

THE HERALD

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SESSIONAL NOTES.

On Monday April 4th, consideration of supply was resumed in committee. When the estimates for the Public Works department were taken up, Mr. Mathieson said we had never received any explanation from the Commissioner of Public Works, why he pays out large sums of money, without competition and irregular in every way. In the Georgetown district this was done by an official of the department who has been openly proven to have given under oath information that was not true. This official, Mr. Lavers spent \$600, for political purposes; for buying votes. This is in addition to the irregular proceedings of the commissioner in the matter of C. B. Clay while he was a candidate on the Government side, for the Legislature. Why was all this money spent without public competition? Throughout the length and breadth of the Georgetown district, he (Mr. M.) and his colleague found this expenditure for political purposes openly going on. The commissioner squirmed and hedged and gave as little information as possible. The Commissioner, said Mr. Mathieson, seemed determined to give information concerning his unlawful acts. There was no urgency; no reason why this money should be spent without competition. A large portion of this money was paid for cutting down bushes; ten dollars to this one and ten dollars to that one. The men engaged in cutting down these bushes told Mr. Mathieson and his colleague, Mr. McDonald, that they had been engaged at this work by the officials of the Government, when a hard and fast bargain was made, with the distinct understanding that they should vote for the Government candidates.

Mr. Wyatt called attention to the Commissioner's statement that the public service required the expenditure. He (Mr. Wyatt) had in his hands a return brought down by the Commissioner, and there was nothing there to show there was any urgency. The most of the money was paid for cutting down bushes and repairing culverts. Mr. Wyatt here read a long list of names of persons who got sums ranging from \$2. to \$20. for cutting down bushes. There was nothing in this return to show there was the slightest urgency. For his own reputation, the Commissioner should make some explanation of the expenditure of this money in this way. It was very evident, said Mr. Mathieson, that the Commissioner had no explanation to make. Therefore, all that could be done was to leave him to the Government members and to the country. "He would like to get some information about a right of way for a road near Sturgeon, which had been bought eleven years ago. The road has not been opened and is never heard of except when it is revived for political purposes on the eve of an election."

Mr. McLean would like to know in how many districts in the Province \$600 are spent outside of the expenditure for bridges. Mr. Arsenault spoke along the same lines.

Mathieson wanted to know if the Commissioner of Public Works was anxious to offer an investigation such as he granted last session. It will be remembered that last session, Mr. Lavers had made sworn statements before him. Mr. J. A. McDonald, member for Cardigan, when this statement was made in the House by the Commissioner of Public Works as the sworn statement of Mr. Lavers said the statement was false. Later Mr. McDonald wrote a letter to the public press stating with all the publicity possible that the sworn statement of Lavers was false. Yet this man is continued in the public service. The commissioner of Public Works seems simply to throw open the public treasury and let the money be dragged out.

Mr. McKinnon was surprised to discover that the road at Sturgeon had not been opened. The reports of the Commissioner stated that all roads for which rights of way had been purchased had been opened. Discussion on the item was continued by Mr. Prowse, Mr. Mathieson and the Leader of the Government. On the item for ferries, an amount of upwards of \$500 was charged on account of repairs to the steamer Hillsboro over two years ago. This created a lively discussion, inasmuch as it was a very extraordinary condition of things to be called upon to provide for expenditures supposed to have been made over two years ago. Mr. Dobie pleaded for better treatment and improved service on Ellis River Ferry. He considered it very unfair that the people of that section should be obliged to put up with such inadequate accommodation. Mr. Arsenault eulogized the complaints made by Mr. Dobie. Prince County, paid more in taxes than either of the other counties, and received less. Mr. A. J. McDonald, considered it was time tolls should be abolished on Ellis River and other ferries. Mr. Mathieson considered an explanation should be given by the Commissioner of Public Works regarding Cardigan ferry. At the time the present Government came into power piers were ready on both sides for a steam ferry. In consequence of neglect the wharves have broken down and departed, and the ferry boats have disappeared. The accommodation is most wretched. Mr. J. A. McDonald said he understood the ferryman at this place had offered to put a gasoline engine in his boat and make daily trips to Georgetown, if the Government would pay him \$500. There was \$500 in the estimates for this service and Mr. Mathieson wanted to know if any arrangement had been entered into. The Commissioner of Public Works said that a delegation had waited on the Government; but no bargain had been made. Mr. Mathieson asked Mr. Cummiskey who comprised the delegation; but the Commissioner refused to answer. Mr. Mathieson said he felt satisfied the Commissioner had invented this delegation. It was an outrage that such an important ferry as this should be kept in this scandalous condition.

