

THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 1919

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M. P. P.'S IN ONTARIO BUDGET DEBATE



Lieut.-Col. W. H. Price of Parkdale (on the right), scored the profiteers on munitions and the men who were responsible for the Kitchener Camp conditions; F. Wellington Hay, North Perth, top left of the cut, who wants a thorough audit of the books of the banks to protect against investors; and Z. Mageau, Sturgeon Falls, (bottom left), who protests against the high prices charged by brewers for liquor they sell.

WHAT WILL THEY DO?

The McQueen report is before the people as well as before the legislature. The people read the evidence on which that report is based. They know that the findings of the commissioner are not partisan, but based on the sworn testimony, and many of them have been far more emphatic than he is saying what they thought of the men who as representatives of the people so grossly betrayed their trust.

THE LAST RESORT.

In a last desperate effort to hold the opposition party together on the McQueen report the Standard says: "Had the McQueen report been prepared by a man holding the respect of the people, at the instance of a government deserving of any respect whatever, a different view might have been taken of it. But under present conditions the worst that Mr. McQueen and his employers can say about those political opponents does not lessen in the slightest degree the opinion in which they are held by the people as a whole."

CANADIAN POLITICS.

The Ottawa correspondent of the Toronto Star writes to his paper as follows:—"No further steps were taken in public at any rate towards the rumored formation of a permanent Unionist party, but a conference of the caucus referred to the 'Unionist Party' even before the McQueen report was made. The plain issue cannot be dodged or the plain facts obscured. Every member will be judged by his stand in relation to that report. No amount of rage or bluster will score out a single count in that stern indictment. No mask of piety will conceal the ugly features of graft and gross deception. It is not a pleasant theme. There was a hope that before the enquiry was instituted, or very shortly after the members involved would see the position to which they had brought themselves and make a clean breast of it; but they chose to sit on the lid until it was pried from under them. They are now face to face with their own record, with the people looking on and asking what is to be done to vindicate the honor of the province. Every member of the house is concerned in restoring the good name of the province, and in restoring public confidence in public men. The McQueen report will be up for discussion tomorrow. The testing time has come. The issue is squarely up to every man on both sides of the house."

THE PROVINCIAL BUDGET.

The people knew in advance that the Standard would assail the provincial budget and try to belittle the provincial secretary, and that it would not permit itself to be trammelled by facts in its indictment. Anything that may help to withdraw public attention from the McQueen report is regarded as good ammunition.

The budget speech, however, speaks for itself. There is no attempt at evasion, no attempt to conceal the facts. The people know that these are abnormal times, with higher cost of everything. They know also that the Valley Railway has laid a tremendous burden on the province, and that when the Foster government came into power it found an empty treasury and a condition of affairs that called for drastic measures. Hon. Mr. Murray has presented a detailed statement of the year's business. Apart from the Valley Railway expenditure the province lived close to its income. The Standard fiction that the \$90,000 assessed for patriotic and war purposes was diverted from its original purpose is too silly for serious consideration. It was fully understood that this money was to be used for general purposes as well as to make grants for special patriotic purposes. The Standard does not feature the fact that \$6,000 had been set aside for interest on the patriotic potato bond issue.

Hon. Mr. Murray was able to show that the last year had been a year of prosperity in New Brunswick, with greatly increased farm production and sound business conditions. So far as provincial finances were concerned, the higher cost of labor and materials operated there as elsewhere, but the expenditure was kept within \$207 of the income. He sets out clearly the purposes for which the expenditure was made, and the budget debate will give fuller information, in reply to opposition criticism, as to the details of that expenditure. The provincial secretary forecasts increased expenditure in some important directions this year, for the further development of progressive government policies, and reductions in some other directions. The comparative statement presented will be found worthy of a careful reading. Hon. Mr. Murray is to be congratulated on the clearness of his annual statement, and the government on the record of progressive administration.

According to the Saskatoon city editor's report for 1918, the public utilities show a net profit of \$14,214 for the year. The electric light and power department had a surplus of \$19,805, water department a surplus of \$8,861, and street railway a deficit of \$14,825.

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CUT OUT THE GAMBLING

(Toronto Globe.) Despatches from Ottawa forecast the removal of war-time restrictions and a wide-open season for the racetracks. With horse-racing as a sport there can be little room for quarrel; with gambling as the chief interest and horse-racing as the necessary adjunct for sustaining it, there is every cause for criticism. That is why, coincident with the growth of the gambling spirit, there is an increasing body of public opinion recognizing its evil influence and determined to wipe it out. "Clean sport" is even the slogan of the true sportsman, as distinguished from the gambler, whose interest in any form of sport is measured only by what he can get out of it.

Two Ontario newspapers a few days ago, each in its own way, voiced the increasing aversion of the public to the gambler. The Woodstock Sentinel-Review, after referring to an incident connected with a hockey match played in Toronto, said:

"It seems impossible in this country to keep any sport free for a long time from the evil influence of the gambling element. Horse-racing, in just one of the most deplorable and legitimate of sports, has been brought into disrepute by the gamblers. Professional jockeys rather than a sport. It is long since lacrosse began to fall away in the estimation of people who love sport for sport's sake. And now hockey is showing the effects of the evil influence." In Windsor it is suggested that handbook operations have been carried on to such an extent and in such a manner that sharp action on the part of the police became imperative. The Border Lines Star, after some comments on the daring manner in which the offenders conducted themselves, says: "Windsor prides itself on having a business-like police department. It doesn't fool with sentiment or 'friendship'—at least the citizens of Windsor like to believe so. It was started to raid handbooks. Now it can finish the job—and finish it thoroughly—because the handbook operators themselves have invited it to do so. And apparently the invitation has been accepted with gusto."

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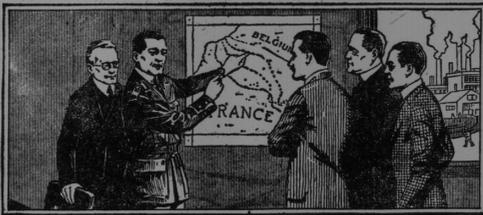
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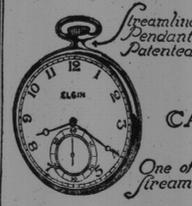
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