The St. John Standard

OUR SECOND FRONT PAGE

THE STANDARD, ST. JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 1921

A PAGE OF NEWS ABOUT THE MARITIME

UNEQUAL PUNISHMENT FOR LIQUOR LAW VIOLATORS IS CHARGE OF HON. DR. BAXTER

One "Rots in Jail" While Other Has Fine Refunded is His Statement.

LONG DISCUSSION ON ROAD POLICIES

Hon. Mr. Veniot Declares He is in Favor of Abolishing Statute Labor System.

(Continued from Page 1.)

Mr. Baxter on the item of $260,000 for ordinary roads, said that the minister of public works in reply to some observations by him (Baxter) had commented on an expenditure made by the old government during the month of February, 1917. He considered the expenditure quite in order, as the estimates for the year were not then made up. The government had taken the responsibility and in the election which followed failed to secure an endorsement from the people. One of the complaints against the old government by Price Waterhouse & Company, was that it made capital expenditure which should have been paid out of current revenue, and it was evident that the present administration was trying to restore the balance.

The Real Question.

The real question of the hour was the record of the administration now in control of affairs. The minister had referred to expenditures made on the Provincial Hospital, which had been paid for out of current revenue. In his (Baxter's) opinion that was merely a new method of imposing direct taxation without making it too direct. They had expended the money and were now asking the municipalities to pay part of the capital cost of the institution, and they sought to make it appear that it was part of the current expenses.

Hon. Mr. Veniot—"That is very ingenuous."

Mr. Baxter—"Yes, it is ingenuous on your part."

Hon. Mr. Veniot—"It was your argument I had reference to."

Mr. Baxter said that they might add to the sins of the late administration the sin of having kept the minister out of the house.

Prohibition Act.

Referring to the Prohibition Act, he said he noticed that $69,000 was authorized by law for its enforcement. He conceded that it required a large sum to administer the act, but it was not so much a question of money as of principal. The estimates passed by the House should be taken as a rough guide to the expenditures. When any legislation was passed it should be taken as a rule of conduct for the people of the province. The law said that penalties levied were not to be remitted, and if they were remitted, the magistrate himself was liable to punishment for an offence.

The power that had been taken from magistrate had been assumed by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. In the case of Dr. Sullivan, of Charlotte county, his fine had been remitted and the money returned to him with $12 in addition. What could be said of a government which remitted the fine imposed on one man for violating the law, and allowed another to be sent to goal. He believed all be treated alike. He would admit that the law was too drastic in one respect, wherein it cut out the right of appeal from a defendant. He had been responsible for that provision in the act as he felt at the time that the legislation needed to be very drastic, but he could see now that he had been in error.

Right of Appeal Gone.

The law took away the right of appeal and treated as a convict every man who was accused. The House had power to make changes in the law, but up to the present had not done so. He had heard of a case in the village of Hampton where a druggist named Compton was reported by an inspector for violating the law. In that case, the prosecution was called off by some parties in St. John, who were probably known to members sitting on the front bench opposite. He had also heard of a woman in Charlotte county who was carrying on a drug store. She died and there was no one to carry on the drug store, but it went on just the same. He believed the chief inspector should be given full power and should not be interferred with by the government. The law should be set aside by the very men who are responsible for its enforcement.

Government to Blame

When the illiterate man discovered that the law was for only one class of people that man was apt to become a rebel against society. He did not propose to refer to the double shuffle that was being carried on, but would say that the information was being carefully compiled and would be used in due time. When the matter came up for discussion, the government would have to take the responsibility for violations of the law.

Hon. Mr. Byrne said that while the leader of the opposition had stated that he intended to refer to a number of cases, he had taken good care not to do so. He had criticized the government and had endeavored to make the people believe that it was interfering with the enforcement of the prohibitory act. He could say that while Rev. W. H. Wilson held the office of chief inspector, he had in all cases so far as the government was concerned, received every support that it was possible to give to him. The member had tried to make it appear that the government had no right in a right case to remit a penalty; that when a fine was imposed by a magistrate it must stand.