In answer to Mr. Mathieson, the Leader of the Government said it was the policy of the Government to have the Federal Government if possible take over the Southport wharf. Mr. Dobie wanted to know what consideration the Government intended to give to Lot 16 Wharf. This was a most important place and something should be done. Mr. Arsenault spoke along the same lines.

When the Premier at the evening sitting moved that the House go into Committee of Supply. Mr. Wyatt took up the matter of paying second class salaries to teachers holding only third class licenses, and pointed out that this was a misappropriation of public money. It had been said that the Board of Education had done this; but said he, the Board of Education had no authority to break the law. In addition to this it was said that persons had obtained licenses, who had not qualified at all. If this is true, all information bearing on the subject should be brought before the House. He concluded his remarks by moving, seconded by Mr. Kennedy, an amendment that a special committee be appointed to investigate this matter and other alleged irregularities in the education department, with power to examine witnesses under oath.

The Leader of the Government said that he was instructed that no persons had received licenses who had not qualified. It was true that several were given permits to teach for a year. This is permissible under the regulations. One of the two men, of the seven teachers paid second class pay, although holding only third class licenses, taught for two years. All those who obtain these permits to teach, receive only \$80 a year.

Mr. Mathieson said that we had ample evidence that the practice of paying second class salaries to teachers holding only third class licenses had been going on for some time. The Superintendent of Education should not be held responsible for any conduct of this kind. The Government are above the Board of Education and control it; therefore the Government must be held responsible for every action of the Board. Surely it was deplorable that our educational system had been so prostituted that it was necessary to take advantage of these permits. It is a sorry plight surely. Abundance of evidence was at hand to establish the existence of the scheme of paying to teachers salaries to which they are not entitled. Mr. James Kennedy read a list of names of teachers who were receiving salaries different from that which their licenses called for. Some of these salaries were higher and some lower than those which should attach to their licenses.

Mr. Kennedy asked if those members on the Government side, who made the plea that many of these teachers found it very difficult to get through college and to whom higher salaries were given than their licenses entitled them to, would be willing to grant this favor to all others who might make a similar request, otherwise they are in favor of partiality and injustice.

Mr. McLean said it was quite plain the members on the Government side were learning quite a lot. When this question came up a few evenings ago, the Government would give no information; tonight they were willing to give a lot of information. They gave so much information that they contradicted themselves. Was it a just or generous thing to give a higher salary than the license called for to young teachers from the Prince of Wales College, and at the same time pay only a third class salary to an old first class teacher simply because he was teaching in a primary school? Mr. Arsenault pointed out

that the Leader of the Government admitted the thing was wrong; other members on that side say it is all right and they are willing to take the responsibility, and still others say the Superintendent is responsible. This was the medley of opinion presented by the Government. In any case the proceeding was wrong and illegal and if a committee of investigation should be granted the evil and injustice of this proceeding would be shown up. The amendment was put and declared lost on a division of 14 to 12.

The House then went into committee of supply. On the question of wharves, Mr. Delaney called attention to Herd's Point Wharf. He pointed out that this was a very important wharf and much business was done there. He hoped this "wharf would be overlooked." Mr. James Kennedy, asked to whom this wharf belonged and was told it belonged to the Local Government. How then, he asked could individuals undertake to poll council votes on this property. This had been done, Captain Read had voted on it and another Read had voted for Captain Read on this property. In any event the property is not worth more than \$150. Mr. Prowse said the wharves all over the Province were going to wreck and ruin, and rapidly going to keep company with the bad roads. The item for packets elicited some sharp sparring between the members of the Opposition and the Government.

