

PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE

CLEVER CRITICISM OF THE GOVERNMENT

J. Murphy Aptly Reviews History of Ministry—Stuart Henderson Ably Follows in Attack.

Victoria, March 30th.
Prayers were read by Rev. J. F. V. chert.

"Receiving Attention."
Before proceeding to the general business of the day, J. A. Macdonald asked the Premier if he had decided upon any legislation respecting railways. The House had been in session six weeks, and while it was announced in the King's speech that there would be railway legislation, yet no announcement had been made. The opposition had shown patience in the matter and had not pressed for answers from week to week. He thought it but right that an announcement should be made now.

Premier McBratney said that the question of provincial aid to railways was at this time receiving his greatest attention. This was received with laughter by the House.

The Premier said he did not take the leader of the opposition seriously in view of the votes of want of confidence on the order paper.

The leader of the opposition said it was for this very reason he asked the question.

Coal Mines Act.

On the third reading of the bill to amend the Coal Mines Regulation Act, R. Hall moved an amendment that "Bank" for the purpose of this act shall mean the surface entrance to a mine, except in the case of a vertical shaft, when it shall mean the foot of the shaft."

He explained that when the amendment was introduced last year the excuse was that it was to bring the Crow's Nest mines into the same condition with respect to a day's work as the mines on the island. He favored an eight-hour day, but a man for an eight hours' pay should give eight hours' work. He also thought that a man who wanted to work a few hours extra time should be allowed to do so if he was paid for it. In this province legislation was being passed ahead of the time. The collieries of this province had to compete with those of the United States. In the latter country the men worked nine hours a day for less daily pay than the miners got here. The oil companies were also interfering with the local mines. The attempt to fix an artificial wage worked against the interests of the industry. It would take very little to close down the collieries, on Vancouver Island. There was no demand for this legislation. If this amendment passed it would be a loss to the men. If all the coal produced by the collieries was consumed by the province there would be more excuse for this. But the province did not control the price. He hoped the members would look at this seriously and not with regard to carrying favor with any workmen. He felt sure the workmen would agree with him in this.

Parker Williams contended that coal miners did not make between 50 cents and 80 cents an hour in British Columbia. The coal of Washington and Oregon states was really a lignite and did not come into competition with the Vancouver Island fuel. Some miners in Washington worked nine hours a day, but three-fourths of the miners worked only eight hours. For from twelve to fifteen years there had been an eight-hour day in Idaho. Within the past year changes had taken place in the colliery at that city, and an attempt was made to annul the legislation of last year. The eight-hour day now in force was said to have been three of them fitted into a twenty-four-hour day. This proposal of Mr. Hall's would not allow this.

W. W. B. McInnes said that the act of last session was passed on the condition that it would not interfere with the condition in the mines of Vancouver Island. It was now found that if this act went into effect it would seriously disturb two mines on Vancouver Island. The legislation of last year was brought in to affect the Fernie mines. This amendment of Mr. Hall's would not alter the provisions of last year's act with respect to Fernie. If the legislation went into effect it would reduce the time of labor of the miners in two of the Vancouver Island mines by 50 minutes a day. The coal market was not without the control of this province. The cheaply mined coal of Japan came into competition. While Washington coal was inferior to that of Vancouver Island yet there were grades of it which came very nearly to the quality of the Island product. The result of reducing the hours of labor in the mines would lead to trouble with respect to wages, and a strike would be precipitated. The act of last year gave miners reduced as a slope an advantage of 50 minutes a day. This alone would give Nanaimo the disadvantage of 50 minutes as compared with the slope in an adjoining coal field. Nanaimo was a paradise for coal miners. Why should conditions be disturbed? The miners there did not want to disturb the conditions. If the act went into effect he did not believe that the company at Nanaimo would await trial with the men. The mines would be closed, and he spoke advisedly on this.

On motion of Harry Wright the debate was adjourned.

Third Readings.

The bill to amend the Dentistry Consolidation Act passed its third reading.

The bill to amend the B. C. Railway Act also passed its third reading.

Elections Act.

On the bill to amend the Elections Act, F. Carter-Cotton said that while the sum of the deposit should be reduced, he rather favored wiping the deposit out altogether than make this change. He thought all classes should be represented in the Legislature. There was no prospect for a general election until the end

of the present parliament. This might therefore be deferred for two sessions longer. At the present time he could not support it.

W. J. Bowser moved the adjournment of the debate.

J. H. Hawthorthwaite pointed out that it was manifestly unfair to delay these matters.

The debate was adjourned.

Workmen's Compensation.

