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House of Assembly, 1917

Official Synopsis of Debates

WEDNESDAY, May 30th.

His Excellency having fixed the hour at which he proposed to open the present Session of the Legislature at three of the clock in the afternoon of this Wednesday, the thirtieth day of May Instantly, the Members of the House of Assembly met in the Assembly Room at a quarter to three of the clock in the afternoon, when Mr. Speaker took the Chair.

At three of the clock a Message from His Excellency the Governor was delivered by the Gentleman Usher of the black Rod commanding the immediate attendance of Mr. Speaker and the House in the Council Chamber. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker and the House attended His Excellency the Governor in the Council Chamber, and being returned to the Assembly Room, Mr. Speaker informed the House that when in attendance on His Excellency the Governor in the Council Chamber, His Excellency had been pleased to make a message of congratulatory address to the Legislature, a copy of which for purposes of greater accuracy he had obtained, and then read to the House as follows:

(Speech appears in another column.)

THE PREMIER then rose to move a resolution of sympathy in relation to the death, since last session, of Mr. John Dwyer and Mr. M. J. Kennedy, members of this Assembly, for nearly twenty years Mr. Dwyer had been a Member of the Assembly, entering it first in 1899. Mr. Kennedy, though prominent in civic politics, had not entered on his larger career till only about nine years ago. Neither had been prominent in the debates of the House, but when either spoke it was from a ripe and thoughtful way something worth-while, and both were recognized as men of high principles and integrity. In their chosen avocations both had attained a large measure of success and enjoyment of their industry and ability were to be found in the splendid farm which Mr. Dwyer, the foremost of our agriculturalists, had built, and the many public and private buildings whose erection Mr. Kennedy had superintended. He, the Premier, believed he voiced the feeling of the House in moving a resolution of sympathy with the relatives whose loss had been a severe one—a loss in which the House fully shared. He then submitted the following resolution:

RESOLVED—That this House desires to place on record an expression of its heartfelt sorrow at the decease of John Dwyer, Esq., and M. J. Kennedy, Esq., for some time members of this branch of the Legislature. Their sterling qualities rendered them a valuable acquisition to the Legislature, while mourning their loss, members of this House desire to convey to their relatives, deep sympathy in their bereavement.

DR. LYDIA, as Leader of the Opposition, seconded the motion as endorsing what had been said by the Premier in relation to both members. While he, himself, had been personally associated with Mr. Dwyer, he highly appreciated the work and merits of Mr. Kennedy as well, and felt that the common phrase, "Honest John Dwyer," was equally well applied to the title of Mr. Kennedy.

The resolution was carried by a standing vote.

MR. DEVEREAUX moved for the appointment of a Committee to draft an address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. He referred to the invitation of the British Government summoning the Overseas Premier to Conference—the Empire calling in her children to assist her not only by their physical, but by intellectual forces and ripe experience in Imperial affairs. There was no parallel in history to this remarkable epoch, unless it might be found in Imperial Rome which in the plenitude of her power had her consuls and pro-consuls whom occasionally were brought in to confer. But the conferences of Rome were not to be compared with that lately assembled in the Imperial capital. The unity of the Empire, which had been welded by the magic of blood, was now glorified and solidified by a common sorrow. He expressed the pride of Newfoundland that her representative had been accorded a place in the War Cabinet of the Empire, and allowed to have a voice in the great questions of Imperial policy. Reference was also made to the entrance of the United States into the struggle—an anticipation fulfilled—drawn there in defence of great principles for which Britain was so proudly fighting. Britain was in the fight to maintain justice and her own honour, and up to this moment had upheld all those standards of morality and honour which had been an undeposited heritage for centuries. He was glad the United States had come in, because it was a further evidence that we were fighting for the right, and gave us confidence to believe that God was on the side of Britain and her allies.

neighbor told my mother about Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and I took it, and now I feel like a new person. I don't suffer any more and I am regular every month."—Mrs. HAZEL HAMILTON, 822 South 15th St.

