

THE HERALD

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The Budget Speech.

As will be seen by our summary report of Legislative proceedings, Premier Mathieson delivered his budget speech on Wednesday evening last. The Premier's presentation of receipts and expenditures for the past year and his estimates for the current year show that our Provincial finances are in a healthy condition—very different from what they used to be during the years of Liberal administration. The Liberal budget speeches from year to year bore ample evidence that our opponents then in power were very much in the same predicament as Wilkins Mc-Cawber, they were always "waiting for something to turn up." The present Conservative Government were not long in office when they made things "turn up" and vigorously prosecuted a policy that greatly augmented our revenue and placed our finances on a sound stable basis.

In reviewing the conduct of the Government since their advent to power, late in 1911, Premier Mathieson went on to show the great difficulties they had to contend with. The finances of the Province were in a deplorable condition and the whole machinery of Government was in chaos. The Palmer Government, that had just left office, had collected \$22,000 from the 30th Sept. to the 3rd December, but had spent \$105,000 in the same time, leaving a deficit of \$83,000. In addition to this there were \$85,000 of unpaid accounts, a total of \$168,000 to Dec. 31, 1911. The expert auditors employed by the Mathieson Government showed that the debt and liabilities of the Province were \$1,072,000. This was the condition of things that faced the new Government. They grappled with the difficulties and in one year up to Dec. 31, 1912 they had taken \$60,000 off the deficit of \$168,000, leaving only \$108,000.

During 1913 all deficits disappeared and a surplus of \$15,500 was left over. This was something new in the history of our Provincial finances. Our finances are now the Premier pointed out, in better condition than they have been since Confederation. The external auditor's report showed that our debt and liabilities which were \$1,027,000 on the 31st Dec. 1912 had been reduced to \$1,002,000 by the 31st Dec. 1913. That was a reduction of Provincial debt in one year amounting to \$24,000, practically \$25,000. In the first three months of the current year the receipts had been \$200,000 and the expenditures \$103,000 leaving a surplus of \$97,000. The Premier reviewed at length the extraordinary progress and improvements that had been made in the oyster fishing industry, agriculture and education in general. Regarding agricultural education, the generous grant from the Federal Government had been of the greatest benefit. This grant amounted now to \$26,000 a year, but it would continue to increase until it reached \$31,750 a year.

Coming to the current year the Premier estimated the receipts at \$529,256, and the expenditures at \$523,627, showing an estimated surplus on the years transactions of \$5,629. To this should be added \$11,745, paid into the

sinking fund and about \$5,000 interest on this fund. This makes an estimated reduction of debt during this year of about \$22,000. The Government proposes to spend on education \$50,000 more than the average of recent years. It was also proposed to make a grant of \$500 each to the Charlottetown and Prince Edward Island Hospitals, and \$400 to the Prince County Hospital. There were several special appropriations to be provided for. It was the intention of the Government, the Premier said, to pay the award of the arbitrators in the claim of Walter Lowe, and also to settle the claim in connection with the Lady Wood estate. A sum would also have to be provided for the celebration here of the jubilee celebration of the first confederation conference. Provisions would also be made for exhibitions at Alberton and Souris, as well as for raising mussel mud at St. Peter's Bay.

The Premier pointed out that the present Government had spent in two years twice as much in permanent public works as the late Liberal Government had spent in twenty years. The present Government had secured an addition of \$100,000 to our annual subsidy from Ottawa; they had effected great improvements in our educational system and in our oyster fishery industry; had passed the ballet act, had provided the long and short courses in education and accomplished many other things in the way of progress and improvement. The speech was received with generous applause by the Government supporters.

Sessional Notes.

On Tuesday 7th the House met at 8.15. Hon. Mr. Stewart presented a petition praying for an amendment to the act incorporating the Progress Fox Breeding Association. A petition was presented from several citizens of Charlottetown praying for an act to incorporate "The Charlottetown Street Car Company." Bills in accordance with the above petition were introduced read a first time and referred to the private bills committee.