Remitting Fines

The member must know that that was not the correct position to take. He must also know that the lieutenant-government-in-council had power to remit any penalty imposed for a violation of the law. The remission of the fine in the case of Dr. Sullivan had been properly made. He had before him the petition in the case, which set forth the facts. Dr. Sullivan was a reputable citizen of St. Stephen and not a bootlegger On October 29, 1919, he had filled a prescription for a man who had called at his office. The man complained of cramps in his stomach, and the doctor has prescribed twenty-four ounces of gin, which was to be used for strictly medicinal purposes.

The law gave doctors the right to prescribe liquor if they believed it was necessary for a patient. In this case the man was suffering from a cold and the doctor felt that he needed the liquor. It was true that he had issued the liquor for medicinal purposes.

No Hesitation in Case

When the case came before the governor-in-council, he (Byrne), after reading the evidence, had no hesitation in recommending clemency. The member was trying to make it appear that the government had exceeded its duty under the Prohibition Act, Dr. Sullivan being denied the right to appeal, and his sworn evidence being untradicted, he (Byrne) felt that the recommendation made in the case was right and proper.

Mr. Baxter—"I would like to ask if Inspector Wilson recommended this refund, and also whether in the other four cases he did not recommend a refund."

Hon. Mr. Byrne said he did not know what other four cases the member referred to. If Mr. Wilson recommended a refund in those four cases, would the member say that he did wrong?

Mr. Baxter said he would not say that, but he would say that the member had done wrong in not getting Mr. Wilson's recommendation in all cases.

Hon. Mr. Byrne—"The member has disposed of the four cases, and the case of Dr. Sullivan is the only one left."

Denies Knowing Name

Mr. Baxter—"Will the member give the name of the man from Charlotte county who came up to interview the government on the question?"

Hon. Mr. Byrne said he knew of no man from Charlotte county who had interviewed the government with respect to the case.

Mr. Baxter said that it might be news to his friend to learn that Dr. Sullivan was fined twice.

Hon. Mr. Byrne said that the medical society had taken up the case and that body should know whether Dr. Sullivan was reputable or not. The society had adopted a resolution because of the injustice, pledging its members against signing prescriptions for medical purposes. While the leader of the opposition had offered strictures on the government, he took it that the Sullivan case was the only one he could refer to.

Another Case

Mr. Baxter wanted to know if the member was present at a meeting of the government, when a minister made the statement that if a license was not granted to the Brayley Drug Company, an order-in-council would be passed issuing one over his head. He said that the Sullivan case had been mentioned before the public accounts committee, and an effort to secure the papers had been unsuccessful.

Hon. Mr. Byrne said that the member could have moved for them in the House.

Mr. Baxter said that the public accounts committee were entitled to the papers.

Hon. Mr. Byrne said he had not heard of anybody asking for the papers.

Mr. Jones—"Yes, I asked for them."

Mr. Magee—"If the member asked for the papers I certainly did not hear him. No papers were withheld by me from the committee."

Mr. Jones said that he had asked for the papers in the Sullivan case when the comptroller-general was present, and no notice was taken of his request.

Mr. Scully said he was a member of the committee and he did not know of the member for Kings asking for any papers which he did not get.

Hon. Mr. Byrne said that the government could have no object in holding back the petition.

Mr. Baxter wanted to know if Mr Wilson had made a recommendation in the Sullivan case.

Hon. Mr. Byrne said he had no recollection of the matter at that time. The papers were all in his possession and he would be glad to lay them before the House so members could have all the facts.

Mr. Pinder said he remembered Mr. Jones asking the comptroller-general about the petition in the Sullivan case and the comptroller merely shook his head.

Road Expenditures

Mr. Fawcett said he wished to impress on the minister of public works the necessity of spending a greater proportion of the money on the country roads than had been done during the past few years. The province facing serious problems, and he would not advocate the lavish expenditure of money, but he thought there should be a more equal division. It had been said that he (Fawcett) had been concerned in road expenditures in the Parish of Sackville. Some of the roads in his parish were in need of attention.

