The St. John Standard

OUR SECOND FRONT PAGE

THE STANDARD, ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 1921

A PAGE OF NEWS ABOUT THE MARITIME

CABINET SALARY BILL IS ACCEPTED BY LEGISLATURE AS MANY MEMBERS OBJECT

Members Wonder Why Such a Proposal Was Not Introduced at Earlier Date.

TOO MANY MINISTERS SAYS HON. DR. BAXTER

Others Agree With Him That There Should be a Re-adjustment of Cabinet Duties.

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Richards wanted to know if the bill was the result of representation made by the civil servants.

Hon. Mr. Michaud said the civil servants were taking action to form an association. Although they had not asked for the bill, he understood it met with their approval.

Mr. Fawcett wanted to know why civil servants were more deserving of pensions than other classes who had become advanced in years, and who, no doubt, had given just as faithful service to their employers, he thought that the time had almost arrived when some attention should be given to the question of providing widows' pensions.

Hon. Mr. Veniot said the bill was merely asking for pensions for servants of the people.

Hon. Mr. Michaud said he thought all would agree that the civil servants of the province were not overpaid, and some of them were underpaid, for the work they performed. The bill only had reference to persons in the employ of the government. The question of widows' pensions was being considered by different organizations, and no doubt in time something would be done. Men who worked for years in the government service could not easily abandon it and engage in other pursuits and if the government did not provide for their future, it was necessary for them to come to the legislature, hat in hand, and beg for something.

Getting Rid of Officials.

Mr. Baxter said that to a certain extent he did not agree with either of the previous speakers. He agreed with the minister that the salary of officials was insufficient to enable them to save anything for the requirements of old age. It looked to him as if the bill had been obviously drawn by the government with the object of getting rid of some officials, whose services could not be disposen with in any other way. In his experience of ten years in the legislature, he knew of no deserving case where assistance had not been granted to an official on retirement. Employees of the Dominion government were sure of a pension but after all, how much more deserving were they than the people who had to raise the money with which to pay them.

To Protect Everyone.

He believed the time was coming when the right of every man and woman to be sheltered from the municipal home would be given consideration. They were unable to make any provision for the widow who had lost her son, but could find money for those employed in the public service. He noticed that under the bill the government could either give assistance or withhold it; he thought all officials on retirement should come to the legislature for assistance until such time as a real superannuation scheme was devised to which they would be called upon to contribute.

Hon. Mr. Foster.

Hon. Mr. Foster said the bill laid down the principle that public employees should be provided for upon reaching a certain age No doubt a general superannuation scheme was the proper basis, but it would require much thought and work to get it in the proper shape. The bill went farther than the Leader of the opposition seemed to think, as it left it optional with the government to confer a pension on an employee who is still capable of performing his duties. When the time arrived that an official should be retired, the bill made it unnecessary for him to come to the legislature, hat in hand. When it was decided that superannuation should be granted to an official the bill gave the government a principle to work upon. Mention had been made of a widows' pension fund. Before embarking upon such a policy it would be necessary to find out what amount the municipalities would contribute. In Ontario they now contributed to the extent of fifty per cent.

Mr. Taylor said he was opposed to the principle of the bill. The bill should stand over until next session, and an effort made in the meantime to devise a scheme for superannuation of officials.

Mr. Smith (Albert), was surprised that the government should bring in such a important bill during the dying hours of the session. The principle might be good, but he was not in favor of it. He would like a pension scheme to which civil servants themselves would contribute.

Mr. Barlock thought it would be unwise to press the bill. All branches of the government were doing good work, but lack of funds to provide pensions was a serious obstacle. He would like to see people in years and unable to support themselves, receive some consideration. Mr. Flewelling said he was heartily in accord with any scheme to assist those in the employ of the government or any corporation, but he did not think that the present bill was practical.

Hon. Mr. Foster said that the opposition to the bill seemed to be spreading among members. He thought it would place the employes of the government in a much better position than they occupied at present. The civil servants would know what they were to receive on retirement. He would suggest that progress be reported on the bill.

Hon. Mr. Veniot

Hon. Mr. Veniot said that a member for York had intimated that the civil servants of the province had expressed the wish to contribute their part to a superannuation scheme. It seemed strange to him if the civil servants had such a plan in mind they had seen fit to be known through channels other than the heads of their departments. In the past civil servants had made representation to the ministers in regard to their salaries, and re-adjustments had been made, but they had never intimated their willingness to contribute to a superannuation fund.