Before the orders of the day were entered upon Hon. Mr. Dalton rose and moved a resolution that the sympathy of the House be extended to Mr. S. T. Garland, a member of the House who had suffered the loss of his wife, whose funeral took place that very day. Hon. Premier Mathieson seconded the resolution. It was also supported by Mr. Richards Leader of the Opposition. The resolution then passed unanimously.

Hon. Premier Mathieson then presented the Report of the Provincial Auditor and explained the new system adopted in making up the public accounts. He also laid on the table the report of the External Auditor on the liabilities of the Province. In addition to these reports he presented the statement of our Province's claim against Canada in the matter of Federal Representation and also a report of the presentation of this claim before the interprovincial conference held at Ottawa in October last.

On motion of Mr. Richards the bill in connection with the sale of lands of the Church of England at Port Hill was read a third time and passed. Several other bills were reported from the private bills committee and then the House took recess.

When the House resumed in the evening at 10.15 Premier Mathieson tabled the estimates of expenditure for the present fiscal year. The House then adjourned.

The House met at 11.30 on Wednesday forenoon. After routine Hon. Mr. Stewart presented a petition from the Mayor and Councilors of the city of Charlottetown praying for an act to amend the Charlottetown Incorporation Act. A bill founded thereon was received read a first time and referred to the private bills committee.

On the orders of the day being called, Mr. J. A. Dewar rose to a question of privilege. He said he had handed notice of a resolution to the Clerk, but this notice had not appeared on the order paper and he was informed that the second, whose name was appended had stated that he had not given authority for his name to be so attached. Moreover he was refused permission by the Clerk to examine the notice. He desired to have the matter investigated. At 1 o'clock the House took recess.

At the beginning of the afternoon sitting, the Premier presented a message conveying a report of the Privy Council of Canada on the acts passed by the Legislature of this Province in 1912. The report allows these laws to go into operation. The companies act was then further considered in committee of the whole. Progress was reported. Hon. Mr. Stewart referring to the matter raised by Mr. Dewar, said the Clerk misunderstood Mr. Dewar when he asked to see the notice of his resolution. Mr. Stewart said the Clerk thought Mr. Dewar wanted to take the notice away. Mr. Dewar, Hon. Mr. McLean, Hon. Mr. Arsenault and the Clerk of the House referred to the matter briefly. At six o'clock the House took recess.

When the House resumed at 8.30 Premier Mathieson commenced his budget speech. At the outset he said the motion to go into committee of supply opened up a review of the actions of the present Government for the past two years. He said that no Government in Canada, since Confederation had to face such difficulties as had the present one. He went on to show how wretched was our financial condition; it was really appalling. The financial position of our Province had never been in good shape since Confederation. We had not been solvent. On the contrary we had always been on the down grade. Assets of the Province to the extent of \$2,500,000 had been used up and in addition to that the debts and liabilities of the Province amounted to \$1,072,000. When the expert accountants had been called in from the banks they found in addition to all the foregoing that the Palmer Government had left a readymade deficit from Sept. 30th 1911 to Dec. 31st of that same year, of \$83,000 besides \$85,000 of unpaid accounts. In spite of all these burdens the Government had on Dec. 31st 1912 a deficit of only \$108,000, a reduction in the year of \$60,000. On the permanent public works of the Province the present Government spent more in two years than the Liberals spent in twenty years.

Premier Mathieson next explained the receipts and expenditures of the past year. He showed how the actual surplus exceeded the estimated surplus by \$14,000. On the other hand the actual expenditure was \$9,373 less than that estimated. The surplus of the year was \$15,557 and the reduction of debt amounted practically to \$25,000. He next pointed out how much improvement had taken place in the education department. A result of these improvements is that the best teachers remain in the Province and do not go abroad as formerly. Referring to the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition as to the receipts and expenditures of the Province from Dec. 31st 1913 to 31st March 1914 he had been happy to inform him that the receipts were \$200,000; the expenditure \$103,000 and the surplus \$97,000.