Mr. Wetmore said he wished to refer to one road in particular, that between St. John and Rothesay. During the past few weeks he had received numerous complaints to the effect that farmers could not get over it with their teams.

The Chief Road Engineer when told of these complaints had said that the horses were not shod properly. However, change in the shoeing of horses had not solved the problem. It was his own belief that something could be rolled into the surface to make a footing. It was an excellent road for hauling, but the horses would slip. He knew of no horse shoes which would hold.

Horse Shoe Inspector.

Mr. Young said there might be an inspector of horse shoes under the department of public works. Last year $150,000 had been voted for ordinary roads, but $325,000 had been expended. This year, the appropriation asked for was $150,000. Last year within two months of the end of the session there had been a special warrant issued and on August 8 there had been a special warrant for public works. The reason for this advanced by the minister had been damage done by freshets, but the freshets had not taken place until September.

Hon. Mr. Baxter—"We did not even know then there was to be an election."

Deserve Good Roads.

"The farmers of York county who came thirty miles over mud roads to Fredericton deserved better highways They paid their share of the auto tax. It was said that the trunk roads were built for tourists. Ten good farmers coming into Fredericton twice a week were worth more than all the tourists who would come in years Between Fredericton and his home at Taymouth, he had noticed several pieces of road machinery which had been left in the open all the winter Concerning the winter road-roller, he would like to say that it was the only thing which was effective in breaking winter roads. One pair of horses could handle it in a foot and a half of snow, and it made no ridges which would cause drifts in later storms. He hoped that the department would supply these rollers as far as funds would permit. With regard to the Workmen's Compensation Act, he did not know what to say, except to ask the government to dispense with the whole act.

Against Compensation Board.

He was opposed to compensation boards. An employee could be compelled to insure himself, as had been done, or his employer could insure him.

Mr. Martin—"Wages will have to be raised to do that."

Hon. Mr. Veniot—"Does the hon. gentleman not know that the C.N.R. has transferred everything to the compensation board?"

Mr. Young said that the C.N.R. has not done away with that assessment. Employers should not be asked to pay for insurance on employees. The latter could insure themselves. The amount paid for salaries under this act, was $35,000, which was too much. This year the total charge on those engaged in lumbering had been three per cent. under this act. If there was an unpopular thing in the province it was the Compensation Act. He had had employees who had said they would rather pay their own insurance.

Mr. Martin.

Mr. Martin said that the member for York had said that the Workmen's Compensation Act was unpopular. It was unpopular with a certain class, but that class was not twenty per cent. of the people. He (Martin) had had considerable experience among laboring men and had not encountered a man who was not satisfied. In Chatham he had seen many men who had lost limbs in saw-mill accidents and other men had been killed. He had not heard of an employing company paying for lost limbs or paying the dependents of the dead men more than $500.

Mr. Young asked if the member could mention a case which had occurred before the creation of the compensation board.

Mr. Martin said there was the case of Frank Flagler, killed in the mill of the Miramichi Lumber Company. J. W. Brankley, president of that company, was either in the gallery or about the House.

Mr. Young—"The dependents received good treatment."

Mr. Martin said that they got no treatment at all, and he doubted that the widow received $500.

Mr. Burlock.

Mr. Burlock said he must congratulate the government upon bringing down the budget which had caused the opposition to sit almost in silent admiration. The standardization of roads was too high. He agreed with the member for York, that the standard of secondary roads was also too high. The patrol system was too expensive. That was one reason why there was no money for back roads. The farmers problem was not one of production, but of hauling. Country roads of Carleton county were generally in a deplorable condition during the greater part of the year. Rural depopulation was a great problem in Canada, and bad roads constituted one reason for that depopulation. The present government had built some fine roads, but they were located in wrong places. They paralleled railways where the haul was short. Other districts with long hauls had no improved roads.

Decreasing Population.

In regard to education he must emphasize the problem presented by the rural districts with decreasing population. He wished it understood, however, that his interest did not stop with the common schools. He could speak on behalf of the farmer members of the House that they were unanimous in supporting the request for an increase of $25,000 in the annual grant to the University of New Brunswick. The formation of a circulating library in connection with that institution was desired. It was recognized, that the New Brunswick Telephone Company had a monopoly. The Public Utilities Board had given that company not only increased rates but also a right to charge for mileage. That bore heavily on the rural districts.