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23 THE PREPARED

ties. We were not a military country. Here in Newfoundland, almost in the Arctic zone, we had been cut off from the great centres of civilization for a century and a half; but all our traditions were English, Scotch or Irish, the red blood of our British ancestors ran pure in our veins, and it has always been felt that if war came and Britain summoned her children to her aid that our fighting race would maintain the noble traditions of her forefathers. How well our soldiers have done let Caribou Hill, Beaumont Hamet, and Monchy speak. True, they have paid the price for their valour, but we do not mourn our gallant lads who have fallen because of the supreme privilege which has been theirs of giving their lives for others. The first effect of our losses was to cause intense grief, the second, assuagement, and the third, glory. Reference was also made to the work of the British expeditionary force, the victorious retreat from Mons, the battle of the Marne, and the heroic pluck of our British soldiers. He made but passing reference to the other than war matters in the speech, congratulating the Government upon the splendid financial condition of the Colony, the increased provision to be made for civil servants, and the augmentation of the pay of the Royal Naval Naval Reserve.

MR. HIGGINS seconded the motion. The speech he summarized as a War Speech. It was customary to include in the Speech an outline of the policy of the Government. The fact that the war almost absorbed the full Speech on the present subject of the day, emphasized the tremendous influence it was having on our life. Men's minds were absorbed in the larger questions of the war; the welfare of the Empire was their first consideration; it should be, if it wasn't, the time when "none were for the party and all were for the State." Referring to the Imperial Conference, and pointing out the previous speaker in his expressions of pleasure and pride that Newfoundland had been so worthily represented there, he said that if the War had done nothing else, it had demonstrated the soundness of the unity of the Empire and produced the first movement toward the fulfilment of the great theory of Imperial Federation. Tribute was paid to Britain's share in the war and to our own noble lads who have died so bravely, and done such credit to the race and to the high principles for which the Empire stood. He also dealt with the high cost of living, the appointment by the Government of the Commission to enquire into the high prices, the increase in the salaries of Civil Servants and the augmentation of the grant for Education.

"When we talk of the ease with which the Commission might act, we are prone to forget that the same problems, presenting the same difficulties and the same awkwardness, exist elsewhere." The question of high prices simply resolves itself into a matter of wages. If the latter increase in proportion to the cost of commodities, there can be nothing to complain about. The present duty was to give higher wages. With regard to trade profits, he claimed that war profits as such should not be made, that credit to the war and to the exploit their goods; but so long as business was done with the object of making profit and earning dividends and governed by the law of supply and demand, it was difficult to see how prices could be kept at what might be termed a normal rate. He also referred to the increase which had been given the men of the Naval Reserve so that their pay would equal that paid the men of the Regiment, and said that this was not only an act of justice, but the whole country would be gratified to learn it. In closing his address he took occasion to add his tribute to those already paid to the memory of the late Messrs. Dwyer and Kennedy, both of whom he had been closely associated with, the former being co-representative with him for the past three years.

DR. LYDIA congratulated the mover and seconder for the address in reply, for the ability they had both displayed. They had characterized the

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Do its duty
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Genuine must bear Signature

Wm. Carter

Speech as a War Speech, and in this they were correct. Dealing with the War he pointed out that it was in times of stress that national greatness was developed, illustrating this by references to the history of Greece and Spain as well as that of our own nation. He called up his references to a former occasion to the flag which adorned the Speaker's desk, and showed how the three crosses entwining his participation in the War Conference, the emblematical of the freedom, liberty of thought and free institutions which the British nation enjoyed today. He could not help viewing the Speech from a different angle than the previous speakers. He joined in welcoming back the Premier, and thought it was a great honour not only to him, but to the Assembly. He criticized the delay in opening the House, claimed that the Premier had pledged that it would not be delayed longer than April 20th, and thought it unfortunate that the business of the country could not have been done earlier in the year. He then turned to the entry of the United States in the war, and welcomed the great Republic to the South to the great brotherhood of nations in the World War. The U. S. A. stood for resources which would be felt with telling effect in the near future, and paid tribute to the sacrifices that country had always made in the interests of justice and liberty. He dealt with the business of the British Army from the days of the "Contemptible Little Army" to the present, and gloried in the achievements of the brave lads of Newfoundland. He wanted to know what the Speech contained in reference to the soldiers' pension bill, or the increase in the wages of the Naval Reserve, and asked if it were correct that the Speech contained no reference to the end of the war. He likewise accused the Government of not playing the game so far as the regiment is concerned. He also complained that though the Premier had publicly announced that he intended to seek his co-operation in connection with a new recruiting move, he had not yet done so.