On the item of \$30,000 for roads, discussion arose. Mr. James Kennedy pleaded for the opening of a road at Norborough. This road is very much needed and would relieve one man from the necessity of travelling five miles uselessly. This man was a strong supporter of the Government and had opposed Mr. Kennedy and was promised this road; but nothing had been done since then. Mr. Delaney strongly supported the opening of this road. The opening of it would be of very much importance to supporters of the Government.

Mr. McLean wanted to know what the Commissioner of Public Works intended to do in the case of the road from Fairfield to the starch factory at the Baltic. The Commissioner said the damages for rights of way were considerably more than the Government were willing to pay; but the matter would be considered during recess. The discussion on roads was continued by Messrs. Arsenault, Prowse, Cummiskey and Dobie. The matter of 56 chains of land purchased from Hon. Peter McNutt for \$555 for a road of very little use to anyone except Mr. McNutt and another man, came in for a good deal of criticism at the hands of Mr. Mathieson and others. This land was bought on the eve of the last election, and Mr. McNutt was at the time a member of the Government. Mr. Mathieson pointed out that this was done by private contract on the eve of the election, and a member of the Government was the beneficiary. There was no petition for the road. Mr. Arsenault, Mr. Kennedy and other members of the Opposition strongly criticised this transaction. The road terminates at Mr. McNutt's lobster factory on the shore. The whole transaction seems to have been in the nature of a sop to Mr. McNutt.

Tuesday forenoon several bills were read a third time and passed—some others on the order paper were advanced a stage. The land assessment act was then read a second time and committed to a committee of the whole.

Mr. Mathieson said that a perusal of the bill went a long way to show the similarity between it and the tax act of 1877, commonly designated the "Davies Tax Curse." The bill was long, had much machinery and was well calculated to become oppressive. Any farmer who considered his property over valued could appeal to the County Court. Here he would be met by the Government with all their machinery and their witnesses, and the farmer would have a poor chance, and even if he won his case in court would have large expenses. There was no reason, he said, for the assertion that the lands of this Province were undervalued. Taking into consideration the total number of acres of land, the average taxation that has been collected for the past sixteen years indicates that our farm lands show a

valuation of \$16,000,000. If this act goes into force, and the land taxes increase \$20,000, as the Premier anticipates it would increase the land values by \$10,000,000, bringing it up to the \$26,000,000. There was no reason to suppose that our farmers have undervalued their land. About \$33,000 a year, on an average, have been collected from the farmers, and last year under extra pressure, \$35,000 were collected. Why is the income tax not pushed and collections made from wealthy men who pay little or nothing? Why are not the lists of income tax payers published?

Mr. Mathieson, referring to the statement of the Premier that he had gained evidence from the Registry office that farmers were undervaluing their land said the Government had been derelict in their duty not looking after those who were depriving the public coffers of a large amount of taxation. The Premier, he said, had acted arbitrarily in refusing to permit the copying of the lists of income tax payers. If that information were known to the public, it would be a strong lever towards bringing about a correct knowledge of the status of the income tax. He controverted the Premier's statement that farmers are paying heavy land tax in the Province of Alberta. The only Provinces paying a direct land tax into the Provincial treasury are Prince Edward Island and British Columbia.

Mr. McLean considered it a remarkable condition of things that the number of income tax payers in this Province is only 1,419. He considered that if these lists were known to the public generally, the amount from income, he felt sure, would be very much increased.