Mr. Tracey.

Mr. Tracey said that the road question was one of the greatest of today. Parties had gone into power and out of power on that question. He would like to see the House go into committee of the whole and work out a road policy which would be better. The trunk roads which had been constructed were good, and he did not agree with his hon. colleague (Burlock) that they were wrongly located. But there were the country roads which also should be looked after. In every county there should be one man responsible for the bridges and roads. He should know where work was most needed, and should be in charge of the labor. Too great reliance was put into statute labor for country roads. Too little value was received from it. Often the road supervisor was a farmer who had his own interests to look after.

Proper Elevators.

He believed that York county was the only one which had given to women the right to vote. He suggested that the government act so as to make the right to vote general. He considered that the steamshi service between St. John and Cuba would be of great importance to the Province of New Brunswick. The federal government had paid great sums for grain elevators and other means of developing overseas trade for other parts of Canada, but he did not know of even a frost-proof shed for vegetables and other perishable products being built to assist the farmers of this province. Lack of such facilities at St. John compelled shippers to ship through the American ports, chiefly Boston.

Hon. Mr. Veniot.

Hon. Mr. Veniot said the road problem in New Brunswick was heavy and the hon. member for Carleton (Tracey) was right in stating that it was too great for one man to solve. If the House could divest itself of political feelings and get down to brass tacks more would be accomplished. He could say that in 1919, the minister of public works had propounded the policy of expending motor fees on country roads as soon as the Dominion would adopt the Federal aid scheme. Last year $550,000 had been spent on secondary trunk roads and branch roads. The minister proceeded to name roads of these classes in Carleton county on which expenditure had been made. Last year a total of $66,000 had been spent in Carleton county, and in York $43,000 from motor fees and $26,000 from other sources. Carleton county for years had not returned a supporter of the party now in power, yet, a large expenditure had been made there. Good work had been done in Kings.

Mr. Fawcett asked what was the mileage of roads other than trunk and secondary trunk roads?

13,000 Miles of Road.

Hon. Mr. Veniot said there were approximately between thirteen and fourteen thousand miles. The road mileage of the province was about 18,000 miles greater than that of either Maine or Nova Scotia. The people were asking too much. He had been pleased to hear representatives of the farmers of the province state that the system of statute labor should be abolished, and that the abolition would come soon. Statute labor was the greatest curse the roads ever have had. Last year the total tax for roads had amounted to $242,000, of which $86,000 was in statute labor. The province did not receive thirty-three per cent. of value from that labor. The people themselves did not take enough interest to go out and do a fair hour's work on the roads. This province was the only section of North America which constructed and maintained roads out of provincial revenue or bonds. In other provinces municipalities all were required to bear a share of the cost. Out of a total of $242,000 in road tax only $76,000 was collected. The province was defrauded out of $82,000.

Counties in Default.

Counties were in default of road tax as follows:

Albert, $1,200; Carleton, $6,000. Charlotte, $3,000; Gloucester, $4,000; Kent, $6,000; Kings, $4,500; Madawaska, $3,600; Northumberland, $8,000; Restigouche, $3,000; Queens, $4,000; Sunbury, $2,000; St. John, $11,000; Westmorland $10,000; York, $5,000.

Hon. Mr. Veniot said members would be negligent if on their return to their constituencies they did not take this matter up.

Hon. Mr. Veniot said the law gave any municipality power to increase the rate of assessment for road tax which is set down in the act. Only two counties availed themselves of the provision. Victoria made it fifty cents instead of twenty-five and Madawaska made it fifty cents except in two parishes. The committee arose to resume at 8.30 p.m.

Accident In Mill Results In Death

Man Caught in Cogs Had Leg Badly Crushed—Died After Operation.

