

The Herald

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Legislative Session.

In this issue will be found a report of the proceedings of the closing days of the recent Legislative Session, as well as an account of the closing ceremonies and a list of the acts passed. The Session was about the usual length and the amount of legislation was about normal.

The members of the Opposition talked a good deal; but they seemed to lack cohesion and appeared to plunge along without organization. The longer the session lasted, the more chaotic did their condition appear to become.

The Opposition made their more reckless and ill-advised manoeuvres when they presented their charges regarding the Provincial Infirmary. It certainly was extremely short-sighted tactics to base serious charges against a public institution on the declarations of an irresponsible dissatisfied and agitating paranoiac, as the sequel abundantly proved.

Our Opposition friends, very soon after they fired this gun, discovered that it was loaded up the wrong way, and would be sure to kick. They made the discovery too late; as a consequence they were very angry by the time the investigating Committee reported. The charges from which they hoped so much turned out a regular boomerang. The evidence, as recorded by the sworn stenographer, completely disproved all the charges in their indictment. Their attempt to base a minority report on a garbled smattering of the evidence was worse than ridiculous; it was preposterous. The whole business was a sorry manifestation of utter recklessness, in attempting to make political capital without counting the cost. They may perhaps be wiser next time; but they are sadder now.

The closing ceremonies of the session were clothed with unwonted interest, consequent upon the war and the entrance thereto of our latest Ally, the United States. For the first time our flag and that of the neighboring Republic were intertwined in the decorations. Of the Legislative Chamber, and the accredited representative of the United States occupied a seat of honor on the floor of the House. This is certainly as it should be. The tremendous conflict in which the Empire is engaged for the preservation of liberty and civilization appeals to all lovers of righteousness. What more natural than that the great American Republic should become an Ally in the glorious cause; and what more natural than that we should join, not only our flags, but our hearts and our hands?

Provincial Legislature

The House did not meet on Monday 23rd until 9 p. m. After routine the debate on the resolution relative to production of peat in the Province was resumed by Mr. Bell, Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Lee followed in the discussion of the past question. Mr. J. A. Dewar followed Mr. Lee in the discussion of the same subject. Hon. H. D. McEwen was the next speaker on the past question. The other speakers on the subject were Mr. George E. Hughes, Hon. Mr. McKinnon and Mr. A. E. McLean. The resolution was then put and carried. On motion of Hon. Mr. McKinnon the Montague incorporation bill was again referred to committee for further consideration. Progress was reported. The committee stage of the P. E. I. Egg and Poultry Association Incorporation Act was then resumed. The bill was

reported and ordered to a third reading. On motion of Hon. Mr. Arsenault seconded by Hon. Mr. McKinnon, a resolution was introduced to repeal the Fox Tax Act, and to provide for a system of taxation based upon prices realized on the sales. The resolution was reported without amendment and the bill founded thereon was presented and read a first time. Mr. Bell and Mr. Johnston spent considerable time talking about the external Auditors report. Mr. McNevin, seconded by H. D. McLean, moved the following amendment to Mr. Bell's resolution.

That all after the word "that" be struck out and the following inserted in lieu thereof:

That on the first day of the present session the following committee on Public Accounts was appointed: A. P. Prowse, Chairman; H. D. McEwen, R. J. McLellan, A. J. MacNevin, John H. Bell, A. C. Saunders, J. D. McInnis.

That the said Committee was convened by the Chairman on the 29th day of March last;

That meetings were held after due notice on the following days: March 29th. Present—Mr. Prowse, Mr. McEwen, Mr. McNevin, Mr. McLellan, Mr. Saunders. March 30th. Present—Mr. Prowse, Mr. McNevin, Mr. McEwen, Mr. McLellan. April 3rd. Present—Mr. Prowse, Mr. McNevin, Mr. McEwen. April 4th. Present—Mr. Prowse, Mr. McEwen, Mr. McLellan, Mr. McNevin. but the Leader of the Opposition did not attend at any meeting and at only one meeting did any one member of the Committee from the Opposition attend;

That if the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues on this Committee were desirous of examining the Public Accounts in every detail the opportunity was open to them throughout the session;

Therefore Resolved, that the Government is deserving of confidence for having inaugurated for the first time in the history of this Province a system of audit by which the current financial standing of the Province is set forth every year and the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues on the said Committee are deserving of censure for having utterly failed in their duty to examine into the public accounts for the past year.

