

The New Highway Policy of Provincial Government Announced To People of New Brunswick by Hon. B. F. Smith, Minister of Public Works; Is Modern, Practical and Meets All Requirements

To the Electors and People of the Province of New Brunswick:—

The organization of a successful highway administration has been the duty assigned to me since I assumed office as Minister of Public Works in September last. The question of highways is one which has interested me particularly in recent years, because it is one of the few great instrumentalities of our public life with which nearly all of our population come directly in contact. My interest in good roads is not merely an interest in the pleasure of riding in automobiles; it is not merely an interest in the very much more important matter of affording the farmers of this country and the residents in villages the means of ready access to neighboring markets as have need for economic benefit, but it is also the interest which is so apparent in weaving together a net of our rural and urban population and provincial opinions as it is possible to do. It is of supreme importance that the people of this province should think together; that they should think ultimately as a whole; and I feel in my enthusiasm for good roads, that this pleasant relation will, to a very large extent, be accomplished. The road is the great link of human intercourse; it is the most inclusive and far-reaching factor in the history of civilization; it is the mainstream of popular tendency; it fixes prices, it opens markets; it raises social standards; it concentrates public sentiment; it multiplies efficiency and conserves energy; it even regulates the law of supply and demand. No plan of highway improvement is complete unless it contains provision for the betterment of every mile in public use.

Demand for Adequate Improved Highways.

The consideration of this great question which is of so much moment to the people of this province requires the most careful and sober thought. Twenty years ago the automobile was with us a curiosity; today there are upwards of three thousand automobiles using the public highways of this province to an extent utterly undreamed of and with the resultant creation of problems which necessitate a revolutionary change in the phase of road construction and management. The radius of travel has been so greatly increased from that of the horse-drawn vehicle as to make farmers' homes, which were considered remote from the cities in the

old days, now almost in the class of suburban homes. The automobile, at first a city luxury, afterwards a city necessity, then a country luxury, and now a country necessity, has brought about an instant demand from both city and country for adequate improved highways. The automobile has done more than create a demand; it has provided to some extent a source of revenue for road purposes which has now become quite considerable. The total motor vehicle registration and license fees during 1916 was a little in excess of \$38,000, and this formed less than one-fifth of what was expended upon the public highways during last season, and yet the demand is going out from our people, coming from every direction through the province, saying that we want greater expenditures made and a more efficient maintenance of the highways throughout the country. With the revenues which the Government have at their command at the present time it has been difficult to do to use a larger amount than has been used upon the public highways, having in view the other public services of the country which must receive attention. Therefore, it will be seen that in dealing with this great question we find ourselves on the one hand, with the public anxious for greater expenditure, and on the other hand, a revenue not expanding sufficiently to meet those needs which are so apparent. Hence after giving this matter the most careful consideration from a businesslike standpoint, the Government has decided to submit for the consideration and approval of the public throughout this province the following plan, and the following method, to raise funds which may be applied as hereinafter referred to:

Serial Bond Issue To Raise \$500,000.

The automobile fees, which, it is estimated, during the year 1917 will amount to \$50,000, it is proposed to place in a separate fund for the purpose of providing for a bond issue that will be made, and which will be retired, both principal and interest, by the fees from automobiles. It has been decided that the most attractive form will be a serial bond issue, upon which both the interest and the principal will be retired within fifteen years. The amount that can be raised from such bond issue, based upon the actual revenues from automobile fees as they exist this year, will be slightly in excess of \$500,000. The following

table gives the exact method and shows the amount of principal and interest which will be payable yearly:

Yrs.	Maturing.	Amount of Bonds Payable.	Amount of Deferred Sur. Car. Paid over.
1	\$24,000	\$25,000	—
2	25,000	24,800	\$200
3	26,500	23,550	150
4	27,500	22,250	425
5	29,500	20,850	75
6	30,500	19,375	100
7	32,000	17,850	250
8	34,000	16,250	—
9	35,000	14,550	450
10	37,500	12,800	150
11	39,000	10,925	225
12	41,000	8,975	250
13	43,000	6,925	325
14	45,500	4,775	50
15	50,000	2,500	—
		\$530,000	\$232,350

It will thus be seen that we are not handing down to posterity any burdens for the advantages which we are enjoying in the present age. It is safe to assume that this fund will increase from year to year much more rapidly with an improved condition of highways. This fund will be used for the purchase of improved machinery and for the building of gravel roads for ditching and draining, and the installation of concrete and arch culverts throughout the province. The estimates of the department, which have been very carefully considered, make provision that \$100,000 will be expended next year throughout the province by putting down of these concrete culverts alone, and the whole plan has been devised with a view to:

Judicious Expenditure By Competent Officials.

