

BUDGET SPEECH SHOT UP BY HON. J. A. MURRAY

Leader of Opposition Picks to Pieces Financial Statements of Local Government as Revealed in Budget

Shows Bonded Debt Has Been Increased by Two Million Dollars, and That a Deliberate Attempt Had Been Made to Deceive the Public With the Belief That the Gov't Had a Surplus of \$30,000—Gives Foster Gov't an Un-easy Hour.

Assembly Chamber, March 26—The House met at three o'clock. Mr. Burchill presented the report of the committee on standing orders, also that of the corporations committee. Mr. Marsereau presented the report of the agriculture committee. Notices of inquiry were given as follows: By Mr. Dickson, as to whether James P. Ryan, of Moncton, has been appointed a poultry inspector, and as to payments made to George Cochran of Moncton. By Mr. Smith, (Albert), as to the fate when the Moncton bridge was taken over, and as to the disposition of old timber and new planks used in connection therewith. By Mr. Marsereau, as to the number of applicants for wholesale and retail licenses under the intoxicating liquor act.

great sacrifice had been made. Those bonds were good investments, which ranked with the best in the land. Reference had been made to increased agriculture production, and the honorable minister of agriculture had been spoken of as a factor in that work. He (Murray) did not wish to detract from any credit that might be due the minister of agriculture, but he wished to point out that the department had been materially aided by the provincial government. The Honorable Provincial Secretary-Treasurer had stated in his speech that the accounts as published were absolutely correct in every respect, and that people could see at a glance the true condition of affairs. Perhaps his honorable friends opposite could see the accounts in the manner described by the last speaker, but he (Murray) would have to confess that he could not. One plank in the platform of his honorable friends when in opposition was that they, on assuming office, would obtain a true statement of provincial finances, and would reduce the cost of administration by getting rid of a lot of useless officials. He would like to ask them if the promise made in that plank had been fulfilled. Had they reduced the number of officials and cut down expenses so as to avoid direct taxation? He claimed that they had not carried out that pledge. He had been accused by the honorable minister of public works of having used material in his speech on the address which should have been deferred until the delivery of the budget. He had since consulted Bourmont on the subject and had found that the statement (Murray) had taken was absolutely correct. The honorable minister of public works had stated that all accounts for the fiscal year were charged up to that year, and would be found in the comptroller general's report. The honorable provincial secretary-treasurer had told of a new system introduced by the government which showed revenue and disbursements on one page of the report, and he had asked honorable members not to confuse that statement with the consolidated revenue and expenditure statement as published in the Royal Gazette after the close of the fiscal year. He wished to point out that, in the statement which had appeared in the Royal Gazette the government had claimed a surplus of \$30,000, and their newspapers, under glaring headlines, had referred to it as the achievement of a businesslike administration. That surplus had popped its head over the top of the parapet and had disappeared. The report which had since been brought down showed that a deficit of \$124,000 had taken its place. The honorable provincial secretary-treasurer wanted it understood that the original statement only referred to cash transactions, while the other statement showed actual revenue and disbursements. He (Murray) had looked into the new statement and he was not only very confused, but was unable to reconcile it with the statement which appeared in the consolidated revenue accounts. Many items which appeared in the one part of the report failed to agree with items set forth upon another page. For instance, the item of necessaries for 1918, \$2,134,422, and on the statement was shown in the cash statement as \$90,000, while in the second statement there was an increase of \$4,396,238. The item of amusement tax receipts was shown in one statement as \$13,737 and the other as \$16,467, and the same thing applied to other items. Territorial revenue was set down in the first statement as \$791,027.68, but on reference to another part of the book, it was found to be \$799,673.77, a difference of \$7,326.68. It must be borne in mind that the accounts from which he had quoted were supposed to reveal a correct statement of provincial affairs. There may be an explanation in regard to the matter, but it certainly was not clear to him. In his mind the accounts were confusing and he would like to have a further explanation from the honorable provincial secretary-treasurer. He did not think that the statements as published were in keeping with the platform of his honorable friends opposite. Last session they had passed a bill dealing with the patriotic tax to which they had hitched on the sum of \$128,000 against the protests of the opposition. They had collected \$98,328.32 of that amount, and what had they done with it? The honorable provincial secretary-treasurer had submitted the distribution of items to the House which showed that part of the money had been expended in the guarding of bridges. He claimed they had expended the money for political purposes, and had imposed direct taxation upon the people, under the guise of patriotic expenditure.

from the Canadian Pacific Railway, yet, the comptroller general's report showed receipts of \$1,661.42. Turning to accounts receivable he found that the sum of \$7,916.25 was still outstanding against the company. He wished to say that had the previous administration adopted such a method of bookkeeping they would have made a much better showing. His honorable friends had used the new system to reduce the size of the deficit and to deceive the people. Hon. Mr. Foster said that the items were shown on both sides. Mr. Murray (Kings) continuing, said that he was coming soon to the other side. He said that the provincial hospital accounts showed receipts of \$22,149, to which was added the sum of \$16,853 which represented stock of the institution. He had never, in his experience, heard of any business man adding his stock in trade to his cash receipts. The old government had been accused of piling up an account of \$583,782.73 while in the revenue and credit for the stock they had on hand when they went out of office.