In seconding the resolution Mr. H. D. McLean pointed out the recklessness of the statements of the different members of the Opposition regarding the debt of the Province. One of them placed the annual deficit of the present Government at \$40,000; another at \$60,000, and still another places it at \$90,000. The discussion was continued by Mr. Bell and Hon. Mr. Arsenault. Hon. Mr. McKinnon, Mr. A. E. McLean, Mr. Paton, Mr. Lee, Hon. Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Dennis, Hon. Sir Charles Dalton, B. Gallant, Hon. Mr. McEwen and Mr. McInnis. The amendment being put the House divided the vote standing 14 to 12 in favor of the Government. The Resolution was then put and defeated on the same division reversed.

The House did not meet Tuesday bill about 12.30. On motion of Hon. Mr. McKinnon the "Beaver Protection Act" was presented and read a first time. Hon. Mr. McKinnon also introduced a bill to amend the act incorporating the "Montague Electric Company." Recess at 1 o'clock.

It was 3.30 when the House reassembled. The first business brought before the House was the automobile bill. Dr. A. A. McDonald moved the second reading of the bill bearing on the subject. The motion was seconded by Hon. Mr. Arsenault. The House went into committee with Mr. Prowse in the chair. Mr. Geo. E. Hughes in opposition to the bill, read a list of petitions containing over a thousand names he said of persons opposed to the running of automobiles. Mr. John A. Dewar spoke in opposition to the bill. Mr. A. E. McLean followed on the same side. Mr. Saunders spoke in favor of it. Mr. James D. McInnis spoke against it. Opposition to the bill was continued by Mr. Dennis, Mr. B. Gallant, J. H. Bell, Mr. George E. Hughes, Mr. Saunders, Mr. Johnston, Mr. Lee. A division was taken in committee, showing the pros and cons 14 to 14. The chairman gave his casting vote in favor of the bill. The bill was reported. On the motion

to adopt the report of the committee, the House again divided, the vote standing 15 to 11 in favor. The House then took recess at 6.40.

The House reassembled, after recess, at 9 o'clock. The bill to amend the Statute Law, on motion of Premier Mathieson, read a second time, and committed to committee. Progress was reported at 10 o'clock.

The report of the committee of members of the Legislature to investigate the charges made by Mr. George E. Hughes, relative to conditions at the Provincial Infirmary, was presented by Mr. A. P. Prowse, Chairman of the Committee and read by the Clerk of the House. The report is as follows:

To the Honorable, The Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly.

Your committee appointed to enquire into and report upon the charges submitted by Mr. George E. Hughes relating to the Provincial Infirmary and certain officials of that Institution beg leave to report as follows:

The authority and scope of the Committee is set forth in the following resolution:

RESOLVED, That a committee of five members of the House be appointed by this House to enquire into and report upon all charges made or submitted by George E. Hughes, a member of this House, from his place in this House, on Tuesday, the Third day of April, instant, as set forth in a document in writing, dated the First day of March 1917, purporting to be signed by William J. Murphy and others and laid upon the table of this House.

(2) That the committee shall have power to send for persons, papers and records and to examine witnesses on oath.

RESOLVED, That the Special Committee appointed by this House on Wednesday, April 4th, 1917, to enquire into and report upon all charges made or submitted by George E. Hughes, a Member of this House, on Tuesday, April 3rd instant to certain officials in the Provincial Infirmary, have power to hold Sessions either at Charlottetown or at the Provincial Infirmary.

Your Committee met at the Provincial Infirmary on Thursday the 12th instant. Dr. Conroy appeared and represented the Trustees and Mr. McKinnon appeared on behalf of Mr. James Byrne against whom most of the charges were directed. Mr. Hubbard, the official Stenographer, was duly sworn and the Committee proceeded to take evidence at about 2 o'clock on the said 12th instant.

The charges as set forth in the document referred to in said resolution are as follows:

1. Studied persecution of blind, crippled and infirm men.
2. Banishing away ladies and men from Charlottetown who have come out there to see friends of theirs.
3. Neglecting to distribute a sufficient number of blankets to make the men comfortable at night while in the meantime blankets are looked up in the closets.
4. Pulling old infirm men out of bed, on the floor, and striking them. This has happened three or four times only recently.
5. Permitting inmates to quarrel and fight in the dining-room at their meals and making himself ridiculous also before the inmates.
6. Permitting an old man of 70 years of age to carry on scandalous actions with a deaf and dumb girl inmate in the presence of nearly eighty (80) men and women; during meal hours. This old man is an old chum or crony of Byrnes, being acquainted for years before coming here, and both are from King's County.
7. Allowing foolish inmates to carry vitals to a blind man; the meals being put up by the inmates in a contemptuous manner. The inmates also quarrelling and with those men nearly every day.
8. Opening windows and letting in cold wind on those men in bed, or in wheel chairs.
9. Allowing all the patients effects, such as clothing, money, tobacco, matches, etc., to be stolen by inmates (who should be in the Penitentiary). There are closets here with locks and keys and they are of no account

whatever. "Everything is stolen."

