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House of Assembly.

DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS.

Mr. Stewart said he rose as an independent member to express his opinion. The House had been asked to pass a vote of Want of Confidence, and he had listened attentively to the remarks made on each side in order to form a correct opinion, as he could not give his vote for the Amendment before the House without some good reason for so doing. He must say, so far, he had listened in vain for any argument to convince him that such was his duty. During the debate his suspicion had been strengthened, especially by the speech of his Hon. colleague who preceded him, that the question at issue was not how the interests of the country could be best promoted, but arose out of the dissolution last spring and the question then involved. He Mr. S. could not discern any justice in the charge of recklessness preferred by the ex-Attorney General against the Government, he thought the very reverse was the case. Objections had been raised to the Government on account of failure in the carrying out of the provisions of the Election Law he (Mr. S.) thought the Government had done all that could be reasonably expected of them. The difficulty existed in the Law itself its imperfections and complications were such that it was impossible for Sheriffs and other officers to ascertain their duty under it, the consequence was that in many instances the law had not been fulfilled, and in Charlotte, his County, an Election could not now be held. He had heard no reason advanced which would justify him in condemning the Government on this point.

The next charge against the Government arises out of the railway operations. When the Hon. member of the Amendment made, on Monday, the statement that the railway had been expended illegally and without authority of Law he was supported and the Government had done wrong, but upon examination he found the Act of Assembly empowered the Government to issue Debentures, and the faith of the Province was pledged for their payment, one principal ground of objection was that the works had not been carried on under the Commission, for whose appointment the Law had provided, and that, therefore, the issue of Debentures was illegal, but he could scarcely think that the Hon. ex-Attorney General, would contend as a lawyer, that the Debentures were not valid.

He (Mr. Stewart) was always opposed to the Railway scheme propounded by the late Govt. He had always considered it an impracticable and ruinous scheme. The Session of '86 was a special one, and there was no time to go into a consideration of the subject; but he had never supposed that the government intended to carry out that scheme any farther than concerned those lines which had been already commenced, until further legislation was had on the subject. The Shediac line had been commenced. An Act of Assembly had provided for the purchase of material from former contractors, and that right, was to be the first finish ed. He (Mr. Stewart) was of opinion that the government had acted wisely in waiting until the meeting of the Legislature before they appointed Commissioners, and the House was not justified in censuring them for that delay—at least they have thereby saved the amount of salary, and for that deserve credit; besides, the reason advanced by members of government—that they were anxious to remedy a defect in the Act by which there was no security required to be given by Commissioners before they appointed their officers—was well worthy of consideration.

From his (Mr. Stewart's) knowledge of the parties concerned with railroad works, he was convinced that the statements of the "Leader," as read by his Hon. colleague, were not correct. He knew that some portions of railroad works could be better carried on in winter than in summer. The Act provides that the Government should lay all accounts in detail before us, and when they do that it would be time to bring forward a charge of extravagance. He was not surprised that the Hon. Solicitor General and other Hon. gentlemen had been disgusted at the existing state of things, when a mere squabble for office seemed to be the leading idea, in which the interests of the country were forgotten. This state of things—this having one government this year, and another next, was in his opinion calculated to injure the reputation of the country, and lessen its credit abroad.

He (Mr. Stewart) claimed to be a conservative, and thought much of himself than if he were called a liberal. He did not like those self-styled Liberals, and could not repose much confidence in them. While his Hon. colleague's speech was very stirring, he could not agree with the sentiments he

advanced. His comparison between conservatives and radicals was quite laughable, but, as he considered, very much out of place. He (Mr. Stewart) thought his Hon. colleague might give his opponents some credit for sincerity. Before his (Mr. S.) would support the opposition in a vote of want of confidence in the present government, he must know who were to succeed them. He did not think there were any gentlemen in the House, that he could put more confidence in than those who were now in the Executive. The Prohibitory Law was passed while the Liberals were in power, and it was not till they were turned out that we got rid of that incubus on our freedom.

