

The Herald

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EDITOR & PROPRIETOR

Notes From Ottawa.

Although spring weather now prevails at Canada's Capital and, generally speaking, the streets and side walks are clear of snow; yet at this writing there are in some sections of the city great quantities of ice several feet in depth formed from snow that has been here all winter, subject to rains, frost and all changes of weather. Groups of men are employed breaking up this icy snow with picks and carting it away.

For the time being, the glory has departed from Parliament Hill. The bustle and activity that were wont to prevail there during the parliamentary session are absent. The throngs of pedestrians moving up and down the boulevard, to and from the forum of the people's representatives, are no longer in evidence. The great gothic pile, within whose halls vitality throbbed and statesmen were wont to contend with intellectual rapier is now, thanks to the fire fiend, a dismantled ruin, lonely and abandoned. But it is altogether likely that reconstruction will commence before very long, when a new and grander parliament building will rise from the ruins of the old one. Then, once more, Parliament Hill shall become the point of attraction; the goal of visitors to Ottawa.

In the mean time the parliamentary session is progressing and the country's public business is receiving the attention of the people's representatives, in the improvised legislative chambers in the Victoria Museum, where the Senate and Commons are now located. It was a fortunate circumstance for the Government that this building was available when the shocking conflagration drove the assembled members of both Houses so precipitately out into the cold. This temporary parliament building is a splendid large structure and adapts itself wonderfully well to its new purposes. The plain and practically unadorned appearance of the chambers; the improvised divisions off into corridors and the simple unupholstered seats, for the most part, lend an air of democracy to the place, and involuntarily conveys the impression that this is beyond question the peoples forum.

Seeing the Leaders, after an interval of some years, one is immediately impressed with the idea that their constant guard in the fore front of the respective political battle lines is not all amusement. The Premier, Sir Robert Borden, while apparently healthy and vigorous, has aged under the care of state. Sir Wilfrid Laurier has become an old man; but unless one saw him for the first time after four or five years, the evidence of old age would not probably be so apparent.

The idea of prorogation before Easter has been given up, and the present agreement is that Parliament should adjourn today, Wednesday until next Tuesday. This breather will be a welcome relief, especially to the cabinet ministers and those members who are active on the committees. The session so far has been a particularly arduous one. The Senate took its adjournment last week till after Easter.

MINARD'S LINIMENT CURES DYPHTHERIA.

The Legislative Session.

The House resumed business for the week on Tuesday afternoon, 11th. Mr. Speaker took the chair at 2.40. When the orders of the day were reached the Premier intimated that at four o'clock His Honour the Governor would receive the whole House in the Council Chamber, when the reply to the address would be presented. At that hour the whole House, headed by the Speaker, proceeded to the Council Chamber and formally presented the reply to the Governor, who graciously accepted same. On returning to the House the Speaker reported that His Honour had graciously received the address. The Public Accounts were then tabled.

The Premier as chairman of the Standing Rules and Orders brought in a report and stated that the rules were the same as those approved in 1905, and every year since, with the exception that one section had been extended. He thought it advisable that these should be printed for the convenience of members to save them the trouble of referring to the journals of the House. Mr. Bell said a copy of the rules had just been laid on his desk and he would like a little time to consider them. He thought, for example, where there were no specific rules governing questions that arise, the rules and procedure governing the House of Commons at Ottawa should be accepted instead of the British House of Commons. On this point Premier Mathieson dissented from the contention of the Leader of Opposition. He showed that the P. E. Island Legislature was older than the Dominion Legislature and older than the Parliament of the United States, and that it had many ancient and historic associations with the Mother of Parliaments. He thought it would not be wise to depart from the custom which made the rules and procedure of the British House of Commons govern cases which were not covered by the specified rules of the House. The Premier then withdrew his motion, in order to give Mr. Bell time to peruse the rules before their adoption.