Mr. Baxter said he had no objection to progress being reported on the bill, but he hopes that the House had heard for the last time a threat against the civil servants of the province. If the civil servants had expressed a desire to contribute to a superannuation fund, for doing that they should not be menaced by a minister of the crown.

Denies a Threat.

Hon. Mr. Veniot said that there had been no menace in his statement. He had merely said that if the civil servants, instead of conferring with the government found it necessary to go outside with their complaints, the time had arrived when a reform should be instituted.

Mr. Baxter said that the government of which he was a member permitted a gentleman sitting in confidential relations with them to furnish information to their political opponents, yet they allowed that man to continue in office. That was the way the old government treated its civil servants.

Hon. Mr. Foster moved that progress be reported with leave to sit again.

Control of Ferries.

Mr. Baxter, on the bill relating to the control of ferries, said that when the measure was introduced, the Minister of Public Works had stated that it would only apply to ferries which were subsidized by the government. He had information that the minister had objected in view in addition to those he had stated. He (Baxter) was in receipt of a letter from the parish of Shippegan, in the minister's own county which seemed to throw some light on the subject. There was a ferryman in that county appointed by the municipal council, and he had been in receipt of a subsidy since the year 1908. His name was Savoie, and he voted against the minister at the last election, and now an effort was being made to take the subsidy away from him and give it to A. D. Robichaud, a bitter Liberal. Robichaud was sore at the county council for not appointing him. It seemed that he had been conducting a ferry but the service he gave was unsatisfactory to the residents of Shippegan. On one occasion W. S. Loggie, M. P., had almost lost his automobile from the ferry boat. The information in the letter which he (Baxter) had received indicated that the minister, instead of desiring control of the ferries in the public interests, was endeavoring to strike a political blow at an official in his own county.

Gives the Name.

Hon. Mr. Veniot said that it would not do to place much reliance in the letter which the hon. member had read to the House. Why had he not given the name of the writer?

Mr. Baxter—"Martin J. Robichaud."

Hon. Mr. Veniot said that Mr. Robichaud was well known to the people of Gloucester, and had been turned down by them. With reference to the accident to W. S. Loggie's automobile, he wished to say that the ferry slip had been built by the Dominion government, and stood at an angle of 45 degrees. When Mr. Loggie started to take his car up the slip the engine stopped and the car backed up. The ferryman was in no way whatever to blame for the mishap. The object of the measure was to deal with conditions in the county of York, and along the St. John River. The department had lost a scow costing $600 or $700 through the carelessness of a ferryman and wanted to put a stop to that sort of thing.

Shippegan Ferry.

In regard to the Shippegan ferry, Mr. Robichaud was appointed in 1917 by the municipal council. There were two ferries in operation, and he (Veniot) had told the municipal authorities that there would be no subsidies unless a good service was given. When he inspected the ferry he found the scow was unfit for use, and that a new one would have to be built A new scow was provided, but some members of the council made politics out of it, and gave the appointment to Mr. Savoie. He (Veniot) knew nothing of the change at the time. Savoie was a supporter of his and so far as he knew was still one. Robichaud had procured a new ferryboat, and he (Veniot) felt that he should stand by him. He was not playing any political game. The county council had not appointed a man to operate the service to Shippegan Island, and he (Veniot) had named one. The bill was agreed to.

Increasing Salaries.

The committee next went into consideration of a bill to amend the act respecting the executive council.

Mr. Fawcett said it seemed to him to be wrong to increase the salaries of the ministers at the present time, as such a course would not be consistent with conditions in the country. He was not in a position to know all the conditions, but at a time like the present it was important that expenses should be kept down both at Ottawa and Fredericton.

Mr. Smith (Albert), said he was opposed to the bill. When the budget was brought down the keystone was retrenching. The Minister of Public Health was to serve without salary, but a salary had been granted him and now it was to be increased.

Hon. Mr. Roberts—"He was without salary for three years."

Mr. Smith said that he considered the government was too topheavy. Excepting the Minister of Public Works, none of the members of the government devoted their whole time to the public service.

Premier's Views.

