

ROAD REPORT GIVEN IN HOUSE; A FINE RECORD

Hon. Mr. Veniot Gives Review of Department's Work

Speaks of Commendation Received from All Sides—Riddles Opposition Criticism—House Business.

Fredricton, April 13.—Hon. P. J. Veniot, minister of public works, carried the war into the enemy's camp today, with results that were disastrous to the opposition. Defensive warfare does not appeal to the minister, especially when he has a liberal supply of ammunition to expend, and today he completely broke up the opposition barrage of insinuations and innuendoes behind which they had taken refuge. Pressing home the attack, he struck blows which will leave their marks on the opposition party.

Made by Friends of Opposition. The minister of public works, in denying the statement that those responsible for the Dugal charges had offered to withdraw them in consideration of a payment of \$10,000, a charge which had been repeated on the floors of the house this year, declared that those associated with the charges had been offered \$25,000 if they would drop them. In reply to opposition questions he said that this offer had been made by friends of the present opposition.

Mr. Veniot also declared that the Prudential Trust Company had paid \$9,600 for the privilege of handling the Valley Railway funds for a four per cent return, and that securities to the nominal value of \$180,000 which they had given the former government were not worth the paper on which they were printed, and that the province stands to lose that amount as a result of the mismanagement, if not worse, of the previous government.

In reviewing the opposition contributions to the debate, Hon. Mr. Veniot said that never during the thirty years in which he had followed the proceedings of the legislature, had he seen an opposition so driven to the wall and forced to use such general statements and criticisms as had marked the debate this year. Their only hope seemed to be that if they slung enough mud, enough of it might stick to partially conceal the stains which had been left on the records of the province by the courses pursued by themselves and their friends.

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Mrs. L. Andrews, of Bainbridge, N.Y., says: "My little daughter, 12 years old, was run-down and was run-down, tired all the time, nervous, had headaches, couldn't eat and had to stay out of school. VINOL has built her up. She has a good appetite, no more headaches and has returned to school."

For all run-down, nervous, anaemic conditions, weak women, over-worked men, feeble old people and delicate children, there is no remedy like VINOL.

He pointed with justifiable pride to the fact that he had expended something like \$800,000 since taking office without a single direct charge of maladministration. Hon. Mr. Veniot had laid against himself or his officials, and he invited specific criticisms of his department.

Adopted N. B. Standard. In discussing the record of his administration of the department, Hon. Mr. Veniot told of the steps that had been taken to secure federal aid for road building and drew attention to the facts that his standard of road building had been adopted as the standard for the entire Dominion. He refuted the charge of favoritism or sectionalism by showing that the amount spent in the North Shore counties, including Westmorland and Kent, was not less than the amount spent in the other river counties.

With respect to the deficit, he pointed out this was due in part to work required to overcome the neglect of the previous government, by the increase of almost fifty per cent in cost of labor and materials, and by expenditures necessary in the interests of public safety.

Regarding the increase in capital expenditures, the minister showed that \$800,000 of this was due to contracts which did not protect the interests of the province which had been made by the previous government.

Other criticisms of his road policy were effectively answered by Mr. Veniot by statements which he quoted from opposition and independent papers, and by the testimony of political opponents and a long list of prominent citizens who were not supporters of the present government. A change of improper collusion between the inspector of roads for Kings county and other officials of the department had been made by Mr. Dickson, and Hon. Mr. Veniot declared that the member had said too much or too little and that the statement on which the allegation had been made was false. He demanded that Mr. Dickson should either retract or lay definite charges, and in the latter case he promised a full investigation by an independent commission.

A New Bridge. Among the announcements which the minister made was one to the effect that following the collapse of a section of the Hartland bridge, Hartland soon would have a bridge of the description that should have been there by this time if the former administration had done its duty. He also mentioned that he was preparing signboards which would be placed on all the roads of the province for the guidance of travelers.

Hon. Mr. Veniot took up in detail the arguments offered by members of the opposition, particularly with reference to his department, and one by one showed the lack of foundation for criticism which had distinguished them. He had been accused of "falling down" in his undertaking to secure the transfer of the river wharves to the federal government, but official correspondence which he presented proved that, while delay had occurred on the part of the federal government, this transaction had been completed and that the Ot-

tawa authorities were preparing to go ahead with the repairs. The same criticism had been offered with respect to the government policy in reference to the Caraguet Railway, but in this case also he showed that the federal department of justice was responsible for the delay and that when the appeal from the provincial act had been decided in its favor, although it was February and the road was blocked with fifteen feet of snow, he had compelled the company to clear the road and resume operations. These are but a few of the instances in which the opposition, by misjudged attacks, had merely made it easier for the minister to score.

Hon. Mr. Veniot spoke for two hours in the afternoon and two and a half hours in the evening, and by the time he had completed his address there was little left of the opposition charges against his administration.

John Young of York. John Young, of York county, followed Hon. Mr. Veniot and after arguing for an increase in stumpage rates and better salaries for teachers, complimented the minister of public works on the excellent road work which had been done in his district, only one feature of which he found open to criticism. An interesting statement was made by Mr. Young with respect to the opening of winter roads. He advocated the abandonment of snowploughs for this purpose, and told of his experience with a roller which he had used for the purpose last winter and which had proved most satisfactory. It had been invented by a resident of Stanley and, Mr. Young

predicted, would revolutionize the work of opening winter roads.

Still Drags On. The government appeared willing to allow the debate to die a natural death at this point, and refused to put up a speaker. J. K. Pinder, of York, was called upon by the opposition to fill the breach and he moved the adjournment of the debate.

The house adjourned until 10:30 tomorrow morning, as preparations for the governor's ball will render the assembly chamber unavailable in the afternoon. In the afternoon the municipalities committee, which has a docket of thirty-two bills, will meet in the committee room.

At 12:30 tomorrow, after the morning session, representatives of temperance and other organizations will address the members on the subject of the federal law which provides for provincial referendums on the question of the importation of liquor.

Hon. Mr. Byrne introduced a bill to amend the Woodman's Lien Act. He explained that extensive operations in connection with pulp work were to be carried on in the province during the present year, and the object was to extend the provisions of the act to that class of lumber.

Hon. Mr. Byrne introduced a bill to amend chapter 188 of the Consolidated Statutes respecting fees, also a bill to amend the New Brunswick Company's Act, 1916, and a bill to amend the probate courts act.

Hon. Mr. Robinson introduced a bill to amend the act for the protection of certain persons employed in factories. He explained that it was proposed to bring the factory inspector under the control of the Workmen's Compensation Act. The amendment would eliminate features of the act which were now within the scope of the department of health.

Hon. Mr. Smith introduced a bill to enable the minister of lands and mines to purchase lands from the New Brunswick Railway Company. He said it was proposed to acquire 4,000 acres ad-

Joining a settlement in Madawaska county. The company had intimated its willingness to sell for seventy-five cents per acre and the department proposed to turn the land over for settlement at that figure, plus the general expenses.

Hon. Mr. Robinson moved that rule seventy-eight be suspended to permit the introduction of a bill to enable the city of Moncton to issue debentures. The debate was continued by Mr. Young and was adjourned on motion of Mr. Pinder and made the order of the day for 10:30 o'clock tomorrow morning.

A bill relating to street paving in St. John was withdrawn by Mr. Baxter and the fee was ordered to be returned. Hon. Mr. Foster announced that the house would sit Friday evening and probably on Saturday.

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