Public Works Expenditures.

Referring to the public works expenditures, he said that consolidated revenue account showed an expenditure of \$523,782.73 while in the revenue and disbursements account it was shown as \$571,298.46, which was a difference of \$47,515.73. In turning to another part of the book, to look for the amount of the difference standing as a liability, he found that the difference was \$48,132.73. He was utterly at a loss to understand the statement of the accounts as published, and while the honorable provincial secretary-treasurer might know all about them, he did not believe that there were a dozen honorable members who did. The report of the comptroller general contained three different statements of the provincial accounts, a revenue and disbursement statement, an amended statement and another statement which appeared in the back of the book. One would have supposed that from the three statements correct information as to the financial standing of the province could be obtained but the last was too great for the ordinary layman.

With regard to the increase and revenue, which mention had been made, he wished to point out that much of the increase was due to such items as greater production, sale of seeds, sale of sheep and fuel control department. These were not matters simply to enable them to swell the receipts in future years. The patriotic and war purpose tax had produced \$9,073, but his honorable friends would not repeat the experiment this year, and would not have a similar amount to credit to ordinary revenue. With regard to the increase in revenue, which mention had been made, he wished to point out that much of the increase was due to such items as greater production, sale of seeds, sale of sheep and fuel control department. These were not matters simply to enable them to swell the receipts in future years. The patriotic and war purpose tax had produced \$9,073, but his honorable friends would not repeat the experiment this year, and would not have a similar amount to credit to ordinary revenue.

There had been an increase in game licenses receipts amounting to \$16,700 last year owing to legislation which had been adopted, which was not in the interest of the people of the province.

Funded Debt.

The funded debt of the province was \$9,999,646. New Brunswick government had \$2,134,422, and on the account of the Valley Railway \$5,950,000. The Government had added a half million to the debt of the province which had been added to the debt with the former administration, and including the increase in floating liabilities, they had added the sum of \$1,072,000.34 to the debt in the year and seven months. The total debt of the province now was \$19,127,107.27, an increase since the present government had taken office of \$1,995,864 to the public debt of the province. He would have liked to have seen the Government adopt two years ago

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THE WEATHER.

Washington, March 26—New England—Rain Thursday. Cold Thursday night. Friday clearing and colder. Fresh south winds shifting to north-east.

Maritime—Moderate winds, fair and mild.

Fredericton, March 25.—A large delegation from Woodstock representing the Agricultural Society there, interviewed the government today, asking for a grant of \$1,000 toward the erection of a new exhibition building, since the old exhibition grounds were used by the Valley Railway there and had been closed for some time. They plan on putting up a \$20,000 building and providing an automobile park. The premier asked estimates and particulars of their plans, and promised consideration.

Paris, Monday, Mar. 24.—In official circles here the fall of the Karolyi government in Hungary is ascribed to its internal and external causes. Internally, it is known that the extremists have been steadily increasing in number from the day of the armistice. On the other hand, with regard to external questions the early hope of a rapprochement with the Allies had not been realized until recently. The events likewise occurred which are felt to have direct bearings on the crisis. The first was the order of the Allies that the Hungarians withdraw to the Rumanian boundary and the Rumanian treaty of 1916. The second was the Allied order to give to the Czech-Slovakians the territory actually were issued. Karolyi himself had declared he would surrender the government in such circumstances.

French: "Saying 'Thank you' to a woman," says a new play by the playwright, which is being produced in the neighborhood of it used to be, it is quite lately, the customer who is unconscious.

BORN.

WILLIAMSON—To Mr. and Mrs. Leonard L. Williamson, a son, March 21st.

DIED.

GERSON—On the twenty-sixth inst., Mrs. Catherine Hogerson, at the home of her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Thomas Lydon, 17 Richmond street, leaving two daughters to mourn.

Saturday morning at 9.15 o'clock to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception for solemn high mass of requiem.

At the St. John County Hospital, on March 26th, 1919, Edward Fillmore, of 64 St. John street, West St. John, after an illness of six months, leaving his wife, his parents, and five brothers to mourn.

At the St. John County Hospital, on Saturday afternoon at 30 o'clock to Greenwood cemetery, friends invited to attend.

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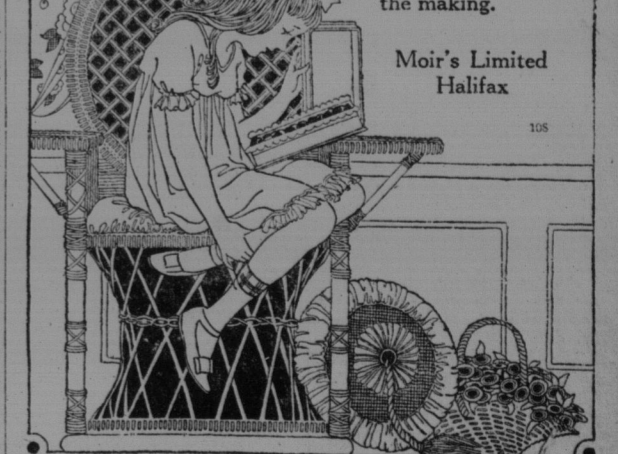
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