Van Buren, April 13.—While examining a break in one of the machines of his sawmill at Seigas, N. B., Fred Dionne had his left foot and part of the leg crushed by a cog wheel from which he died soon after. One of the cogs of the wheel became loosened and Mr. Dionne tried to kick it into place when his trouser leg became entangled and drew him into the machinery. His left foot and part of the leg were crushed and it was due to his presence of mind that his whole body was not drawn into the machinery. Realizing his danger, he grasped a beam and clung to it until his cries brought his two brothers to his rescue. Drs. Hammond and Albert of Van Buren and Dr. Violette of St. Leonard were called and advised that he be brought to his home in Van Buren. Father Martin of St. Anne's was called and administered the last rites of the church. Dr. Violette rushed him to Van Buren and amputated the injured leg, with Drs. Hammond, Albert and Theriault in attendance. Immediately after the operation Mr. Dionne died from loss of blood and internal injuries. The deceased is survived by a wife and two children.

Famous N. B. Artist Dead In England

William Strong, Born in Dumbarton in 1859, Passes Away After Brilliant Career.

Bournemouth, Eng., April 13.—William Strong, the noted etcher, painter and engraver, died here today. Mr. Strong was a Canadian by birth, but had spent the greater part of his life in England.

His principal work was in the field of etching, in which he achieved distinction, notably in his portraiture in this form of art of several distinguished men. He was one of the original members of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers, displaying his work at the first exhibition of the society in 1881, nad was elected an associate engraver of the Royal Academy when that distinction was revived in 1906.

Mr. Strong, who was born in Dumbarton, N. B., on Feb. 13, 1859, came to England at the age of sixteen.

No Protection So Big Plant Closes

Montreal, April 13.—The plant of Armstrong, Whiteworth of Canada, Ltd., at Longueil, will be closed down. On behalf of the management, it is stated, that owing to the failure of the Dominion Government to give tariff protection on the manufacture of locomotive steel tires this line of manufacture had to be discontinued. The company also made high speed and carbon tools. During the war the company employed several thousand men, but this number has dwindled gradually to a few hundred since the armistice. The company was a branch of the great steel firm which operates the Elsick on the Tyne in England

NO SECRET ALLIANCE.

London, April 13.—Rumors of the existence of a secret defensive and offensive agreement between France and Great Britain have no foundation in fact. Austen Chamberlain, the Government leader, so announced in the House of Commons this afternoon.

REMANDED ON BAIL.

Halifax, N. S., April 13.—Arthur W. Burgess, who was arrested in Toronto and brought to Halifax to answer the charge of theft of $700 from the Robert Simpson Eastern Ltd., was arraigned in the police court this morning and remanded on $3,000 bail.

Building Totally Destroyed By Fire

Newcastle, N. B., April 13.— Fire Monday afternoon at Blackville, completely destroyed the building owned and occupied by Thomas Dunn as a general store, together with its contents and $700 in cash belonging to the Canadian Express Company. The building was erected last fall by Mr. Dunn, who was for many years the station agent at Blackville, and he carried on a grocery and ice cream business. The loss is estimated at $2,000, with no insurance.

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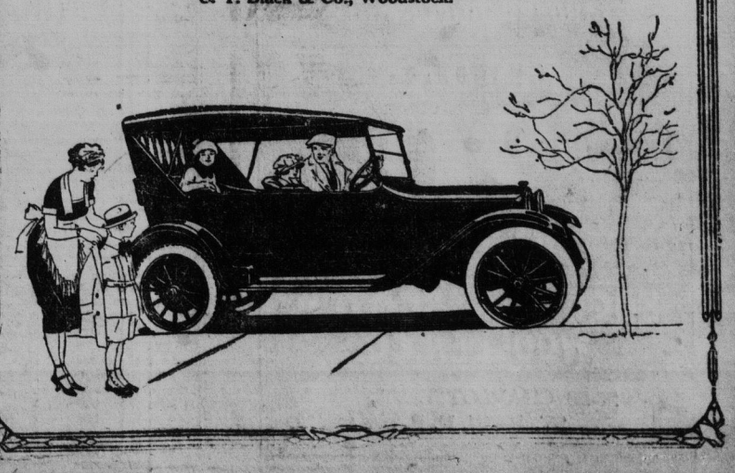
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