Mr. Boyd rose and addressed the House in the following speech, which the Reporter has given verbatim:—"The Hon. ex-Attorney General complains that I laid on the table the proposed Address in answer to His Excellency's Speech. It was my intention to speak, and after you had done so, I moved that you read the Address section by section, and before I had an opportunity to say one word, he jumped up and moved his resolution thinking his Excellency for his speech, and expressing his willingness to give due attention to the several matters alluded to therein; and finding that to be the case I concluded to leave the speech, and let him make the most of it. His first charge against the government is for not carrying out the Election Law. Now I would ask, Mr. Speaker, what the government had to do with carrying out the Election Law till they were in possession of the fact the Law had not been carried out. The times at which Parish Officers are chosen, had passed before the government had come into power, and whatever may have been the duties of the Assessors, Revisors, or Clerks of the Peace, the government could have no information as to the lists made up, until they were returned by the Sheriffs of the different Counties, and the times for making such returns was not till late in December, and immediately after being in possession of these returns, they took immediate action, and what could they do more. Is it to be presumed that the government would or could interfere with the local authorities in the carrying out that law? I think not. So much for the Election Law. The next attack by that Hon. gentleman was as to the manner in which Railway work was being carried on, and which must naturally lead to some great job. Why, says he, were not the Railway Directors appointed before any operations were commenced? Where was the necessity for the appointment of Directors? Was there any more work in contemplation? Was there any material alteration to make? I say there was none. The works on the line from the Bend to Shediac required no attention from Directors. The work commenced had only to be completed, no claims were to be made for land damages, then where the necessity for appointing Directors whose united salary would amount to \$1500, besides perhaps \$500 more for travel and expenses, when there was nothing for them to do, and aside from all this no provision had been made to provide means for carrying on these works. The government only came into power on the last day of May, and would it have been wise for them to make these appointments under these circumstances? No. Had they done so they would have been blamed from one end of the Province to the other. Did the government have to send home a delegation at an expense of some \$500 to raise money for Railway purposes? No. But by a simple letter, the postage of which cost but one shilling and six pence. Thus you see that \$2000 at least has been saved to the Province. Couple that with the premium obtained on Debentures sold, and the interest saved, you have the whole cost and more money saved than the three miles of road in the vicinity of St. John will cost."

Had the government stopped at the completion of the road from the Bend to Shediac, would not the charges be rung all over the land that the Government did not intend to carry out the Railway scheme, or had they done so, would the Opposition have the least chance of complaining of the government for not appointing the Railway Directors? I say they would not, and I have done nothing to cause any of them to do so. Much ridicule has been cast upon the Government for commencing the work in the vicinity of St. John in the winter time. And the ex-Attorney General has told the House, that from the manner in which the work had been conducted, it was manifestly led to some great job. Must any Hon. Member for one moment suppose, that the Hon. Mr. Chandler would lend himself to jobbing? Will any Hon. Member presume to say that he was not actuated by the highest of motives. What did he do in the

first instance he called to his assistance and advice, men of high standing in their profession as Engineers, men who had large experience in great public works, men whose characters were unimpeachable, and men who were fully competent to carry out such works, with such auxiliaries there was no necessity for appointing Directors and paying them when there was nothing for them to do. As to the great jobbing spoken of by the Hon. ex-Attorney General, I have the best proofs in the world that there never was so much work done on any Railroad for the same amount of money in America, not one solitary contract taken or piece of work done has been remunerative to the undertaker, and they knew not such would be the case when they undertook the work, and their principal motive for so undertaking was to make a commencement, get their men and material on the line, and trust to chance for better prices as the work progressed. I have some little idea of the value of completing a mile of Railway, and have seen estimates enough to know when the party contracting has a paying job or not. I am in constant contact and conversation with gentlemen much better qualified to judge of the value of such work than I am. So much for the jobbing and extravagance with which the Government is charged.

The next attack of the ex-Attorney General was charging the Government with offering a Railway Directorship to a member of the House in order as he would have it to bribe the party; such a charge comes with a bad grace from this gentleman. Who was it that offered the Chief Commission of Railways to a member of the present Administration with a prospect of making nine thousand pounds besides the salary attached to the office, was it the ex-Attorney General? Madame Tumor says so, and more than that, she has in the *Head Quarters* of the 18th that such was the case. That matter is now public, and I presume it will be dealt with before the debate is closed. This matter I should not have taken any notice of, had not the government been charged with trying to bribe a member by offering him office in order to secure his support. The Hon. member labored hard to make an impression that the money so recklessly squandered or about to be squandered, would absorb three years By-Road money. This, Sir, looks all very pretty, and if such an idea were allowed to get a broad without contradiction, it would cause great dissatisfaction in the remote and rural districts; but, Sir, that Hon. gentleman well knows that any expenditure on the railways cannot by any circumstance affect the By-Road Grants; they will be taken care of as long as the Revenue is raised as it is. The money for the railways is borrowed from abroad and the two and a half percent, is specially imposed for railway purposes, will, and more than pay the interest of any money required for such undertakings. Then why attempt to make the people believe they will lose their by-road money. The present Administration is said to have come in at the back door—that it is illegitimate, a bastard government, &c. I would ask how the late government came into power? was it honest or honorable? I say it was not. It was a combination of malcontents backed up by the Sons of Temperance, who by constant maneuvering and combination succeeded; and that not by the use of force, but by the straight-forward manner, in ousting their predecessors.

