

# Premier In Able Speech Defends Provincial Government

## GRAND FALLS POWER TO BE DEVELOPED BY THE GOVERNMENT, SAYS VENIOT

**Answers Forcefully Accusations Made Against Administration—Defends Addition to Public Debt—Political Situation in New Brunswick Is Reviewed During Premier's Speech on Budget.**

Fredericton, April 9.—Hon. Premier Veniot in one of the closing speeches of the budget debate gave a very able review of the provincial political situation. He is never at a loss for words, and this afternoon was even readier than usual in his examination of the arguments of his opponents and his criticism of the accusations levelled at the administration.

When in Opposition, though not in the house, P. J. Veniot was able to investigate financial figures very closely. Experience since that time has made him even more skilful in this respect. This was proved this afternoon when he challenged the Opposition's statement with regard to the responsibility for the additions to the provincial debt and showed unerringly just what it was in 1917 when this Government came into power how many millions in addition they had to shoulder responsibility for because of obligations already entered into and how it had been decreased by payments, by buying in of the Valley Railway bonds and other securities during war time, and by additions to the sinking fund.

### ROADS AND BRIDGES FUNDS.

Deducting the obligations entered into by the old government, amounting to over four million dollars and considering the hydro expenditure as an interest bearing obligation without taking into account the amount expended upon the Valley Railway, the only large increases to our public debt have been about \$1,800,000, expended for federal roads and some three and a half millions for permanent bridges. The Premier pointed out that we had borrowed three million dollars provided for out of the auto fund, and that the interest and sinking funds for the redemption of this debt were very generous. In addition to federal roads and permanent bridges out debt had been added by over a million and a half for floating obligations of the old Government as well as of this, and by the bonding of three quarters of a million additional of Valley Railway debt.

The speaker was emphatic in his reference to the Dominion Government taking over this railway, and felt that the branch line connecting with the Maine Central at Vancorbois built there would be no difficulty, in his opinion, in the road being taken over.

### DEVELOPMENT AT GRAND FALLS.

In spite of his attention to detail the Premier did not lose sight of the statement of the Opposition leader, that he personally preferred private development of Grand Falls, and that Government operation as a rule was not carried out as efficiently as private enterprise, and that before action was taken he (Mr. Richards) believed that consideration should be given to both sides of the question.

"I wish to say to this House and country," he declared, "that the Government of the day will not give any consideration whatever to either private development or private ownership. It is our policy to develop Grand Falls and no amount of pressure on the part of the Opposition will induce us to change our policy."

Again in a later part of his speech he used these words "as leader of the Government I have made the Government position absolutely fair, and I repeat that the Government will develop Grand Falls and no private company will have a look in while this Government is in power."

### ACCUSATIONS AGAINST ADMINISTRATION.

The speaker's further references to accusations made against the administration of his Department of Public Works by Messrs. Stewart and Dillie, of Restigouche, and Flewelling, of Charlotte, were very full of detail and unreasonable and misleading contentions. It will be recalled that Mr. Stewart and the leader of the Government had a sharp clash when the former was speaking some days ago, and since then it is very evident that the minister has been busy in his department looking up certain matters of patronage in Restigouche county during the regime of the old Government from the years 1918 to 1916 inclusive.

He also commented upon the contention that the roads will not last out the life of the bonds which furnished the money for their construction and showed that New Brunswick highways were of a standard similar to those of other provinces and that those built under Federal aid were cheaper here. After passing over with much attention to detail the charges against the administration of his department, the Premier gave an interesting statement showing that the proportion which the rural population bore to the city and town population had not altered more than 2 per cent. He took the figures from the census of 1911 and 1921, and showed that in that period many towns had been incorporated in New Brunswick and the population in them classified as urban instead of rural.

If they had remained under the latter classification the census figures would show that the migration from the country to the city had not changed the proportion more than 2 per cent.

Premier Veniot has made many able speeches in the House and in the country. In many respects this was more complete and convincing than any he has yet delivered.