Hon. Mr. Foster said that, unlike the Leader of the Farmers Party, he knew something about conditions. In other provinces ministers were paid large salaries, resided at the capital, and devoted their whole time to the service. In New Brunswick the duties of the ministers left them very little time to devote to their private affairs.

Mr. Young said that he might have supported such a measure a year ago but he could not do so at the present time. The revenue of the province was decreasing, and it was necessary to exercise economy. All of the ministers had received the benefit of the increased indemnity voted last year. The salaries, travelling expenses and indemnities now made a total in most cases of over $4,000. The minister of public works, who was the hardest working man in the government, had last year received $4,488.

Defends The Bill.

Mr. Scovil said it seemed inconsistent on part of those who last session had voted to increase the indemnity by $500, to be now opposing an increase for the cabinet minister. The men holding portfolios had to devote nearly their whole time to the public business. The attorney general had devoted much of his time to the affairs of the province. Many able lawyers had incomes of $15,000 or $20,000 a year, yet the attorney general had to get along with a salary of $2,100. He thought men devoting their whole time to the affairs of the province would not be overpaid at $3,500 a year.

Too Top Heavy.

Mr. Taylor said he was surprised at such an important measure coming in at the dying hours of the session. The trouble was that the cabinet was top heavy, and the province could get along with fewer ministers. A minister of public health was not needed and his duties could be merged with those of the provincial secretary-treasurer who was qualified as a medical man.

Hon. Mr. Baxter.

Mr. Baxter said he would feel that he was not doing his duty if he did not give expression to his views on the bill now under consideration even though he was unable to agree with all that had been said by members on his side of the House. He knew something of the demands which public service made on ministers of the crown, and for years back all ministers, with the exception of the attorney general under the old system, had been underpaid. He agreed with what had been said by the member for Charlotte (Taylor) that the government should have brought the bill down earlier in the session. He also agreed with the member that the bill should provide for a consolidation of offices. A re-organization of the departments of the government was necessary, and should be considered without the slightest regard for the individuals who field office.

A Fifth Wheel.

The Provincial Secretary, apart from his duties in bringing down the budget, was simply a fifth wheel. The department of health should really be in control of the chief medical officer. The crown land department could handle its revenues and the attorney general's department could attend to the incorporation of companies. He felt that the province could get along with fewer cabinet ministers. If the government were re-organized on the lines he had laid down, they would have what Nova Scotia has with 100,000 more people. The salaries proposed were not large, but the bill should have been accompanied by a plan for the consolidation of offices.

Hon. Mr. Foster said he had made up his mind that the bill was a proper measure, therefore it mattered little what time it was brought down. The leaders of the opposition had referred to governments in other provinces, but he wished to point out that other provinces were now adding to the membership of their governments.

Mr. Pinder said that the ministers of the government must have been thinking of the bill, and it was strange they had not brought it down earlier in the session. It looked to him as if they were doing something they were ashamed of, and if they were not ashamed of it, they should be. If the government passed the bill they would have to take responsibility for it.

Mr. Richards said he felt members of the government, in consideration of the amount of work they performed, were entitled to adequate remuneration for their services, and he did not consider the salaries paid at the present time were adequate.

Mr. Curren

Mr. Curren said that if the province expected good service from its ministers it ought to be willing to pay them for it.

Hon. Mr. Robinson said that as one of the interested parties, he was prepared to vote to increase his own salary. He considered he was worth the money. His friends opposite no doubt felt that it was an opportune time to make some capital against the government, and the government in giving them that opportunity offered themselves as a sacrifice. The bill was agreed to.

Public Health.

The committee next took up consideration of a bill to amend the Public Health Act.

Hon. Mr. Roberts made an explanation for the purpose of the bill which was to compel payment on the part of municipalities, which had failed to vote appropriation for public health.

Mr. Baxter asked what was the action which was to be taken reference to which was made in the bill.

Hon. Mr. Roberts said that in the event of a municipality refusing to vote an appropriation the lieutenant-governor-in-council might advance the money necessary to carry on the service. He read an amendment to subsection 1.

Mr. Baxter said that it would be a mistake to pass a bill to compel municipalities to pay money, when a law was already in existence under which that could be done. The law commanded respect, and it was unthinkable that some counties were paying and others were not.

Mr. Smith (Albert)—"Why did the minister bring this down when he already possessed the means?"