The next attack was on the scheme of the government of settling the Wild Lands of this Province. Mr. Speaker, I have given that scheme all the attention I was capable of, and came to the conclusion that the government was right, and that for the following reasons: First, it did not affect the present mode of disposing of the Wild Lands; they were still open for application. They could be purchased for cash down, or on credit payable by instalments, or under the labor Act. The scheme proposed by the government was for the purpose of inducing a good class of emigrants who had some means of their own, and no doubt that the inducements held out by the construction of great public works would cause large numbers to emigrate. Our public lands and their growth is all that we have to meet the engagements undertaken. The whole Revenue, together with the lands, are pledged for the carrying on of Public Works, and cannot be given away. Look at the large amount of money due for lands sold by instalments, look at the large quantities of land purchased by speculators, in the names of parties entirely unknown, and at the mode and manner in which they are to be sold, simply by sending out the names of one hundred persons wishing to purchase lands. In actual fact, the Hon. Member for one moment suppose, that the Hon. Mr. Chandler would lend himself to jobbing? Will any Hon. Member presume to say that he was not actuated by the highest of motives. What did he do in the

land. No, it is for the lumber—that being the cheapest way in which to get them. At the same time he keeps the land locked up from settlement in order to obtain a fresh supply of logs. I well recollect when the late Sur. General issued his circular calling on Crown Land debtors to pay their balances before the month of March, or lose their land; and the impression was strongly made on the minds of those debtors, that it was his own act and not the act of the Government. I took all the pains I could to clear that Hon. gentleman from the charge, and put it where it ought to be, on the government—that truly liberal government, so much lauded. Liberal Government, truly! I also took pains to inform the parties not to be under any apprehension on that score—that the legislature at its next meeting would put a stop to it, and they did so. Much fault has been found with the management of the office of the Board of Works. The Hon. gentleman who is at the head of that department, tells me that the first three months of his incumbency was taken up in settling claims against the late government, and in travelling over the Province, and that notwithstanding he had assistance from men well experienced in such works as came under his department and information from gentlemen in the different localities to whom he had referred certain matters, he was not endowed with the power of ubiquity; he could not be in two places at one and the same time, but that every thing under his charge had been duly and properly attended to.

The Railway Acts, as quoted by the learned Sol. General, must satisfy an unprejudiced mind that the government are clothed with full and ample power to raise money for railway purposes. Then why so pertinaciously insist that the Government had borrowed and expended money without the authority of Law. Mr. Chandler has carried on the work wisely and economically; much fault has been found with the works in the vicinity of St. John. I think the Government acted well and wisely in getting a terminus at the nearest point to the salt water; their object in so locating this line was two fold. First to accommodate the labourers working farther up the line by affording a quick and easy transit to and from their work. Secondly to get the Rails and other heavy material up the line, and from my knowledge of the expense in transporting men and material, I feel satisfied that the cost of transporting materials, &c., by the ordinary mode of drays would come to more than half the cost of the three miles in the vicinity of Saint John. I contend that the works being commenced in the worst time was judicious. The men who worked on the Shediac Road must now be discharged, or a large portion of them, if some other employment had not been found for them. Let these men scatter and go on the works in Nova Scotia or Canada, and how were you going to get them back again early in the spring? You could not. Men will not go on to public works when they are to be discharged in the fall.