## Public Debt Has Increased

The public debt has been increased, since 1916, October 31st, as follows:

Permanent bridges	\$ 8,861,000
Borrowed for roads against Auto Fund	2,950,000
Borrowed for roads under Federal Aid	1,750,000
Jordan Memorial Sanitarium	25,503
Smallpox	80,000
Floating debt old government	789,000
Floating debt present Government	800,000
Buildings, limestone quarry, etc.	109,800
Hydro development	8,050,000
Valley Railway construction	1,700,000
Valley Railway interest bonded	752,000
Total	\$15,511,003
Less redeemed by present Government	\$14,597,717
Net increase since October, 1916	\$1,013,286

Of the above gross increase the present Government had to bond the province for the following obligations contracted for and completed but not provided for by the old government, as well as contracts given and not completed, and for which no provision had been made, as well as their accumulated floating indebtedness, the whole being taken as of the date of March 31st, 1917:

Permanent bridges	\$ 950,000
Floating debt	789,000
Purchase of machinery	118,000
Valley Railway construction	1,700,000
Valley Railway interest	752,000
Total	\$4,306,000

This would leave a gross debt of \$11,205,003, or a net debt of \$9,745,286 for which the present Government is responsible since March 31, 1917.

### BONDED DEBT INCURRED.

As the amount of bonded debt incurred for hydro is being annually reduced by a Sinking Fund sufficient to meet the bonds at maturity, it should not be considered a direct debt, but looked upon more as a debt which can meet all its obligations and being only guaranteed by the province. This amount should be deducted from the net increase made by us in the provincial debt. This would leave the net increase under the present regime as \$6,086,286.

The old government had increased the bonded debt from \$3,884,583 as of October 31st, 1908 to \$15,080,646 as of October 31st, 1916. But to this

(Continued on page 15)

### Answers Criticism Of His Government

Premier Veniot in his speech in the House yesterday said:

I now come to a matter, Mr. Speaker, which I feel should be dealt with in no uncertain or haphazard way. It is a somewhat unusual, but at the same time it is of great public interest because it affects the integrity of the Premier of this Province. While those who have been instrumental in putting into circulation certain rumors affecting the standing of the Minister of Public Works with certain contractors have not displayed sufficient courage to come straight out and say just what they mean, they have gone just far enough to leave in the minds of their followers a suspicion that there exists a state of affairs between the Minister of Public Works and certain contractors, notably the Concrete Builders, Limited, of Fredericton, which does not inure to the credit of the Government.

### Expresses Surprise.

Two years ago when the Opposition asked "if the Government knew who the shareholders and directors of the Concrete Builders, Limited," and the answer was given in the negative, I little thought that there were men in public life who would stoop so low as to make use of that answer to insinuate that I never looked for any in my family. While I was aware, Mr. Speaker, that such an insinuation was being circulated, I gave very little heed to it because I knew little myself that there was absolutely no truth in such a charge or insinuation. But, sir, when I discovered that the same dirty work was being carried on in the Kent election and that a former member of this House, once the Leader of the Opposition, made references to this matter in a public meeting, I never looked for any in my family. I have been told that there was some truth in it, I decided that I would not allow this session of the Legislature to go by without calling his bluff and that of his friends.

### Admirer of a Fighter.

I have said it before, and I wish to repeat it, I admire the open and honest fighter, but I despise the one who is cunning and who uses the vilification of his political opponent. It is the last dregs of a dirty work that I have always been a hard political fighter. I have on no occasion spared my political opponents, but I have always been fair and honest. I have had anything to say against an opponent. I never gave quarter and I never looked for any in my family. I have been told that there was some truth in it, I decided that I would not allow this session of the Legislature to go by without calling his bluff and that of his friends.

### Passing of Southern Bank Revives Tale of Ten-Dollar Bill.

New Orleans, April 10.—The passing of a famous southern banking institution, through consolidation, has drawn attention again to the origin of the term "dixie" as applied to the southland. The claim that the word came from the name of a man who once lived in New York seems to be set at rest by the records of this institution, the Citizens' Bank and Trust Company, which has been merged, after 91 years of continuous operation, with the Commercial Trust and Savings Bank.