After recess Mr. McLean resumed his speech on the assessment bill. He would like to see the income and land tax put on the same footing as to publicity. In that case the income tax list could be revised and corrected from information furnished by those who know. Mr. McKinnon continued the debate. He pointed out that, had the Government done their duty, they need not bring in this bill. All the machinery necessary for valuing and collecting the land taxes are in the old bill. Why does not the Government pay as much attention to the income tax as to the tax on farm lands? Under the old act provision was made for compelling unwilling farmers to pay. Under the new act the honest farmer who makes a fair statement of valuation is coerced. That is all the difference between the two acts. Why do the Government show such anxiety to take the last cent from the farmer, while they do nothing towards making the rich man pay his income tax?

Mr. Mathieson said Hon. Mr. Richards had confessed he had learned that many inequalities had existed regarding valuation; but that Hon. gentleman had failed to put the law in force and enforce the penalties under the old act. It looked as if he had not studied the act. The statute provided all the remedies necessary; but the Government has not put the machinery in force. According to the statement of the Premier \$20,000 additional taxes were expected to be raised under the new act. Are the Government going to apply these \$20,000 to increase the teachers salaries? The system of going to the County Courts is much admired by members of the Government. Why not, therefore, employ the County Courts to enforce the collection of the income tax? Why are those liable to pay income tax so hedged round with so many safeguards?

Mr. Dobie, referring to the ramblings of Mr. Laird, said the chairman should exercise his control of the committee by preserving some semblance of order among the speakers. He considered that if the Government had properly spent all the money collected under the present tax act, they would not now require to increase the taxes on the farmers. Why are the income taxes not sharply collected? There was much loss of money and much injustice in consequence of these delinquencies in collecting the income tax.

Mr. Prowse did not wonder that the Government found it necessary to make a show of justifying the act under consideration. The Government are respecting to-day the fruit of what they sowed sixteen years ago. Why did not

the Government collect the income tax? Why were so many allowed to escape paying any income tax? The Government, with the necessary machinery in their hands, have utterly failed to live up to the tax act now on the statute book. Had our claims been properly pressed the Government would not now be in the throes of despair.

Mr. Mathieson said we hear much from the Government side about adopting a fair attitude. Yes, but let the bill speak out in honest terms. It should be called a bill to increase the taxation on our farmers. The Government had told us the increased \$70,000 of subsidy would prevent future deficits. The Leader of the Opposition told us that nothing of the kind would happen. This has come to pass. What wonderful things the anticipated additional \$20,000 taxation are expected to do. The Premier says nothing will be obtained from the act this year; consequently there is no prospect of meeting the \$38,000 deficit already admitted by the Premier. Then again, it leaks out from some Government members that the \$20,000 additional taxation is to increase the teachers salaries. What a wonderful \$20,000 this is to be sure!

Mr. Delaney expressed himself as unalterably opposed to this bill. It was certainly most unfair to go to the farmers now, at the end of nineteen years of squandering and mismanagement. Had the Government come anywhere near keeping their promises to make revenue and expenditure meet, there would be no need to have this bill passed. As to the income tax he had to say that in his vicinity there were men who did more business than he did; but they got off scot free. It is true they were Liberals. He did not know whether or not this was the reason, but it had a very bad look.

Mr. James Kennedy said that members of the Government kept saying this bill was not for the purpose of increasing taxation. More money was to be obtained by means of the act in the shape of land tax. What did that mean if not an increase of taxation. The farmers are now paying in land tax and road tax to the extent of \$50,000. At the same time wealthy men are allowed to go free from the payment of income taxes. Members of the Opposition refused to give information as to the purpose of the act, whether it was fair or just? Many friends of the Government, with large incomes, are allowed to escape income tax. Why was that?

The debate was continued by Mr. Mathieson who showed that our claim, under the fishery award was unquestionable. All the Liberal Premier of this Province have previously held out to the people that they were pressing this claim and that we could not fail to obtain it. Now, of a sudden the Leader of the Government and his followers say this claim is no good. Mr. Mathieson quoted the strongest arguments to show that no Province in the Dominion had such a valid claim against Canada. Let the members of the Government side take an honest and serious view of the question of our claims; let them study what Manitoba has done in the matter of claims and they will understand what we want; secure if we want about it in earnest; because we have claims so much stronger. When members of the Legislature and its Leader stand up in their place in the House and say we have no claim and sneer at any advocacy of our claims, what hope of success can we have? Progress was reported at six o'clock.