THE PREMIER touched on the several remarks of the Leader of the Opposition, and first wished to disabuse the mind of the House and the public that the Government had not "played the game" in connection with the Regiment. From the very first, responsibility had been shared with the other side, and the public through the Patriotic Association. This was done so that not the slightest tinge of party politics should interfere with the Regiment. The Patriotic Association and its various Committees had taken over the work which was being done in England by the War Office and in the other Dominions by their Militia Departments at a great cost. The patriotic efforts of citizens here knew saving all this expense to the Colony. The Government were co-operating in every way with the Association. With regard to the claim of the honorable gentleman that he had not been consulted as promised in connection with further movements for recruiting, he wished to say that was not quite correct, as on Friday last, in the presence of the Colonial Secretary, he outlined his views on the matter, as at the same time he discussed the possibility of amalgamation, which had been rejected. While on this matter the Premier took occasion to say that the statement in his interview with the press had been entirely misrepresented, and that he had never suggested and had no intention of introducing Conscription. In connection with the opening of the House he desired to say that the delay was unavoidable so far as he was concerned. He expected to be back from the War Conference in April, but there had been a postponement for a month owing to the non-arrival of General Smuts and the uncertainty regarding the Australian delegates, and this had upset all his plans. He then proceeded to tell of the duties of the Conference which were of a two-fold character—to attend alternately to the War Council meetings and the Colonial Conference gatherings. He spoke of the advantage of hearing the contented reports from all the war, and of the great honour that had been done the country in being admitted in full partnership in the Empire. This action of the British Government, he said, was merely in return for what had been earned by the position taken in the war. Britain at war was doing wonders. She had accomplished more in thirty months than Germany had in forty years. She had performed a miracle, as one writer had put it, "she had added another wonder to the seven wonders of the world." And in

his accomplishment the great Dominions had contributed their share. He said that the part played by Newfoundland was greatly appreciated. Everybody with whom he came in contact, from the King to the lowest peasant, extolled in highest terms the splendid efforts of Newfoundland. On the other side our position was fully understood. We were completely isolated, had lost sight of the arts of war, hadn't seen a soldier for fifty years, and it was only the great spirit of the Empire actuating our people that enabled us to take our place. One of the speakers had said that the war had placed Newfoundland on the map. That was not oversteating it. He spoke of the serious matters the War Cabinet had to deal with, the mass of material to be gone through, all the possibilities regarding peace that had to be considered, and referred to the great confidence of the people of England that victory was certain to pitch on our banners. The Russian revolution, which he stated had come unexpectedly, and was a bolt from the blue, and the uncertain situation it had created, and the result on the war if Russia defected, were also dealt with. Brief references were also made to the submarine menace, which, he said, would have no serious effect on the war, and the great assistance that would come through the entry of the United States into the war. He intended to deal with the work accomplished by the Imperial Conference and matters of local interest, but the hour was too late, and he had to postpone his remarks until another occasion. Before he concluded he read the message from General Allenby, already published here, telling of the gallant work of "Ours" at Monchy.

HON. COLONIAL SECRETARY, in supporting the motion for the adjournment of the debate, stated that it had never been the Government's intention to postpone the payment of the augmentation to the wages of the Naval Reserve men till after the war. Notices of bills and questions various members gave. The House then adjourned until 3 o'clock to-morrow.

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