Some authorities have attributed "dixie" to the name of one Dixie, a large landholder and kind-hearted slave owner who resided on Manhattan Island during the latter part of the eighteenth century, but in New Orleans they take no stock in such a story and point to old chronicles of the Mississippi Valley, and to the records of the bank, to disprove it.

In the thirties America was flooded with "wild-cat" money, and counterfeiting was so common that suspicion became fixed on almost all paper money. Through it all, however, the bank named after the Citizens' Bank and Trust Company of the whole of the Mississippi Valley and the remainder of the country as well. In the days before the Civil War the Citizens' notes were printed in French as well as English. The most common denomination was the ten dollar note, and it bore the Roman numeral "X" and the Arabic numeral "10."

But, also, in the middle of the bank was printed the French word "dixie" and the word "dixie" was used by the bank as a trade name.

The Mississippi River then was the great highway of traffic between New Orleans and the north, and in the argot of the river, when a plan was headed south into Louisiana on a trading expedition he was going to "come back with a pocket full of Dixie."

From "Dixie" to "dixie" was an easy step. And the south, particularly Louisiana, became known as "the land of Dixie" or, more briefly, as "Dixie Land."

Incidentally the song first was published in New Orleans, and by a music house which still is in business in Canal street.

### TO SPEND MILLIONS FOR BETTER ROADS

**New York Public Works Department Plans 300 Miles at \$15,000,000.**

Albany, N. Y., April 10.—In the present year the State Department of Public Works, of which Colonel Frederick Stuart Greene is superintendent, will construct 300 miles of new roads at an estimated cost of \$15,000,000. Of almost equal importance will be the department's reconstruction programme, which will result before the end of 1924 in the rebuilding of from 225 to 260 miles of public highways, at an estimated cost to the state of \$12,000,000. This work will be largely under the supervision of Captain A. W. Brandt, the new Commissioner of Highways.

State appropriation for aid on town highways and county roads available this year is expected to reach almost \$8,000,000.

Trenton, N. J., April 9.—The New Jersey Highway Department will work in the next few weeks begin its programme of highway construction for the present year. The programme calls for the building of eighty-six and one-half miles of roads and the expenditure of approximately \$6,892,400 in financing this year's programme.

During 1923 practically one-third of all steel manufactured in the United States was used by the railroads.

There are 3,260 new schools in Ukraine and 8,840 more planned.

### Insinuations

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### MADE HYDRO PROBE

Chairman of the Gregory Commission appointed by the Government of Ontario to investigate the Hydro Commission. His report has just been tabled in the Legislature. It consists of two volumes of typewritten material, and completely vindicates the Hydro-Electric Commission. The cost of the Gregory Commission was \$205,801. Of this \$104,680 went in salaries to the Commissioners, \$102,286 in engineering fees, \$17,931 in photography, and \$955 for newspaper clippings.

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### SORORITY BURNS BRAND IN FACES

**Three Girls Badly Marked by Nitrate of Silver Solution.**

New York, April 10.—What is mere choolgirl beauty compared with the honor of dear old Delta Kappa Gamma?

That is what several Brooklyn High school girls are asking each other, while they gaze into the mirror to reflect and reflect faces. For the president of the sorority used nitrate of silver to paint the Greek letters and various other symbols upon the faces of the fair initiates. As the result, there may be trouble for one of the girls. But, then, they are now full-fledged members of the dear old "Delta Kaps," so why worry. Mildred is the girl who has had to pass up several nice parties because the marks on her face haven't healed, and the other two girls are glowing in the beauty of their new brand.

Miss Helen Chapman of 681 Lafayette avenue, Miss Helen Steingesser of 1146 Sterling place, and Miss Mildred Hellwig of 44 McDonough street, are the girls whose countenances now look as though they "had been through a wreck or two" to quote one of the girls. But, then, they are now full-fledged members of the dear old "Delta Kaps," so why worry. Mildred is the girl who has had to pass up several nice parties because the marks on her face haven't healed, and the other two girls are glowing in the beauty of their new brand.

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