

Our Ottawa Letter

Grand Trunk Pacific Gets \$16,000,000—Premier Blushes for Minister of Militia (By The Guide Special Correspondent)

Ottawa, June 5.—Parliament failed in its effort to wind up the business of the session this week and it will be Tuesday or Wednesday next, and perhaps a little later, before silence reigns once more in the Commons and Senate chambers. The chief business of the week has been the voting of millions of money quite regardless of the fact that our revenues are falling. The bond guarantee of forty-five millions to the C.N.R. has been put thru. As predicted last week legislation to give additional aid to the G.T.P. for the construction of the Mountain section has been introduced (a sixteen-million bond guarantee); a sum of \$1,200,000 has been voted to placate the Ontario electors who lost money owing to the failure of the Farmers' Bank, while the main and supplementary estimates have been voted at a rapid rate.

Practically all hope of the Redistribution bill being put thru has been abandoned at the time of writing, because the committee named to fix the boundaries failed to reach a unanimous agreement and neither side seemed to have any desire to stay here for a month or so to fight out their differences. While some legislation of importance has been passed the session will undoubtedly be remembered for two things: The tariff increase and the generous aid handed out to the railways.

No Time For These

The abandoned legislation makes up a long list and makes it practically certain that the next parliament will have to meet in November if the government hopes to get away in time to hold a general election before the snow flies in 1915. In addition to the Redistribution bill, which in all probability has gone by the board, the bills left over include: The Civil Service act, proposed amendments to the Controverted Elections act (in other words electoral reform), the Agricultural Credits bill, the revision of the Railway Act, promised amendment to the Lemieux act, the bills to increase the representation of the western provinces in the Senate. Other legislation promised, including the Co-operative Societies bill, might be mentioned; but the list is a sufficiently long one to show the abortive nature of the session just about to close.

The bill to guarantee the bonds of the G.T.P. did not meet with much opposition because of the fact that under the terms of the agreement made with the company in 1903 under which the government undertook to guarantee bonds for three quarters of the cost of the Mountain section there was a fear that the company could make good its claim to assistance in the courts and in that event the cold cash would have to be handed out.

'Political Burglary'

The bill to reimburse the depositors in the Farmers' Bank came in for some very severe criticism, more particularly at the hands of Dr. Michael Clark, who said that in order to make votes in Ontario the government was taxing the people of the rest of the Dominion. He described the measure as probably the worst piece of legislation ever introduced in any legislative assembly and expressed the hope that the Senate would kill the bill and thereby save the country from an act of political burglary.

Hon. W. T. White's defence for the bill was that Hon. W. S. Fielding had been guilty of an error of judgment in issuing the certificate to the bank and that the government was under a moral obligation to pay the depositors.

The Dominion Millers have been here this week to ask the government to subsidize a steamship company to the extent of half a million dollars in consideration of securing control of the rates of that particular line. This is a modification of their request for the establishment of a government trans-Atlantic service. While such a service would undoubtedly help the farmer as well as the miller it has led an eastern paper to remark that the millers ap-

pear to want protection in the home market and a subsidy to do business abroad.

On Monday the house had a field day, the second of the session, on the estimates of the Minister of Militia. The discussion was kept up until after midnight, but only one item was put thru, there being a general criticism of the size of the expenditure by members of the opposition. Hugh Guthrie, at the close of the day gave notice that when the estimates were being concurred in he would move that they be cut down by three million dollars. In the course of his speech Mr. Guthrie, in referring to other things on which a portion of this money might better be spent, dwelt upon the desirability of action being taken upon the recommendation of the Royal Technical Education Commission which, in a report made to the government a year ago, recommended the expenditure of three million dollars per annum for the establishment of a proper system of technical education both in the cities and in the country districts throughout the Dominion. Mr. Guthrie criticized the large expenditure on drill halls and on junketing trips, automobiles and the frills of the headquarters staff.

Col. Hughes and Farmers

Col. Hughes, in the course of his reply declared it to be his intention to continue the construction of drill halls throughout "the length and breadth of the land." It would take more, he said, than the eloquence of Mr. Guthrie to stop him in his purpose. "The hon. gentleman says," remarked Col. Hughes, "that the farmers are indignant, but he forgets that half of them own automobiles themselves and they believe that the minister should have twice as many as he now has because he is prepared to show that each automobile has saved its cost five or six times over, as compared with a horse and carriage. The hon. gentleman tried to bring in the farmers as condemning the militia expenditure, but I can tell him that the agriculturists are behind the drill halls and the cadet system in Canada."

It will be recalled, perhaps, that in a former letter reference was made to a slur cast upon the commission on technical education by the minister of militia. The attack upon this commission was repeated by the minister who said, "The hon. gentleman (Mr. Guthrie) talks about technical education. Let me say that our opponents sent a party junketing around the world, at a cost of over \$100,000, and all the evidence of any value that was collected could rest on the end of your little finger. Cries of "No, No."

"Yes; from the viewpoint of technical education and of the upbuilding of the manhood of the country," declared the minister, "in his most bombastic manner, "no technical education can possibly approach the benefit that is being given to the people thru these drill halls."

Cries of "Oh, oh," greeted this declaration, and Premier Borden blushed and looked extremely uncomfortable.

But it made no difference with the minister. He said that the more the opposition criticized the more he was delighted.

Carvell's Slashing Attack

F. B. Carvell made the most slashing attack on the militia expenditure that has been heard in the House for many a long day. He declared that there was no necessity for a top-heavy militia force. "When the minister speaks about the great educative principle back of his militarism the difficulty in arguing with him," said Mr. Carvell, "is that he seems to believe in it. When a man really believes in such a policy as that it is like arguing with a crazy man, because there is no good in arguing with him." Mr. Carvell did not agree with the minister that the militia works for the benefit of any man in Canada, morally, religiously or in any other way in

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