It is a well defined principle that, in order to obtain the best results from expenditures made, some responsible head must have charge who will direct all movements in connection with the same. To meet this need it has been decided that an Inspector of Highways shall be appointed in each municipality throughout the province, whose duties shall be to give general supervision and inspection of all road construction and maintenance in that county. This official will be selected by, and responsible to, the Minister of Public Works, and upon his shoulders will rest to a very large extent the responsibility of successfully carrying

out the work, which will mean much towards economy and the general improvement of the highways over which he has jurisdiction. The selection of these officials will be made with a view to their competency to take charge of a work of this importance, and from no other standpoint. We have throughout our province today many excellent men who are acting in the capacity of road supervisors that will be well qualified, if a careful selection is made from among them, to undertake this important branch of service. The work that is done in every county, not only by the construction gangs, which it is intended to create, but the supervisors also, who have in the past, and will have next season, charge of the local labor, will all be under his direction and supervision. Complaints that may be coming from any section of the county can promptly be referred to the Inspector, and it will be his duty to give accurate information directly to the Department of Public Works. This step will insure, without doubt, the most judicious handling of the expenditures which are to be made.

Stable Construction Without Extravagance.

It is obvious that in the handling of the large sums of money as herein proposed, every precaution must be taken that it be not squandered. The department must see to it that officials charged with this great expenditure are not only honest, but are as well men of sound practical judgment. It is essentially a business in which the expenditure should be that of practical common sense. The controlling authority should be business sagacity coupled with a spirit of fairness in a distribution of road benefits. There are over eight thousand miles of highway in New Brunswick, and even with the proposed bond issue we cannot afford to carry on a type of construction excessive in cost. In the States of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and many other states of the Union, a road policy has been in force for some few years which classifies the roads, and heavy taxes are levied upon the people to keep up the different highways in those States. In addition to this, very generous assistance has been given by the Federal authorities in financing the project of building permanent highways. We in New Brunswick are depending wholly at the present time upon our Provincial revenues to take care of this impor-

tant work. Therefore, we cannot expect to enter upon the same class of road construction as is being done in many of the states to the south of us where they are expending from \$5,000 to \$10,000 per mile. The best that we can expect in New Brunswick for some years to come, at least, is that our roads shall be built to a uniform width and properly graded and drained.

Modern Equipment to Be Used in Road Work.

Too much stress cannot be laid upon the last mentioned phase of road construction, as the drainage of our roads is the first step towards permanency. In addition to this, arrangements are being made so that gravel can be transported along the highways of the province at the lowest possible cost. Modern road trucks will be purchased and will be in operation to solve the problem of moving gravel along our highways; concrete culverts and arch culverts will be given special attention, and these will be so laid down that they will not only be permanent, but remove entirely the possibility of the old dangerous wooden culvert that has given so much annoyance in the past, in order to perform this feature of the work and to construct on a permanent basis as far as it is reasonable to expect, it is our intention to organize a construction gang that will operate in every county in the province. These construction gangs will be headed by competent foremen who will have charge of them and direct their movements, and who will be well versed in practical road building. They will be furnished with modern road machinery propelled by motor power: heavy plows, road graders and other implements necessary for the accomplishment of effective road work no matter what conditions they may come in contact with.

Construction Gangs to Remedy Existing Evils.

These construction gangs will be operating continuously during the summer months and can be expected to make the highways we have at present a class of labor, but they will become proficient in the work and give very much better service to the province. It will be their duty to grapple with the hard problems of road construction. My observations in the past have led me to believe that through-

out the Province of New Brunswick we have many miles of excellent highway at the present time, but there is in addition to this a proportion of the mileage of highway throughout this province that is in bad condition. It is this percentage of mileage which makes the whole system at present unsatisfactory, and which it is proposed these construction gangs will grapple with. Our organization will be so arranged that these gangs will commence operation on the roads early in the month of May and we will seek to remedy the evils that exist as speedily as we can.