During the evening sitting the committee stage of the land assessment bill was resumed. Several clauses were discussed by the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. A. J. McDonald, Mr. Dobie and others. The bill was reported without amendment. The bill amending the Chancery Act was then passed through committee and reported and the House adjourned 11.50.

Before entering on the orders of the day Wednesday Mr. Mathieson asked the Leader of the Government if anything had been concluded regarding the securing of the new and cheaper school books from Ontario. He called attention to a report of a teacher's convention held in Ontario recently, where, at much exception was taken to some of the series of school books recently introduced there. The Premier said that no conclusion had yet been arrived at in the matter of introducing these books.

A message was read from the Lieut. Governor transmitting estimates for the public service from the end of the present fiscal year, Sept. 30th next, up to the granting of supply next session of the Legislature.

Before further considering supply in committee, Mr. Mathieson pressed the matter of the publication of the lists of income tax payers. As the Government had thus far refused to make public such lists, he considered that at least lists should be furnished to members of the House. He strongly emphasized this point. He considered it was right this should not be refused under any consideration. Mr. McLean followed on the same lines. Mr.

Mathieson pointed out in the most emphatic terms that the right existed for members of the House to go to the Provincial Secretary's office and view these lists and make copies of such lists. That being granted, the Premier should permit that lists might be made by a clerk employed by any member, for convenience sake. After some further discussion on by Mr. McLean, Mr. Cummiskey and Mr. Palmer, the Leader of the Government took up the matter. He did not consider that the names of those who paid should be published, and as to the making public the names of those who had failed to pay he had not much objection; but he did not think it should be done until notice of such anticipated publication had been served on the persons whose names were slated for publication. Mr. Wyatt said that this matter, as is well known, had given rise to much comment and much complaint. One reason of this was that all are not treated alike. One is found to pay, and another, equally or better able to pay, is allowed to go free, and so on. For these and other reasons he considered it would be a good remedy to have publication in the matter. Mr. McKinnon could see no objection to the publication of the names in question. He could see no reason why those liable to pay income tax should be treated differently from the manner in which it is proposed to treat tax-payers under the new land tax act. After some more remarks by the Leader of the Opposition and others the matter dropped and the House went into committee. (The Premier gave permission to members to copy the lists.)

On the item for ferries considerable discussion took place on some accounts paid to A. Kennedy & Co. This account over \$500, was contracted during 1907 and 1908. Since then several accounts had been paid to this firm; yet this account appeared not to have been paid and was brought in now. These accounts should have been published in last year's public accounts. Mr. James Kennedy read these accounts and showed what exorbitant prices had been charged for the articles enumerated. He aimed at upon the contract obtained by Captain Read, a member of the Government, to procure seat coats for the western Provinces. Through the assistance of the Provincial Government as he (Mr. K.) believed in securing this contract on such advantageous conditions. Captain Read said he was able to make \$14,000 on this contract.

After Mr. Cummiskey had undertaken to explain the prices named in the account, Mr. James Kennedy again took the floor and reiterated his statement that the prices under consideration were excessive. He held the Commissioner had misled the House in this matter. He evidently did not understand anything about this business. Mr. Wyatt continued the discussion. He drew from the Commissioner of Public Works that goods were obtained from a store without any written requisition. Bills were paid when they came in, without question. Mr. McLean considered it a loose way of carrying on the business under review. The Commissioner said the smaller shops was the cheaper; but Mr. McLean showed him he was quite off his base, the larger sizes are the cheaper. Other prices, stated by the Commissioner were equally incorrect. Mr. Mathieson pointed out that the name of Captain McDougall was improperly attached to some of the bills. The name was written quite differently in two different cases, evidently in different handwriting. The bills were not certified for the most part. As to the prices, Mr. Mathieson showed that Mr. Kennedy, Mr. McLean and Mr. Cox all stated the prices were excessive. These men are all authorities, they have had long experience in handling such goods. What was the sense of holding back for three years bills

of this nature and of this extent? After some more discussion the item passed.