10. Allowing trunks and valises (stored in the attic) to be burst open, and no protest made by them against such villainy.

It is likewise charged in said document that Dr. Goodwill discharged James Byrne as attendant in said Institution about two years ago for inability and inefficiency in the carrying out of his duties, that the Government reinstated him and that the Institution has become very degraded under his management during the last three years brought about principally by Byrnes.

The following witnesses were examined under oath:

Abraham Bonnell
William J. Murphy
Litus Campbell
Laughlin McPherson
John R. McInnis
Oliver Thompson
Donald McLeod
James Byrne
Peter Trainor
Addie Dingwell
Mrs. M. Newbury
Mrs. Louis Bonnell
Edward Fraught
Dr. Blanchard
Dr. Conroy
Dr. McMillan

All the Members of the Committee were present while the evidence was being taken on the 12th, 13th and 18th instant, with the exception of Mr. Saunders who was absent on the last named day.

Annexed hereto is the extended report of the evidence as taken by the official stenographer.

The evidence disclosed that there was no ground for any of the charges made or submitted by Mr. George E. Hughes, a member of this House, from his place in this House the 3rd day of April instant, as set forth in a document in writing bearing date the 1st day of March, 1917, that said document was mainly compiled by William J. Murphy, an inmate of said Institution, having been copied by him from an original dated the 31st of Oct. 1916, after the same had been revised and amended on his behalf as appears by his verbal evidence and said original document was put in evidence and is annexed hereto, that the other inmates of said Institution whose names are appended to said document had not or had any other inmate of said Institution anything to do with compiling or writing said document dated 1st of March, nor with said original document nor with revising or amending same nor did any of those examined excepting said William J. Murphy know what was contained in said document or that such charges were being formulated against said Institution: That the said William J. Murphy has mental delusions and is not always accountable for his actions and the fact has been established by the evidence that the charges contained in said document are the outcome of such delusions and have no foundation in fact.

That the said James Byrne against whom specific charges were directed, has been shown to have been not guilty of the charges preferred against him, nor any of them, but on the contrary the evidence disclosed that he had been an efficient and careful attendant and he had never been dismissed, nor had there ever been any intimation of his dismissal from said Institution.

That your Committee inspected the Institution throughout and are able to report said Institution to be well kept, the inmates are carefully looked after, good and sufficient food and clothing are supplied, and the building is well heated, the officials connected with said Institution are all competent and faithful in the discharge of their respective duties.

ALBERT J. PROWSE,
Chairman.
R. J. McLELLAN,
A. J. McNEVIN.

Mr. Prowse, Chairman of the Committee, moved the adoption of the report and animatedly read very severely upon the conduct of Mr. Hughes in connection with this matter. He carefully analyzed the history of the charges made by Murphy, showing that alterations had been made in the original. The motion to adopt the report was seconded by Mr. R. J. McLellan. He said this majority report may be regarded as the unanimous conviction of the majority of the Committee. He referred to the extraordinary confidence and assurance with which the Opposition had presented the charges in question. He also

pointed out that Mr. Bell manifested a desire, during the investigation, to go outside of the resolution to fish for evidence; but was prevented, very properly, by the majority of the Committee. He quoted some portions of the evidence to show how utterly unfounded were the charges preferred by Mr. Hughes.

Mr. Bell moved an amendment to the report of the majority of the Committee seconded by Mr. Saunders. Mr. Johnston followed on the Opposition side, supporting the amendment. Mr. McNevin, member of the Legislative Committee, continued the discussion. He showed that Mr. Johnston had made a tremendous noise and spoke in a loud and boisterous voice. Evidently he felt he was pretty badly hit. At 1.05 a. m. Mr. McNevin adjourned the debate and the House then adjourned.

It was very near 12 o'clock, noon, when the House met on Wednesday. The usual routine proceedings having been disposed of the bill relative to motor vehicles was ordered to be read a third time. Mr. Hughes, seconded by Mr. David McDonald, moved that the bill be not now read a third time, but that it be read six months hence. The division being taken the amendment was defeated, the vote standing 15 to 14. After the bill went through its third reading and was passed, the House took recess.