Road Construction under the system that has been in vogue in the past has been delayed too late in the season. Serious complaints have arisen, and naturally so because the washouts that have occurred in the spring of the year have been allowed to remain untouched until the regular supervisor has come on to that portion of work to perform his annual labor. This complaint will be entirely overcome by the proposed system and it is the intention not only that these construction gangs will commence their work early but that also the local labor and the work of the supervisor will be commenced at an earlier date than has been done in the past. Therefore, it is proposed that this feature of our road policy will result in not only overcoming these minor evils, but as well in the widening of the roads to a uniform width as far as it is practicable; the proper drainage and crowning of the roadway; the installation of concrete culverts to replace the old wooden ones and the graveling of our highways generally, together with road filling, and surfacing, where it is found that the ordinary earth will not make a sufficient road bed to endure.

Efficient Maintenance Feature of New Policy.

To build and not build well is wasteful. To build and not maintain is criminal. We are all aware that in past years the road policy which has been in force has resulted in men performing their statute labor and other work at a certain season of the year—usually far too late. The highways were then left to suffer the weather conditions which they might be subjected to for the balance of the season without much attention having been paid to them. There is no feature of our road improvement policy which will appeal to the people with greater force than

this phase which we are now dealing with.

Patrol System to Be Established in N. B.

Our ambition is not only that the work that we shall do each year shall prove effective and give general satisfaction, but that we must protect the expenditures which we have made before, and overcome as far as it is possible to do the streams rushing down the hillsides and carrying off the gravel which has been hauled upon the roadway the previous year and only leaving the condition as bad, if not worse, than that which formerly existed. To meet this need, we have decided to establish a patrol system, which will extend throughout the province and will result in the careful maintenance of our roads. Our patrolmen will be furnished with motor power that will enable them to transport gravel in order that they may make temporary repairs if necessary; also split log drags for the dragging of the road in their section. The highway will be divided into divisions; these men will each have a section of the highway under their control and under the inspection of highways perform a very valuable service. Their sections will be numbered so that a complaint can be made from any part of the province to the Department of Public Works, and in this way will be dealt with promptly and effectively. The expense of this service will be borne out of our ordinary revenues.

There are many other features which time will not permit that I shall dwell upon in detail which will enter into and form part of our policy of road improvement. The administration is fully aware that the road question in the province is a very serious one. It proposes to move carefully in this matter but trusts that the general features of the policy of the Government which I have outlined in this article will meet to a very large extent the needs which exist.

In conclusion I desire to say that it is my wish that the Automobile Associations, Farmers' conventions and Tourist Association and other bodies of this kind throughout the province will co-operate with me and my department in this great work, and I shall be very glad from time to time to receive suggestions from these bodies and from others interested in the great question of good roads for New Brunswick.

Very respectfully yours,
B. FRANK SMITH.

Carleton County Electors Vote For B. F. Smith, G. L. White, W. S. Sutton

ST. JOHN GLOBE CONDEMNS NEW BRUNSWICK OPPOSITION

Long Established Independent Liberal Newspaper Sizes up Provincial Political Situation—Paper Says Opposition's Crown Lands Policy Sufficient to Justify Government's Return.

The St. John Globe, Independent Liberal, last night concluded an editorial with these words: "The opposition proposal to hand the management of the Crown Lands over to a commission and thus divest the government of its most important function, is a proposal which no elector can afford to ignore and which no elector should regard lightly. It involves a sacrifice of the principles of responsible government serious enough in itself to justify the government's return to power without reference to any of the other issues of the campaign."

What the Globe Says.

The Globe editorial in full follows: "A political circular delivered at every St. John home says: 'The issue before the people is the simple choice between graft and honor in public life.' The eight paragraphs of the circular deal with graft charges with two exceptions against men not now identified either with the provincial government or with provincial politics. Is that fact one that should be overlooked? Is it proper on the very issue of 'graft and honor in public life' to place against the Murray government, which took office only a few weeks ago, the sins of those who have sinned during the past nine years, and not to place against the opposition the sins of those who during previous parliamentary service so badly mismanaged this province? Does not the issue of 'graft and honor in public life' when it raises questions about the Valley railroad, recall the frauds of the Central railroad and the Beersville line? If it brings thoughts of the Crown Land political fund, must it not also bring thoughts of the more honest Crown Land collections which in the nine years since 1909 have given the province \$2,000,000 more than in the last nine years of the predecessors of the present government?"

