceding Government. His hon. friends had not used the term "proceeding" in the House. He (Baxter) was careful in regard to the feelings of an ex-Minister who now occupied a seat in the House. They probably had in mind another member of a former administration who occupied an honorable position as a member of the present Government. He (Baxter) did not wish to dwell upon ancient issues, but he would say that the accounts under the old system gave satisfaction. He would change his position as Minister of Public Health, spending from thirty to forty thousand dollars a year, without having the courage to go back to his constituency for re-election.

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know that he was serving in a cabinet that was violating the two first principles of responsible government? Did he know that one member of the Government who had expended \$200,000 last year, had never submitted himself to the people he represented? He must know that the acceptance of office in a government without re-election by the people, was a defiance of the principles of Liberalism.

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happened, the roads would be less permanent and there would be no money to put them back. He held that it was wrong to put capital into continuing the roads, but not stand the life of the bonds. For doing that the Government might get public commendation for a time, but the day would come when it would be the cause of dissatisfaction.

"Madame Deficit." The Government was the first to express joy over an infatuation from the most ancient times had been in direct opposition to the principles of Liberalism. Yet the House had prepared for taxation to be imposed upon the people of the province, while one seat to which the people were entitled remained vacant. There was also another vacancy. He would ask the Hon. Minister of Health to direct his attention to those germs of disease which periodically became active in the County of Westmorland, and prevented one of the hon. members from taking his seat. Much had been said in a previous session concerning four hon. members opposite, who were removed from the frame and the words "Madame Deficit" were substituted. What had happened afterwards? The report against the Government, the dynasty and Madame Deficit went to a bad end.

Future Revenue. The current accounts of the Province for 1918 had shown a deficit of \$14,855,98. In 1919 there was a deficit of \$27,486.13, which made a total of \$42,342.13 for the two years. He thought that was pretty good, but they should wait and see what would happen next year. In three years the deficit of the Government had totalled over \$800,000, which went to show that they had done little better than their predecessors in the deficit business. The time had arrived when either the revenue had to be increased or the expenditures decreased, or a master how many chartered accountants were employed nothing was possible. The Government had promised to increase the rate of collection of revenue during the present year from the lumbering industry. They had last year collected from stumpage the sum of \$1,200,000. This year they estimated a revenue from stumpage of \$1,200,000, which meant \$1 for every two dollars they had collected last year. They had reduced to increase the rate of stumpage to \$7, yet it would require a very large increase in order to collect the amount that had been estimated. He believed they would increase the stumpage, but the next year would show that his prediction was not correct. He would repeat that the estimate for stumpage could not be fulfilled and Madame Deficit would fill across the stage once more.

The Expert's Work. He was given to understand that the Government did not propose to depend upon increasing the rate of stumpage as a means of increasing the revenue. He believed that the question of imposing the real thing in direct taxation was the real thing in the matter. He had known by the almost contemptible title of auditor-general, but now he was known by the transcendent title of controller-general. That was all that had come out of the new Act.

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