Hon. Mr. Roberts said he would not have brought this down if he had thought the existing law was sufficient.

"Perfect Shame."

Mr. Smith (Albert) said that Albert had voted the appropriation for public health the first year the act had been in force. The municipality observed the way the money was expended and refused to vote the appropriation the second year. In Albert county the administration of the act was a perfect shame and there was no benefit from it in proportion to he amount expended. By resolution the municipalities had asked the government to amend the health act and make it more practical. Not even an acknowledgement of the communication was received. One of the councillors who voted for that resolution had been a standard bearer of the government in 1917. Last year, when the council refused to vote the appropriation a threatening letter had been received from a legal gentleman. Now the minister informs the House that he did not think that he had possessed authority to compel payment, it had been a bluff and the people of Albert had known it. In Albert county the department must take responsibility for the enforcement of the act. It had been a perfect farce.

Against The Act.

Mr. Peck said that one-third of the province was against the health act. The counties of Northumberland, Kent, Albert and Kings were opposed to it, and in every other county of the province could be found people who were against it. It was the most unpopular measure ever introduced by the Foster government.

Hon. Mr. Veniot defended the act, claiming that the result of the election had shown approval of the measure.

Mr. Hunter said that in his section of York county the act was not popular, because it was too much, was too top heavy, and had too many big salaries attached to it. It might be suitable to a city, town or village, but was a hardship in rural districts.

Dr. Curren pointed out some of the benefits of the act, especially in the collection of vital statistics. The financial loss occasioned by the needless death of so many children in early years was enormous. The bill was agreed to.

Governor's Residence.

A bill to authorize the sale of a portion of old government house property to the Dominion was taken up. Mr. Richards said that the fund from the proceeds of the sale was intended to provide a residence for the lieutenant-governor, and it was only fair to expect that that residence should be in Fredericton and he urged that provision be made in the bill to that effect. Later, the bill was agreed to with an amendment which set forth that in the event of the lieutenant-governor establishing an official residence in Fredericton suitable for the purpose of government house, he be paid a sum sufficient for its upkeep, providing it is approved by the committee of the council.

Votes For Women.

The act to amend the municipalities act was re-considered and Hon. Mr. Byrne had a section added extending the franchise in municipal elections to widows and married women owning property. He promised Hon. Mr. Veniot that the question of extending the municipal franchise to women in cities and incorporated towns would be given consideration.

Mr. Fawcet asked for re-consideration of the bill increasing salaries of members of the government, and on a vote being taken the bill was adopted 23 to 16. A bill to provide municipal buildings in the city and county of St. John, was agreed, to with an amendment by Hon. Mr. Foster providing for a two thirds vote of the council with respect to a bond issue.

Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. Wetmore presented the final report of the committee of agriculture after which the House went into committee with Mr. Hayes in the chair and took up consideration of the supplementary estimates which were passed as follows: Good Roads Convention at Halifax, $500; Natural History Society of New Brunswick, St. John, for repairs to building $1,126.45; Steam Navigation, $1,600; New Brunswick Rifle, $300; Historical Publications, $500; Women's Institutes, $750; Maritime Stock Breeders, $200; Public Health Instruction at Normal School, $300; Supreme Court Reporter for additional expense in publication of report, $250; Natural History Society of New Brunswick for preparation of natural resources exhibit $1,000.

"The safe course is temperance in all things; treating our bodies as servants; never allowing them to become masters. Proper care will prolong life."

N. B. Health Week, April 24-30.

New Brunswick Mill Men Take Reduction

But Ten Hour Day Will be Fought to a Finish is View.

Fredericton, N. B., April 15.—Local Union No. 120, International Union of Timber Workers, last night appointed a committee of their own members to confer with the managers of the local lumber mills in an effort to reach an adjustment of the differences which threaten to prevent the operation of the mills on the St. John river here.

This morning it was said that a committee of four would call on W. J. Glenn, manager of the Fraser Companies, Ltd., of the Victoria mills, and at noon Mr. Glenn said he would meet any of the Fraser Company's employees to discuss any subject of mutual interest. It is understood, however that union officials who are not employees of the company will be persona non grata so far as the employers are concerned.

Take Wage Slice.