On a question of privilege the Premier alluded to the extravagant and scandalous manner in which the Patriot had reported the incident in the House on Friday, and also to the attempts which had been made to discredit the Speaker, both by the Patriot and Mr. Bell and Mr. Johnston. No member had a right to tell the Speaker what he ought or ought not to do. Mr. Johnston and Mr. Bell took part in the controversy which followed. Premier Mathieson pointed out the untenableness of the ground assumed by the Opposition, and Mr. Speaker lectured the members who had taken part in the tangle of the previous week. The matter then dropped. Premier Mathieson introduced a resolution on which to found a bill regarding drainage. He explained the matter at some length. After some other business of a routine character the Premier gave notice that on the following day the House would be moved into committee to consider of supply. The House then adjourned for recess.

House resumed at 9.35 p. m. when the committee stage of the drainage resolution was continued. Many questions were asked by the Opposition, and some other routine business was put through before the House adjourned for the day.

Consideration of the drainage resolution, questions and routine business occupied the House most of the time of the sitting of the House on Wednesday. Before adjournment the Premier tabled the estimates for the present fiscal year.

During the sitting of Thursday, a considerable part of the time of the House was occupied in matters of a routine character, with asking questions and corrections, submitted by members of the Government, of misleading reports of proceedings published in the Patriot. The discussion of the drainage bill in committee was continued, the opposition members taking diametrically opposite views to one another, as each rose in his place to discuss the question.

On Friday evening Premier Mathieson delivered his budget speech. Thus, he pointed out, was his fifth budget since he became Premier. After explaining and exposing the wretched condition of our finances when the late Liberal Government went out of power leaving a Provincial debt of \$1,072,000, the Premier briefly ran over what the present Government had done in the improvement of our finances and all departments of the public service came down to the discussion of the financial transactions of the year 1915. During the three years 1912, 1913 and 1914, the Government reduced the Provincial debt to the extent of \$89,241. But during the year 1915 conditions were not so favorable and the revenues shrank to the extent of the \$89,241 gained in the three previous years and \$16,191 more. The estimated revenue for 1915 was \$517,293; the actual revenue was \$470,729, a falling off of \$47,564. This shrinkage was due largely to falling off of taxation from fox business and from oysters. In addition to this the liabilities were increased by very large expenditure for Public Works and expenditures on account of the war. Then again, the war had a very depressing effect on business, and a consequent reduction in various revenues. But taking our financial conditions as we find it our total increase of liability since the present Government came into power is only \$16,191 or a little over an average of \$4,000 a year for the four years. Compare that with the average annual deficit of \$45,000. At the same time let us remember the annual increase of \$100,000 in our subsidy from Ottawa. The Premier hopes and believes we shall have a nice surplus next year.

Press Comment.

Since he became premier in the autumn of 1911 and, unwaveringly, until the present Sir Robert Borden has held a firm grip on Canadian affairs, but never was that grip so strong as it is today and never did he and his Government possess the confidence of the people to a greater extent than now. The Government has been faced with tremendous responsibilities but has not failed in the test. A few years ago it was the limit of a government's financial duties to handle transactions aggregating in the course of a year, forty, fifty or sixty millions of dollars, yet, in the past year, the Borden Government has handled hundreds of millions and no one has had the temerity to impute the slightest suspicion of graft to any member of it. Even when the case of J. Wesley Allison is attracting attention in that he is alleged to have promoted mushroom companies for the purpose of handling war contracts and to have profited to a large extent we find the Toronto Globe, the leading organ of Canadian Liberalism careful to say: "No one has charged Sir Sam Hughes with participation in this orgy of war contract graft." The Toronto Globe is not friendly to the Minister of Militia and if it did not think he would come out of any investigation with his good name unscathed would be at pains to attempt to shield him. In the Liberal Camp there are plenty of men ready to attack Sir Sam if there was opportunity to

do so safely, but he has compelled even his enemies to be careful. More than once, to paraphrase an oft-quoted line, has he "confounded their politics; frustrated their knavish tricks" and brought them to utter confusion. Today the Minister of Militia is on his way home from England. The contracts in which the Liberals intimate there was exorbitant profit will be probed by a commission of unquestionable ability and honesty. The country can await developments in the confidence that the good name of the Government and its members will remain unscathed. —St. John Standard.