The committee stage of the Public Roads Act was continued during the evening sitting. The bill was reported with some amendments. The House then resolved itself into committee of the whole to take further consideration of the bill to incorporate the town of Souris. The bill was reported agreed to with some amendments.

After some matters of routine on Thursday forenoon, the appropriation bill was introduced by the Premier and put through all its stages. Mr. Prowse moved a resolution requesting the Government to take such action as may bring about an improvement in the train arrangements on the Murray Harbor Branch Railway. The time table, now introduced, does not provide a daily express train, and the resolution of Mr. Prowse asked for this accommodation. The resolution was seconded by Mr. McKinnon, and supported by the Premier and unanimously passed.

Mr. Mathieson introduced a resolution for the relief of Walter Lowe in connection with losses sustained by him in the matter of his contract to erect an addition to the Isaac Asylum. The resolution was first introduced for an arbitration. Mr. Mathieson backed up his resolution by a strong speech. He emphasized the fact that Mr. Lowe was prepared to give security for costs. Mr. Prowse was an opportunity of having his case properly heard. Surely it would be cruel to deny him an opportunity of proving his case. The resolution was opposed by Hon. L. McDonald, the Premier and Mr. Cox. Mr. James Kennedy supported the resolution as fair and just. Mr. Wyatt supported the resolution in a reasonable speech. Mr. Palmer spoke against the resolution in a reasonable and moderate speech. Mr. McKinnon considered the case before the House was quite plain, and so no one could deny the justice of Mr. Lowe's application for arbitration. After Hon. Mr. Hughes had spoken against the resolution, Mr. Mathieson rose to close the debate, the Premier and the Commissioner of Public Works attempted to rule him out of order; but Mr. Speaker ruled that Mr. Mathieson was in order. He expressed his great surprise at the remarks of Mr. Hughes who was one of the committee of the members of the House that had unanimously recommended that this case be referred to arbitration. He pointed out that no one knew better than the Premier that whenever anyone wishes to bring action against the Dominion, all that was necessary was to apply for a petition of right and immediately a fiat is issued. But our Local Government refuses these fundamental principles of justice. He wanted to know from Mr. Palmer, who had been a Stipendiary Magistrate, if he ever pronounced judgment on hearsay evidence or gossip. That was just the course the Premier, Mr. Palmer and other Government members and supporters were pursuing against the question under consideration. Mr. Mathieson read the report of Mr. McLay, which recommended numerous changes and improvements in the architect's plans. After Mr. Mathieson closed a strong arraignment of the Government for their conduct in this matter the division was taken when the motion was defeated on party lines, 12 to 10.

Mr. McKinnon moved his resolution in favor of ballot voting in Provincial elections. He backed up his motion by a brief, vigorous speech. The motion was seconded by Mr. McNeill. Mr. Mathieson speaking to the motion gave a brief history of the ballot act formerly enacted here. The act was passed by the Owen Government in 1876, and published. Then after.

(Continued on third page.)

MODERN BUILDING PLANT! The undersigned intends to establish at MONTAGUE BRIDGE Early in the coming spring, an up-to-date Building Plant for the manufacture From Concrete Of all manner of material for building purposes. The building material here manufactured will include brick and all kinds of Concrete Building Stone, Monuments, Coffin Vaults, Steps, Drain Tiles, Caps, Lintels, Cellar Walls and Floors, Veranda Columns and Floors, and Veranda Walls of all descriptions; all requirements for Concrete Side-Walks, etc., etc. In connection with the establishment there will be a Builders' Supply Store Where the requirements for all kinds of buildings may be obtained. Contracts will be entered into for the erection of Concrete Buildings in any part of the Province. Enquiries regarding buildings and material will receive careful attention and prompt replies. CHARLES LUND, 48 Brook Road, Quincy, Mass. Jan. 5, 1910-4j