The House resumed at 3.50. The bill relating to protection of Beavers was again taken up in committee, Mr. Paton in the chair. After some more committee work, the debate on the report of the Legislative Committee investigating the Infirmary charges was resumed by Mr. McNevin. He proceeded to point out how untenable was the attitude of Mr. Bell and Mr. Saunders in presenting a minority report. He showed the absolutely baseless character of the evidence upon which the minority report was founded. Mr. McNevin showed, from the evidence, that Mr. William Murphy, the star witness of the Opposition, was a degenerate and a most unreliable character. Three doctors testified that Murphy was of unsound mind.

Hon. Dr. Jenkins continued the debate on the Government side. He pointed out that the evidence strongly showed that Murphy was a man of unsound mind. He was at least subject to delusions. He took Mr. Johnston severely to task for having made a vicious attack on one honorable member of the medical profession. He said that Mr. Johnston insinuated the three doctors, Conroy, Blanchard and M. McMillan, had made statements, on oath, at the investigation, that were incorrect and unreliable. He proceeded to show how farcical was the conduct of the Leader of the Opposition and his supporters in this matter. Mr. B. Gallant continued the discussion. The motion on the amendment was lost 15 to 12, and the main motion to adopt Mr. Prowse's report was carried on a vote of 16 to 13. The House then took recess at 6 o'clock.

It was a few minutes after 9 o'clock when the House reassembled in the evening. Almost the whole of the sitting was devoted to committee work and third readings. A resolution relative to fisheries moved by Mr. Dennis and amended by Hon. Mr. Arsenault was submitted. The amendment was carried 15 to 13. House adjourned at 11.45.

The House met at 11 o'clock on Thursday forenoon. Having gone through the customary routine proceedings, Mr. Bell brought up the question of the proposed visit of the Premier to the old country and to the battle-fields, and the "win-the-war" conference in Montreal.

Hon. Mr. McKinnon expressed much surprise at the course pursued by the Leader of the Opposition in bringing up this matter in open Legislature, in as much as the question had been considered behind closed doors, and was considered settled. Why now should he exploit the question before the public? What has caused his sudden conversion on the grounds of economy? If he

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FIVE TWENTY-FIVE.

Mail Contract	Mail Contract	Mail Contract.
<p>SEALED TENDERS, addressed to the Postmaster General, will be received at Ottawa until Noon, on Friday, the 1st June, 1917, for the conveyance of His Majesty's Mails, on a proposed Contract for four years six times per week.</p> <p>Over Rural Mail route No 8 from Kensington, P. E. Island from the 1st July next.</p> <p>Printed notices, containing further information as to conditions of proposed contract may be seen and blank forms of Tender may be obtained at the Post Office of Kensington, Margate, New London and at the office of the Post Office Inspector.</p> <p>JOHN F. WHEAR, Post Office Inspector.</p> <p>Post Office Inspector's Office, Charlottetown, April 18th, 1917 April 18th, 1917—31</p>	<p>SEALED TENDERS, addressed to the Postmaster General, will be received at Ottawa until Noon on Friday, the 15th June, 1917, for the conveyance of His Majesty's Mails, on a proposed Contract for four years, six times per week.</p> <p>Over Rural Mail Route No. 1 from St. Louis, P. E. Island, from the 1st October next.</p> <p>Printed notices containing further information as to conditions of proposed Contract may be seen and blank forms of Tender may be obtained at the Post Office of St. Louis, Ebbwisle, and at the office of the Post Office Inspector.</p> <p>JOHN F. WHEAR, Post Office Inspector.</p> <p>Post Office Inspector's Office, Charlottetown, May 1st, 1917. May 2, 1917—31</p>	<p>SEALED TENDERS, addressed to the Postmaster General, will be received at Ottawa until noon on Friday, the 15th June, 1917, for the conveyance of His Majesty's Mails on a proposed Contract for four years, six times per week.</p> <p>Over Rural Mail route No. 1 from Ellerslie Station, P. E. Island, from the 1st October next.</p> <p>Printed notices containing further information as to conditions of proposed contract may be seen and blank forms of Tender may be obtained at the Post Office of Ellerslie Station, Bidaford, Fort Hill, and at the Office of the Post Office Inspector.</p> <p>JOHN F. WHEAR, Post Office Inspector.</p> <p>Post Office Inspector's Office, Charlottetown, May 1st, 1917. May 2, 1917—31</p>