The British treasury finds its mainstay in peace and war, in the income tax. If there are any or comparatively well-to-do persons in Canada disposed to grumble over war taxes they should reflect on the burdens the same classes in Britain must bear. The Britisher who earns between \$600 and \$2,500 a year must pay 56 cents on every five dollars. If the Canadian earning \$2,500 a year were forced to hand over \$280 to the federal government he would know the war was pinching him. The greater the income in Great Britain the greater the rate of taxation. An income of \$12,500 a year pays \$3,125 into the treasury, or one-fourth. An income of \$100,000 pays \$42,500. These rates refer only to earned incomes. On unearned incomes, derived from investments the taxation is much stiffer. In the current fiscal year the income tax will yield considerably over \$800,000,000. Exceeding the duty on the increment of land values, it is the most equitable tax imposed in the United Kingdom, because it makes "ability to bear" the test.

Dominion Parliament.

Ottawa, April 8—All signs on the political zodiac today point to a season well prolonged into May. In the first place the Liberals are believed to have something further to say in connection with shell transactions, and it is expected that General Hughes will have something to say when he returns which will call for comment; to say the least. But the development which promises to add most to the length of session is the railway situation. It is now pretty generally taken for granted that the Canadian Northern is back in the capital seeking further financial assistance; and the story goes that the Grand Trunk Pacific is in even more serious straits. It is reported that the condition of both these railways is so bad that immediate action on the part of the government in some direction is imperative; and whatever is done is certain to give rise to a great deal of debate. The legacies of the late government are the most serious domestic troubles this government has had to face.

Ottawa, April 9—The financial statement of the Dominion for the month of March and for the fiscal year ending with March (so far as the latter figures have yet been compiled by the finance department) show a war expenditure of no less than \$24,032,296 for last month; a total revenue of \$171,248,668 for the fiscal year and a national debt at the end of the year of \$555,027,592. The war expenditure is now getting pretty close to the million dollar a day mark; the revenue for the year was \$39,550,000 more than for the preceding year and a little over \$1,000,000 more than the Finance Minister estimated in his budget speech of Feb. 15 last; and the net debt shows an increase of nearly \$147,000,000 during the twelve months. The war expenditure for the fiscal year is given as \$134,650,000, although the final figures will not be available for two or three months yet. Revenue increases as compared with the preceding twelve months, were made up for the most part of \$22,480,000 in customs receipts; \$5,575,000 in post office receipts and \$1,000,000 in excise. Expenditures on consolidated fund account decreased by about \$9,500,000 and capital expenditures by nearly \$3,500,000. Customs revenues for March totalled \$9,978,198 as compared with \$7,066,479 for March of last year.

Ottawa, April 10—Legislation remaining to be introduced in Parliament this session will not be of such a character as to entail protracted discussion according to a statement in the House of Commons before it adjourned tonight by Hon. Robert Rogers. The Minister of Public Works had been suggesting that if all the members were diligent and prepared to facilitate the transaction of business it would be possible for Parliament to prorogue on the Thursday before Easter or shortly after Easter. To this Hon. George P. Graham had rejoined that it was improbable in his opinion that prorogation could take place before Easter. Indeed he had been informed that the Government was considering the advisability of an adjournment of the House from Friday night next until the Tuesday after Easter. Mr. Graham suggested that Parliament should remain in session until the Minister of Militia and Defence had returned and had an opportunity of speaking of allegations made during the debate of operations of the Shell Committee.

Ottawa, April 11—The House concurred in and reported from committee Hon. J. D. Reid's bill to amend the Railway Act and this measure now stands for third reading. The bill empowers the railway commission to pass upon the general locations of new railways and to refuse construction of railways if they are not thought to be in the public interest. Some objection was taken by Hon. George P. Graham and by some members on the government side of the house, to this delegation of powers formerly exercised by the railway committee of parliament to the railway commission but the acting minister of railways asked that the experiment be given a trial. Mr. W. F. MacLean of South York and Mr. J. E. Armstrong of East Lambton both approved of the proposed amendment. Mr. MacLean said that it was aimed at the unnecessary duplication of railways which had brought some railway companies into an unfortunate position. It was high time that some power, cognizant of the situation should be able to prevent unnecessary duplication of lines and services. He suggested that other sections of the proposed consolidated railway act should be made law, notably those providing for joint use of railway bridges and for the inauguration of suburban services from cities. Mr. Armstrong said that if the bill before the house had passed years ago, the country would have been saved many million dollars. It would not only prevent duplication of lines but also duplication of terminals.