In the matter of agriculture the Premier enumerated what had been done in this connection. The Dominion Government had rendered us good assistance. We receive some \$26,000 from the Federal Treasury. We will finally receive from this grant \$31,750 by the end of ten years. He considered the agricultural courses given here during the last two years equal to those given in any part of Canada. He considered that no money could be spent more advantageously than that spent on education. It was simply marvellous how much had been accomplished through the Dominion agricultural grant. He hoped that through the Government's efforts, the mussel mud fertilizer would become available to the farmers of the Province at cost.

Mr. Richards Leader of the Opposition followed, commencing to speak at 10.40. He spoke for about an hour in a general criticism of the Government. Mr. Myers followed at 11.40. After speaking a few minutes, Mr. Myers moved the adjournment of the debate. The House then adjourned to Tuesday 14th.

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Federal Parliament.

(Continued from page two)

therefore the Liberals must be bad men.

Mr. MacLean came out strong for free food, free wheat and agricultural implements. He now a full fledged free trader, course like a true Liberal he had to have a slice at "blue ruin," he did that part of it well, have rehearsed it so often.

H. B. Ames.

Mr. H. B. Ames who followed said that after three years successful administration it was impossible to compare this government with others.

The minister of finance, he said was a Conservative optimist, who did not see shadows where shadows were not, and Canada was that new country, which like Kangaroo, went ahead by leaps and bounds with occasional intervals of rest. The year 1913 had been one of trying conditions, which Canada was able to meet and overcome largely through the wise foresight of the minister finance.

For many accounts passed during the year, also, this government had not been responsible. Some \$19,000,000 had been spent provide for public works including the I. C.R. Canals, etc., public works which had to go on the sum of \$12,000,000 had been spent on the N. T. R., \$2,800,000 on the Quebec bridge and \$15,000,000 on the Hudson Bay Railway. Which of these three propositions are the members of the government now in power responsible for? asked Mr. Ames. How could it be said these expenditures were due to the extravagance of the administration when the projects were originated before they came into power? The object of leaving expenditure, however, had been railway subsidies. Last year the had been paid for these purposes the sum as \$19,036,236, almost enough to account for the entire addition to the National debt. And for these subsidies one had only to look back through the records of legislation to find the were not blameable on the present government.

The claim had been that the former minister of finance, Hon. W. S. Fielding, had made a much better showing. Was this not? Turning back to the year 1907-8 it would be found that with \$96,000,000 revenues there had been an average expenditure of \$11,000,000. In that year there had been ominous signs but had the finance minister but on brakes. Not he. He had instead added \$13,000,000 to the national debt of Canada in a single year. He had put on the brakes one year too late. He could not do again 1907 (election year) for obvious reasons. Grits Increased Debt Eighty million in Sixteen Years.

Mr. Ames then stated that the net debt in 1896, when the Conservatives went out of power was \$258,997,000. In 1911, when the came back, it had totalled \$340,042,000, an increase of \$81,500,000 per year. In 1914, after three years of Conservative administration it was \$383,300,000. Thus in sixteen years the Liberal government had increased the debt \$31,500,000 while in three years the Conservative administration had decreased it by \$6,800,000.

Ottawa, April 8.—The first reference of the session to the navy aid bill of last year was made the House this afternoon by Mr. Cocksbut, M. P., of Brantford. Mr. Cocksbut had replied to G. Tariff on of the budget speech and had completely riddled and disposed of the arguments of the Liberal speakers regarding the advisability of placing agricultural implements on the list as well as giving free wharf to the western farmer. In closing a few minutes before 1 o'clock he adverted to the question. "I think it will be too late that the Senate of last year decided to turn down the bill by which it was proposed that this Dominion of Canada should devote \$35,000,000 to the assistance of the Empire navy. Sir George Ross, leader in the senate, since passed away, was, we are told, an imperialist of the imperialists, and when a chance offered for Canada to liquidate a debt long overdue he tall under some strange influence, what it was I do not know and opposed the measure."

A voice—"It was the pa whip cracking."
Mr. Cocksbut—"I believe was the influence of the leader of the opposition."
At any rate there was an influence of opposition, a disagreeable influence I would like to have seen the leader of the opposition join with the government in policy of aid to the British navy.