It is understood that the workers will express a willingness to accept a reduction of pay but at the same time are determined not to return to work upon the ten hour day basis. The employers have insisted upon a ten hour day and have emphatically declared they will not operate their mills except upon that basis, and it is understood that this agreement holds good for the mills in this district as well as along the Miramichi.

Fight Ten Hour Day.

John St Martin, Labor member of the legislature of Chatham was the principal speaker at the Union meeting last night. He urged the men to fight a return to the ten hour day but told them when they were reaching decisions to always take secret ballots as an open vote often did not give the true feeling of the members of a union. Delegates who attended a general meeting of timber workers and other unions affected by the proposed ten hour day at Chatham this week made their report at the meeting which was to the effect that the return to the ten hour day proposal of the employers would be fought to the end.

Pays Tribute To Faithful Secretary

Hillsboro, N. B., April 15.—A meeting of the Canadian Bible Society was held in the office of Jas. S. Blight. Those present were: F. M. Thompson, Rev. J. A. Laughlin, Wm. Hargraves, W. H. Duffy, Rev. A. Horwood, Jas. S. Blight, Rev. G. W. Tilley. James S. Blight was appointed secretary-treasurer for the ensuing year, Mr. W. H. Duffy remains as president.

The secretary's report showed the following collections of 1920: Hillsboro, $53.15; Albert Mines, $25; Surrey, $16.80; Curryville, $13.25; Edgett's Landing, $15.25; Weldon, $11.35. Total amount, $134.80.

The following resolution was presented and adopted: "Resolved, that the board of the N. B Bible Society record its deep regret at the loss of Mr. Jas. Blight, who so long and faithfully performed the duties of secretary and that we record our appreciation of his services in the minutes of this meeting."

Mrs. Sarah E. Cooper.

The death of Mrs. Sarah E., wife of Wm. Coper occurred yesterday at the home of her son-in-law Joseph A. McGaw, 164 Carmarthen Street. The deceased was seventy-three years of age and besides her husband she leaves three sons, Frederick W. of Gagetown, J. Harry of Everett, Mass., and R. E. Hazen of St. John; also three daughters, Mrs. J. A Cooper, Bathurst; Mrs. E. Harry Ross of Hampstead and Mrs. J. A. McGaw, St. John; one brother John Knox of Moose Jaw, Sask., one sister, Mrs. Samuel McCartney of Virginia, and fourteen grand children. The remains will be conveyed to Gagetown on the Valley Railway today and the funeral will take place on Sunday.

Cuticura Soap Complexions Are Healthy

Soap, Ointment, Talcum, 25c. each. Sold everywhere. Cuti. Dept. 'Lymans, Limited, St. Paul St., Montreal.

MEMORY'S GALLERY.

Memory's gallery, long and deep,
Where we our dearest pictures keep,
Never a wail, a roof, a floor,
Just a widely open door.

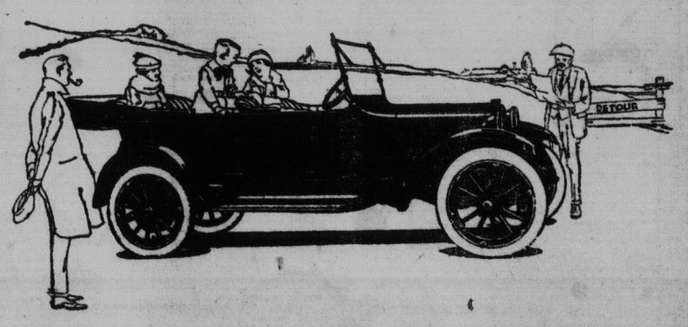
Some are sad and some are sweet,
Some make us laugh, some make us weep,
To some, we never wish to turn:
They show us by the Contrast deep
Those, for which we incense burn,
Those, we would forever keep.

Sometimes a face, sometimes a song,
Sometimes a merry surging throng:
Each for itself a picture makes
For memory's gallery, deep and long.

H. S. H.

DODGE BROTHERS MOTOR CAR

Perhaps the best and truest thing that has ever been said about this car is that you seldom hear anything but good things said about it.

The gasoline consumption is unusually low
The tire mileage is unusually high

The Victory Garage & Supply Co., Ltd., St. John.
Valley Motor Co., Fredericton.
Victoria Garage, Moncton
J. F. Rice & Sons, Edmundston.
McWha & Buchanan, St Stephen.
C. T. Black & Co., Woodstock.