The House then went into committee on the bill to amend the Workmen's Compensation Act, with H. E. Tanner in the chair.

Mr. Hawthorthwaite moved an amendment by which aid under the act should apply to those injured while employed on a building less than forty feet in height. It was absurd to apply the act only to buildings of forty feet or more in height.

This carried.

Another amendment introduced by Mr. Hawthorthwaite put the compensation at \$2,000 instead of \$1,500 as at present in case of death resulting. Under the conditions in British Columbia \$2,000 compensation was none too high.

J. A. Macdonald said that his act really provided for insurance. He did not think it would at the present time be opportune to raise the amount. The bill he introduced was altogether in favor of the workman. Under the depression of the present time, nothing should be done to deter the return of the time of prosperity.

T. W. Patterson said the whole principle of the Workmen's Compensation Act was wrong. The employer was rendered liable for all accidents, even those over which he had no control. Men proposing to carry on enterprises were hampered and discouraged by the money by this \$1,500 a head on the employees hanging over the concern. The placing of such legislation only hampered those who sought to put capital to work.

John Oliver thought the amendment was out of order.

Mr. Patterson, rising again, said that the mover of this amendment had stated in the House that the policy of his party was to wreck the industries of this province. It behooved the other members of the House to think seriously before supporting such an amendment therefore.

Mr. Hawthorthwaite said Mr. Patterson was stating what was untrue, and that the member for the Islands made the statement knowing it to be untrue.

J. R. Brown held that the employer was not liable for all accidents. It had to be shown that the accident was careless. Then again it was necessary to show that the injured had others dependent upon him. He also pointed out that the Employer's Liability Act gave redress also. He favored the consideration of the additional cost of living in British Columbia compared with England the compensation should be increased to \$3,000.

Mr. Davidson thought this would lead to employers being more careful.

Mr. Williams called attention to the fact that employers insured the employees. He rather favored making it necessary for the employer to personally insure the employees. This would give security for the employees. Workmen had their rights as well as employers.

Mr. Patterson said that it made him tired to have lectures read out to him on the subject of the Workmen's Compensation Act. He knew himself more about workmen than all these that talked so much about them. He had himself been a workman all his life. He knew that the best class of workmen in the province did not want to be treated as imbeciles unable to take care of themselves.

Mr. Hawthorthwaite said he gave Mr. Patterson credit for being one of the few members who had the courage of his convictions. This act was not a Socialist one. It was introduced by him at the request of the Trades Union of Victoria. It was a measure which aided in the organization of industrial interests. The risks of capitalists were very small compared with that of those working in industrial pursuits. This was not a reactionary measure. It was introduced by conservative countries. Even in Russia a workmen's compensation act was in force. British Columbia was ages behind in this respect.

He referred to the changes made last year in the statutes by the Attorney-General which it was sought to put back again in their original form now. Last year he had begged the Attorney-General to leave the act alone. His advice was not followed and day after day the Attorney-General came down with amendments on amendments to those poor unfortunate mother acts. (Laughter.)

During the recess the government had done another thing. The government had changed the names of the lands for asylum purposes. They had lost about \$10,000 by the trade. In so doing they had gone back to first principles which were in force among the Indians before the white man came. They engaged in trading and let the other side get the best of them. (Laughter.)

Going into the Lillooet election, he said the Premier had taken great credit for the election of a government member.

There were only 310 voters. About 30 or 40 were working on the roads under the government, and about 25 or 30 were officials for election purposes. In all about one-fifth of the voters were in the hands of the Liberal party. The Liberal party fell down only in the Fraser River valley in that election. The Chief Commissioner deserved the credit for that. The Chief Commissioner could shorten Caesar's words pertaining to his campaign in Gaul when he expressed it as summed up in "I came, I saw, I conquered." The Chief Commissioner could shorten it to "I came, I saw." He went to the Fraser river and saw one person. That man dispensed beans and bacon and the Liberals could only get about one vote out of seven as a result. (Laughter.)

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Continuing Mr. Murphy said: "It was to this world, strange people with their strange herds of cattle that the Chief Commissioner came." (Laughter.)

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of the ancient Greeks. The Attorney-General established a precedent unique in the history of the Empire crossing the ocean to get leave to take an appeal to the Privy Council, which could have been done by writing a letter. (Laughter.) The Finance Minister was being interviewed in Toronto with respect to shipping profits from the province by way of the Panama canal, which would probably not be finished for 100 years. The government came down at the opening of the session with a speech which contained nothing. The opposition rightly refused to discuss nothing. (Laughter and applause.)