More than that, there was a large labouring population in the City of St. John, who must have work or become chargeable on the Parish funds. Those men were all employed at moderate wages, and would be likely to continue on those works so long as they were sure of permanent employment. The Government has also been charged with employing men by the day. I can tell Hon. Members that if they had seen as much as the construction of railroads as I have, they would not be so apt to find fault, working on Railways by the day is not like working on the Roads, or ordinary labouring work as the overseer, or boss as he was sometimes called, knew the exact amount of work that was required of each man under their charge—whether as to how many barrow-loads of earth he was to wheel away in an hour, or how many cubic yards of earth he could excavate in a day—and the labourers who could not come up to the standard would be immediately discharged. The attack of the Hon. member for York (Mr. H.) was not against the Government, so much as to indicate his spleen against his colleague. The Hon. member for St. John, who spoke early in the debate, ridiculed the idea of building Railroads in the winter time, or by day's work; he ought to have recollected that by so doing employment was furnished to a very great many of his constituents, and was the last man that should have found fault with employing men by the day or in the winter time. My Hon. Colleague from St. George told you that small places provide small men, and made himself quite witty with comparing a conservative to a toad. He told you he had been long looking for a type of a conservative, and at last by his receding he discovered that it was a toad, an animal that always keeps his mouth shut but blinks tremendously with his eye, and in fact that he was so unchangeable an animal

that if you buried him under ground for 50 years, and then dug him up, in a few minutes was as lively as ever and blinking as usual. I do not think he paid a very high compliment to the County of Charlotte. I will not admit that Charlotte is a small place, I hold that Charlotte is second to no other County in the Province, and although he came from what he is pleased to term a small place, I think there are as many tall men in his own Parish and more fit to represent the people among whom he lives as there is any other part of the Province; but is it anything strange to see some of these small men when they arrive at the house of a seat in this House, that they begin to swell and swell like the frog in the fable until they burst, and my Hon. friend has followed the example of the frog, has burst too. [This description of the works in progress] were certainly very amusing, he tells you of blasting mud with powder and describes the putting of the charges of powder, and the experiment in the River Magaguadavic in order to get his vessel through two miles of ice, and what the result was, and then made a comparison as to the cost between blowing his vessel out of the ice and blowing up of the mud on the March, and then said:—

He next quoted from the *Leader*, & spoke got up expressly to ridicule the present government and supported by its most determined opponents, his remarks on the railway sleepers on this line, said, and on the one side and decayed and rotten on the other, and was at a loss to know which of them they intended to lay. Did he not know that the unsoundness on the one side were rejected and thrown out as unfit for use, and left there to be taken away by the parties who had furnished them. I listened with attention to the speech of the Hon. member and could gather nothing from it but an attack on the Solicitor General for some remarks that fell from him respecting the conduct of some portions of the testimony of York. These remarks I consider unwarranted; it was a matter for that gentleman to settle with his own constituents. Now, one word more. I maintain that the Government is legitimate, and that they came into power as a consequence of the late general Election; they had the confidence of the people and that is the only legitimate way of any man or set of men coming into a Government. I believe they have the confidence of the country at large. I speak for my own county and myself, and shall continue to support them. If any member has cause to complain of improper treatment personally—I had; but I am not going to drag a Government because I have not got what I think I deserve.

THE BILLS FOR THE YEAR. The Bill to enlarge and extend the Charitable limits for County Charlotte was postponed for 3 months.

Petitions were brought before the House, asking for Legislative aid towards establishment of communication between Canada and the Northern part of this Province.

Mr. Sutton gave notice of his intention of moving the following Resolution at an early day:—

Whereas, by chap. 70, sec. 12, of the Revised Statutes, it is enacted that the acceptance of any office of emolument vacates the seats of members of this House; and whereas, on the 19th Nov. 1886, James Boyd, Esq., a member of this House, was appointed and accepted the permanent office of Government Director in the Canada and New Brunswick Railway Land Company.

Therefore, Resolved, As the opinion of this House, that by the acceptance of said office, the said James Boyd, Esq., is disqualified as a member of this House from sitting and voting therein.

On motion of Mr. Smith, Resolved, That an address be presented to His Excellency the Lieut. Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to inform this House whether any and what amount of Provincial Debentures has been issued to the St. Andrews and Quebec Railway Company, since the month of May last, and also what amount of Debentures have been claimed by the said Company from the Executive Government, under any Act relating thereto; and also copies of any correspondence between the Government and James Boyd, Esq., the Government Director of the said Railroad, either in reference to his appointment as such Director, or the salary thereof, and whether the amount of such salary has been fixed, and if so what amount.

Mr. McAdam gave notice of his intention to move an address to His Excellency asking to be laid before the House all papers and documents relating to the charges collected at the Port of St. Stephens.

On motion of Mr. Chandler it was resolved that no Bill of a private or local nature be received by the House until after the 1st of April, and certified by the Secretary and Treasurer.