Hon. J. D. Reid said that the clauses embodied in the bill were taken from the consolidated and amended railway act which was introduced in the Senate two sessions ago and which had not been pressed because of the outbreak of the war. Sir Henry Drayton, chairman of the railway commission, Mr. Gisborne, parliamentary counsel, and the justice department had all considered the bill and had expressed the opinion that it would not conflict with other sections of the railway act.

(Concluded on page 3)

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Ottawa, April 15—The promise which Hon. C. J. Doherty, minister of justice, gave to the Commons recently that he had under consideration reforms in prison regulations, was implemented.

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New caps in fancy tweeds and worsteds, pin stripes, greys in plain and fancy stripes and plaids of all colors—85c., \$1.00, and \$1.50.

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(Continued from page 1) introduced a bill to make the and penitentiaries act ap to industrial farms. It for the transfer of pris industrial farms and attention of the powers parole board. As the observed in the course of cussion today, there is mu to be done in the way of and he is still considering a scheme in the interests prisoners and convicts through the prison and taries of the Dominion. Pr is being gradually reforme the Conservative regime Province of Ontario as Dominion. The central pr Ontario, which was situat populous district of Toron been removed to Guelph, prison farm has been esta It is a pleasant institut authorities say that it is a of its kind, but prisoners w under the criminal code ca be taken to that farm. H under Mr. Doherty's aus these may be taken to Gu any other industrial farm will be given a chance to life anew. The effect of the legislation will be to end the establishment of ind farms instead of county j prisoners may now be com to these farms instead. county has a splendid ind farm.

Ottawa, Ont., April 16—General Sir Sam Hughes a in Ottawa shortly after two this afternoon and got a reception. A large number military officers and many o rank and file of the 7th 20th Regiments were at station, as well as many ci He had been expected a out hours earlier, and a much crowd was at the station but in spite of the disappoint about a thousand people gat in the afternoon to welcom Minister of Militia back to capital. General Hughes tra on one of the government ca was accompanied by two counsel, Messers. Eugene L K. C. of Montreal, and J. S. B K. C. of Ottawa. Mr. W Nesbit, K. C. of Toronto, has also been retained by G Hughes, travelled with the ister as far as Montreal, and went on to Toronto. M Lafleur and Nesbit met h New York, but Mr. Ewart d see him until he reached Mon General MacDonald and Hon McElin also met the minist Montreal. His staff who w England with him were Capt. Basset, his aide de camp, McAdam and Miss Creggar private secretaries. On his at on the platform at Ottawa Foot Guards struck up " Sweet Home" and played a her of other airs, such as " Adair," while the General, hands with many of those cabinet minister was Hon. R Rogers. Thirty militia of lined up on the platform an minister shook hands with ea them. All the leading offic the head-quarters staff were sent, as well as the follo members of parliament: D Speaker E. N. Rhodes, M Stewart, Col. H. B. Tremaine, Scott, George Elliot, Wil Gray, S. F. Glass, Donald N olson, Capt. Tom Wallace, v Sixsmith and Senator Rufus A cheer was raised by the platform when General H stepped off the train, and wh reached the outside he wa a hearty reception by the He walked to his car with Rogers, and they conv earnestly on the way. He at once to his apartments later had luncheon at the Ch Laurier. In the afternoon called upon the Prime Min and a long conference ensu Sir Robert's home on Wa burg street. The Ministe Militia looked in the best of h and was hearty in greetin e, but he was more serious is his wont. General Hughes tonight that he would ma statement to the house on Tu regarding the Kite charges, meanwhile he had nothing publication.

Senators McLean Murph, Prowse have come home to their Easter vacation.
Mr. Eneas A. McDonald been appointed Judge of P in succession to the late B. Reddie, Congratulations.