The Attorney-General came and gushed in expressing his pride at having the support of the Socialists. The Premier followed in this same way and kept his own party in line by promising railway legislation. (Applause.)

Taking the platform of the Socialists and the Conservatives he could show that the party was not so much as it appeared. There could be no railway legislation if the Socialists were to control the affairs. Capitalists would not invest in a country controlled by them.

If the leader of the Socialists wished to reform the world, well and good, but Cariboo could not exist without capital, and capital would not come in under the circumstances.

If the Finance Minister was fair and honest against this government expenditure as he charged them against other governments, last year's deficit would be the largest in the history of the province. The Minister of Finance referred to capital account expenditure on New Westminster bridge. Mr. Turner argued he never had a deficit, charging roads, etc., to capital account. This government had cut down the expenditure on roads and bridges \$108,000. That was not good policy. There was no economy in that. This was a maladministration. Under the Chinese Restriction Act the minister got more than his predecessor. There was no credit due to the minister for that. The cheque came from Ottawa. He wanted an explanation of the vote of \$58,500 last year for dyking account. This was voted out of current revenue, and then the expenditure was charged to the dyking districts. This was a disgrace for a government in a province like this to claim a surplus. Every dollar should be wisely expended. The credit of the province should be taken to its utmost. There was a government of ability, composed of men who would give all their time to the affairs, he would not be afraid of an increased deficit. The money would all come back tenfold in a few years.

The affairs of the province were run in a most haphazard way. It cost \$100 more to conduct the elections in Esquimalt than in Lillooet, one of the most outlying districts. He instanced a Conservative commissioner, merchant, and dyker in the Lillooet district. He was a member of the cabinet. The next aspirant for cabinet honors was the member for Revelstoke. It had been urged that the President of the Council was fighting against party lines. Mr. Taylor had fought as a Conservative. Mr. Clifford also desired to enter the cabinet. Last session Mr. Clifford had moved to adjourn the debate on supply until the railway policy was brought down. That they had not yet been brought down. (Laughter.)

With such material to draw from he could not compliment the Premier on the choice of cabinet ministers he made. (Applause.)

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We want you to know about Liquezone, and the product itself can tell you more than we. So we ask you to let us buy you a bottle—a full-size bottle—to try. Let it prove that it does what medicine cannot do. See what a tonic it is. Learn that it does kill germs. Then you will use it always, as we do, and as millions of others do.

This offer itself should convince you that Liquezone does as we claim. We would certainly not buy a bottle and give it to you if there was any doubt of results. You want those results; you want to be well and to keep well. And you can't do that—nobody can—without Liquezone.

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flowed. This showed that mining business was going on. He reprimanded Mr. Henderson for having the bad taste to refer to a serious illness he had had. J. Oliver moved the adjournment of the debate, the House adjourning after 11 o'clock.

Victoria, March 31st.

Prayers were read by Rev. John F. Vichert.

A Question of Privilege.

Before proceeding to the orders of the day, W. G. Cameron, on a question of privilege, referred to the report that he had violated the Constitution Act. He had had no transaction with the government. He had dealt with the city, and in so doing had no official connection with the government.

Dr. Young explained that his name had also appeared in this connection. His services with the government had terminated before his nomination.

John Oliver wanted to know if the member for Atlin denied receiving pay for a period after he was nominated.

Dr. Young said he had nothing to do with the management of the treasury department. He had resigned before he was nominated.

The Premier said this being a question of privilege this could not be debated.

New Bills.

The following bills were introduced and read a first time:

By Hon. Chas. Wilson, a bill to amend the Trustees and Executors Act; and a bill to regulate Immigration into British Columbia.

By Dr. Young, a bill to amend the Medical Act.

By Hon. F. J. Fulton, a bill to amend the Royal Columbian Hospital Act, 1901.

By J. A. Macdonald, a bill to amend the Coal Mines Act.

Questions and Answers.

Parker Williams asked the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works the following question:

What portion of vote No. 150, of the session of 1903-4, has been spent in the following electoral districts: Esquimalt, Cowichan, Newcastle, Nanaimo, Alberni, Comox, respectively?

Hon. R. F. Guden replied as follows: "Esquimalt division, \$571,522; Cowichan division, \$735,335; Newcastle division, \$42,225; Nanaimo division, \$1,175,727; Alberni division, \$445,077; Comox division, \$794,247."

W. W. B. McInnes asked the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works the following question:

Will the government receive and allow applications to pre-empt land located within the limits of the Quatsino Power & Pulp Company, Limited, concession?

Hon. R. F. Guden replied as follows: "Yes, if the written consent of the company is obtained by the applicant."