

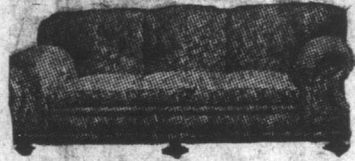
Proceedings at the Legislative Council

(Continued from 8th page.)

that there is no good reason, but that the question is, can they get a better living elsewhere? Do they get a better living on the railway, or is the railway likely to give them a better living hereafter? The number of men employed on the railway year after year has not been very large, nor have the persons employed thereon been changed very much. To the great majority of the fishermen the railway has been of no advantage whatever. They have obtained no labor from it, and are not likely to. But they have been called upon to pay, and will forever have to pay their share of the taxation consequent upon the construction. And what about the labourers themselves, have they upon the whole profited by the employment? I say no, emphatically. During the construction of the road, they have obtained a miserable living, with greater exposure, greater toil, than their fellow-fishermen have been called upon to endure. But early in the morning, and home late at night, forced to pay high prices for provisions with doctor's dues and Postmaster's dues; and with no time allowance except when their backs have been bent and their brows bathed in perspiration, toiling along with pick and shovel, the railway labourers have worked harder and profited less than the fishermen of the Colony during the same time. They have learned a new trade, which they cannot follow because there is nothing more to do. Their boats, their nets, their lines, have moulded away, they cannot expect, in the present state, to get supplies for the fishery. What are they to do after the close of the present year? Emigrate or starve? The railway which was to supply them with employment through the industries along its line, which it would create has failed in that effect.

Now let us turn to the next point of importance, namely, "will the Tourist trade be of such value as to warrant this expenditure?" And in doing so, I ask and seek whether the Hon. Leader of the Government has given us any direct estimate of the value of Tourist Traffic, and I find that he has not. We are, therefore, to accept the conclusions of his speech upon an indirect and perhaps a remote premise. Probably it was not possible, probably he thought it not necessary. He has told how many automobiles visited Ontario, he told how much was spent on roads, he quoted unsupported opinions of the need of utilizing means for encouragement. But, what he has left unsaid is of greater import and value than what he has said. It is the omission that confuses him this time not the

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Commission. He told us that Ontario, which the Hon. Dr. Campbell remarks is his favorite Province, has spent the enormous sum of \$50,000,000 on roads. Whether this is for one year or for the past fifty years the Hon. Gentleman does not say. But he does say that they spent it on roads. This does not mean that they built Tourist roads. That huge amount is at its best a relative figure. By that, I mean, before the amount nubs your understanding, you should view it in relation to the size of the country, in relation to the wealth of the country, in relation to the various expenditures of the country, in relation to the number of the

32,000,000 bushels Rye
24,000,000 bushels Mixed Grain
19,000,000 bushels Other Grain
30,000,000 bushels Potatoes
49,000,000
5,200,000 bushels Hay and Clover

309,200,000

Value Livestock & Poultry

try \$237,000,000
Value of Dairy Products 60,000,000
Value Mineral Production 54,500,000
Under Cultivation—14,000,000 acres
Value Farms, farm buildings, livestock, well over \$1,000,000,000. Capital invested Industrial Establishments, \$1,500,000,000. Value Products, \$1,700,000,000.

In the light of these figures, are we surprised that Ontario could afford to devote to road building the enormous sum of fifty million dollars? There are fourteen million acres of land under cultivation, hence, roads are the very vitality of the farming industry of Ontario. But for their ninety-six thousand miles of roads, much of it would not exist. Consider, if you can, that the value of farm buildings, farms and livestock in that country are well over one billion dollars, and then ask yourselves, is it any wonder that a country so wealthy, so cultivated, so established should venture to launch an extensive road programme, which may not necessarily mean a Tourist programme, and which if information could be gotten would probably not be. These are a few of the Hon. Gentleman's commissions, which speak in more forcible tones than his persuasive rhetoric.

I have quoted the following from Burke as applicable to the strange attitude of the Hon. Leader of the Government, "contradictions are set staring one another in the face, without even an attempt to reconcile them." Nowhere does that trite expression apply with more fitness than in the answer to the question "Whose Bill is it?" A few days ago, with a pride that was youthful, the Hon. Gentleman assured us that this was "Morrison's Bill" and that he intended to have any credit that would accrue. We long wondered as to who was in reality the leader of the Government. It seemed strange that so meek an aggregation should be capable of being held in check by an unknown quantity. At the very best, we could only agree upon the fact that this strange and factious gathering was kept between the traces by two masters, the first, and the second, the triumvirate, Crozier, Morrison and Morrison. But the Hon. Leader of the Government has now attempted to remove any doubt as to who is the actual Premier of this country. Our minds are at rest on that point, we know now that this is not a Morrison Government, not a Crozier Government, but a Morrison Government. And yet, although the Hon. Leader of the Government has so openly and fearlessly stated the actual position, there are, as there ever will be, insurgent ones in the ranks who would dispute that Honorable title to which he justly lays claim. Indignate that the Hon. Leader of the Government, should arrogate to himself the honor which is his by every right, a Brutus in the person of Mr. Bennett, stated as follows:

"I think it would be unfair to myself, unfair to the Government and unfair to this House if I did not emphatically proclaim that no such programme as that outlined in the press as emanating from another source, has ever been considered by the Government of this country, at least, by the present Government."