"Does not every allegation of wrongdoing against those in authority today recall recollections of graft and fraud charges against the previous government? Is the nomination of members of that government and supporters of that

government as candidates in the opposition interests a guarantee of future 'honor in public life'? Are these nominations calculated to arouse enthusiasm in the minds of those who realize that defeating the present government means giving power to those from whom it was taken because graft was rampant and because there was no honor in public life?"

"The revelations of the past year are not the only revelations the elector who wants to do what is right

must consider in deciding how he shall vote. If there was not the sordid story of the past, if there were not in nomination on the opposition side today candidates whose record challenges comparison with that of the men who have been forced out of public life on the government side, the graft issue might be made the paramount issue, but with the record of nominations menacing the security of the future, the graft issue becomes a very sharp double-edged weapon, and the decision of the elector becomes not the 'simple choice' the political circular suggests, but a matter of most serious concern. The elector who would be honest with himself and honest with the province must remember that the real issue is as much the opposition as the government. What a change might bring must be as much in the voter's mind as any other thought when voting on Saturday, and that involves careful consideration of the administrative record of the two parties as well as thought of the policies outlined for the future.

"The opposition proposal to hand the management of the Crown Lands over to a commission and thus divest the government of its most important function, is a proposal which no elector can afford to ignore and which no elector should regard lightly. It involves a sacrifice of the principles of responsible government serious enough in itself to justify the government's return to power without reference to any of the other issues of the campaign."

There are all kinds of weather but only one kind of

PURITY FLOUR

Always the same

"MORE BREAD AND BETTER BREAD"

IN DAYS WHEN PLUNDERBUND FLOURISHED

How Pugsleyites Got the Money that Should have Gone Upon the Roads and Into Bridges of Province.

(The Moncton Times).

"In the last eight years under the old government the crown lands col-

lections were \$2,128,688, while in eight years under the present government they have been \$4,132,330.00, practically double as much, with no increase in the lumber cut. Thus the province lost in eight years, under the old government, two million dollars, or in the full period of twenty-five years that the old government was in power more than six million dollars. This would have built six hundred miles of good macadamized wagon roads in the province at a cost of \$10,000 a mile.

"Whether this enormous loss was due to incompetence or corruption does not matter so much. It was probably due to both, as one of the witnesses at the crown lands investigation held under the present government said the lumbermen had been required to contribute to every Grit election fund down to 1908.

"And yet the old gang, who are responsible for this state of affairs, want

to get back to power because ex-Premier Fleming allowed Bill Berry, a left-over official of the old gang, to raise a political fund from the lumbermen after the government had made a bargain with them for the renewal of their leases under which they were required to pay much more than formerly. Berry operated through some prominent Liberals, and it may be surmised that the whole scheme in raising the fund was to discredit Mr. Fleming, who has since retired from the premiership and from the legislature. But in any case the present government has handed the crown lands so much bet-

ter than the old gang that there is mighty little prospect of bringing about improvement by restoring the latter to power."

The Police Court. In the Police Court yesterday six prisoners were fined \$8 each. In the case of Rubin Hall, charged with stealing a watch from Walter Sullivan, there was not sufficient evidence and the case was dismissed. In the juvenile court a fourteen year old boy was charged with wandering about Mill street at an early hour yesterday morning. He was allowed to go with his parents.

If Belgium Were "Next-Door" To Canada

- if the heavily-charged electric wires, that pen the people into a worthless and almost foodless land, ran along our frontier
- if instead of reading of Belgian sufferings we heard the pitiful tales from the lips of escaped victims
- if we could see the long and hungry bread-lines of people as intelligent and once as prosperous and comfortable as ourselves
- if we could watch the thousands of emaciated children who are fed at the schools by the Belgian Relief Commission
- if what they are enduring, and their desperate need, were clear and vivid to us, instead of unreal and overseas
- then the great hearts of Canadians would be moved, and there would be no trouble in raising several times our present contributions to the Belgian Relief Fund.

Can we bring the urgent need of the hungry Belgian mothers and children home to YOU? Can we enlist YOUR active sympathy for those whose very lives depend on the prompt and continued help of people like yourself? Send your subscriptions weekly, monthly or in one lump sum to Local or Provincial Committees, or

SEND CHEQUES PAYABLE TO TREASURER

Belgian Relief Fund

50 St. Peter Street, Montreal.

The Greatest Relief Work in History.