"In my position as Colonial Secretary I would have some knowledge of such a proceeding, and I would be long sorry to subscribe to any scheme that would involve this country in very much larger expenditure than that already thought of."

The difficulty now arises as to whose authority we are to accept. Mr. Bennett speaks in the official position as Colonial Secretary; the Hon. Leader of the Government as the brains of the movement and the power behind the throne. The Hon. Gentleman assures us that the programme of the Government is that work on the Western and Eastern section shall begin at the same time. But Mr. Bennett, still in a contradictory mood, said, in the House of Assembly:

"If we are going to enter on this policy one of the first things to be done is that we must build a hotel in St. John's, and the road building policy must radiate from this town. And as we push out and advance we will see where and how and by what means we can develop this programme. I apologise to the House for referring to a Bill already passed, but I thought in justice to this House for referring to a Bill already passed, and in justice to myself that I should make these explanations."

Had the Hon. Leader of the Government not made his present position clear and with such single-mindedness made known to us that his was the policy, his was the Government, we should have great difficulty in reconciling this great expenditure which the Government proposes to lay out in Tourist Roads, with the strange comment of Mr. Morrison a short time previous to his election. On that occasion he said:

"Taxes must be reduced and in his

opinion it would be advisable not to spend another cent on roads for the next five years he would even allow grass to grow along the railway."

We know that a man entertaining such an opinion of the great value of Tourist Roads and railroads, as to let the grass grow on them, as was once said of Water Street, would never launch such a scheme at the present. This great product of the imagination, we feel assured, must have been mapped by the Hon. Mr. Morrison and now as he is the hand at the helm it is the Government's policy, no matter how much the subordinate may protest.

You have heard the Bill called a "Perfect Bill." The Editor of the "Daily News" in referring to that strange adjective writes, "He referred to it as a perfect Bill, somewhat extravagant for the production of any human creation, however admirable the purpose of it, or however carefully the clauses have been drafted." So great is the belief in the perfection of the Bill, that the challenge has been offered to lay a finger on a single item capable of imputation. Challenges are dangerous things, but let us accede to the request. The Hon. Leader of the Government has outlined a road, he has given us a plan of road building for Tourist Traffic which he says will cost \$5,000 per mile. This plan touches upon every possible different kind of land in our country. The estimate, therefore, must have been very difficult to make and great caution for any approximate correctness must be shown, but here is a strange statement the Hon. Gentleman has used:

"In putting forward these notes it must be understood that surveys have not yet been made and that routes suggested may have to be modified to some extent when the surveys are made."

Again he deducts 32 miles at \$5,000 per mile from his programme, approximately, at least \$160,000. What is the force upon which he makes such deduction? The reason he gives is as follows:

"Secondly, I understand that it is probable that the N.P.P. Company with connect their plants at Corner Brook and Deer Lake by road, which will mean adding about 32 miles more to the system."

I have maintained from the beginning that the programme was based upon understandings and probabilities.

HON. MR. McNAMARA took occasion to deal briefly with the re-

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HON. MR. WINTER considered it an unfair law. The lighthouses were built for the local vessels and it was right that they should be asked to contribute something to their upkeep. Foreign going vessels were very rarely served by our local lights. They sailed from here in daylight and generally arrived in daylight and the tax on these only paid for the maintenance of our lighthouses. A coastal vessel sailing from Twillingate for Sydney, for instance, would probably benefit from 10 to 20 of our lights, and yet were not asked to contribute to the service. This he considered unfair.

HON. PRESIDENT wished to support the last speaker. The whole basis of the Bill had been changed since its second reading, when it was agreed that one trip could be made to Sydney or P.E.I. by local trading vessels without being subject to the 6 cents a ton.

HON. MR. MORINE explained that the change was favorable to our local vessels. So far as the Council was concerned it could neither take on the foreign tax nor put on the local tax.

HON. THE PRESIDENT—Would it not appear reasonable that a vessel going to P.E.I. or Sydney more than once in one season should pay something towards the upkeep of our lighthouses? (Continued on page 13.)

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