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WHOLE No. 3243

The Opening of the Legislature.

The legislature was opened Tuesday afternoon. After prayers, the clerk of the house read certificates of resignation from Hon Donald Morrison as speaker and member of the house, and of B F Smith as member thereof, and that John P Burchill and George Wm Upham had been duly elected members of the house from the counties of Northumberland and Carleton respectively. The clerk of the house having been informed of the resignation of Hon Donald Morrison as speaker, announced that it was his will and pleasure that the speaker be elected before he declared to the house the causes of his calling the present legislature.

Hon Mr Hazen proposed the name of George J Clarke, a choice which he thought would meet with the approval of every member of the house. It was not necessary to say anything as to Mr Clarke's qualification. All members of the house knew him as a gentleman thoroughly versed in parliamentary law and practice, and they would feel that in his hands the procedure of the house would be in safe keeping.

Mr Robinson expressed his pleasure in seconding the nomination. He felt satisfied that the affairs of the house would be in safe keeping, and he further felt Mr Clarke had the ability and attainments to adorn even a much higher position in the public life of the country.

The resolution was carried unanimously. At 3.15 p.m., the speaker having left the chair, the lieutenant-governor, preceded by his military staff, entered the chamber. Hon Mr Clarke reported that he had been elected as speaker and claimed for the house all its ancient liberties and privileges. His honor, through the clerk, signified his pleasure in concurring in the choice of the legislature.

The speech from the throne was more in the line of an historical document than a forecast of the work of the legislature. In it reference was made to prosperous conditions of the province, the visit of the Scotch farmers, the fire at the Provincial Hospital, the school books and the New Brunswick coal and railway company.

The address in reply was moved by Mr J A Murray of Kings and seconded by Dr Bourque. The leader of the opposition then addressed the house as follows:—

HON. C W ROBINSON.

Mr Robinson said that it gave him pleasure as the leader of the opposition to congratulate both the mover and seconder of the address upon the excellent manner in which they had discharged their duties. The opposition stood in a peculiar position. This was the first year of a new government and in a short term of office we have only their record to discuss. The speech read to this house by his honor was a lengthy one, dealt with many matters, and was admirable as a chronological record. However, there was some notable events that had not been mentioned, and these he would touch upon later on. We are all agreed that last year was a prosperous one for our province and for this we all are thankful.

The tercentenary celebration at Quebec was certainly a great and notable event and the commemoration a worthy one. One very notable thing emphasized by that celebration was the fact that the two races growing up side by side in Canada had been further cemented in their nationalities by fighting side by side under the southern cross to uphold British supremacy. The visit of the Scotch farmers had been referred to, but he did not remember seeing that the government of New Brunswick

had made any effort to give those visitors an opportunity of visiting our province and becoming acquainted with its agricultural resources as would have been done under a capable government. We all regretted the fire at the provincial hospital and the Kingston Consolidated School. The latter was the pioneer in consolidated schools in this province, and other districts were following. He believed the benefits to be derived from such consolidation were very great, and he hoped that steps might speedily be taken so that the work might be resumed.

The fisheries, he said, is an ever recurring topic of his honor. We are only beginning to realize the value and importance of the fisheries of our province. He believed that the money value of the fishing industry in New Brunswick was as great as the whole lumber industry. The government should give earnest attention and make a real effort to a settlement of these fishery matters, and not only make a formal claim for settlement, but should press the claim with all possible vigor. It was the duty of the government to wake up and take more active measures on behalf of the fishing industry.

The government took to itself much credit for inaugurating a new system of bookkeeping. As a measure of course is the province expanded a larger bookkeeping system was necessary. This question was not original with the present government. He, when leader of the government, had gone quite fully into the matter, and had made proposals regarding improvements.

The government also took to itself much credit for having made a good horse trade. Perhaps they had. The question is: Was the importation of horses in the interest of the people as a whole and not simply for the benefit of a few admirers of fancy horses?

One thing he would like to ask the government, and that was by what authority did they obtain an appropriation to import these horses? Whence came the money? In looking over the act appointing the auditor general shall not approve of expenditure of any money not previously authorized by the legislature. Former governments, before making such importations, submitted their proposals to the representatives of the people. The fact that the government did not lose any money on this latest horse trade did not excuse them for their unauthorized expenditure.

Another matter for which the government claimed much credit was the amount of road work done on the roads until before the Dominion election last fall, when a great deal of activity was displayed and in direct defiance of the highway act, which says the road work must be done in the spring and early summer. He would admit we had splendid roads last summer, but this was because of the fine weather and not on account of the work done on the roads. Just before the elections in October great activity was shown in doing road work and wherever it was thought the Conservative candidates might be helped men were put on the roads.

It had been stated that all accounts contracted previous to October 31 had been paid but he very much doubted if the entire appropriation for roads last year would pay for the work done at election times. When the detailed expenditures are brought this would show.

The members of the government, when in opposition, claimed to know just what the province wanted as a highway act, but as soon as they got into power they called upon municipal councils all over the province to assist in drawing up a suitable road act.

One criticism he wished to make at the present time was that this session had been called too late. The legislature should have been in session weeks ago. He believed the government had deferred calling the house together until a Conservative paper could be established in St John—at least he had heard this, or did they put off the session hoping that the courts would deprive the newly elected member for Carleton of the seat he had so honorably won? He thought it was an outrage to keep members here for any length of time at this season of the year.

He was glad the government was optimistic and had faith in the future of the province and were seeking to develop our natural resources. He was glad to know the government was waking up to the importance of developing New Brunswick industrially, and exploiting its mineral wealth, as well as the lumbering interests. He had seen a magnificent iron deposit in Gloucester and believed the province had there the making of a great industry. When

in opposition, the members of the government had criticized the establishment of a bureau of immigration, and one of their first acts on coming into power was to do away with it. But they had learned something since then. He believed that attention should also be paid to the repatriation of the many thousands of young men who had left New Brunswick. He believed there were thousands of native New Brunswickers in the United States who would be glad to return to their native land if sufficient encouragement was offered them.

Among the important measures fore-shadowed in the speech, was the development of the forest wealth and the game resources. The old government had done much along these lines, but he thought the present government had been more concerned in dismissing officials who were thought to be politically opposed to the present administration, than to the real development of the country. He believed that some of the best game wardens in the province had been dismissed simply because they were thought to be on the wrong side of politics. He also understood that the government had appointed game wardens who were not competent for the position, and who were appointed solely because they were party heeled, and their appointment does not do the province or the government any credit.

Hon Mr Hazen—Name them.

Mr Robinson—Messrs Melville and Burt in Carleton County.

Hon Mr Grimmer—Those men are not game wardens at all; they are lumber cruisers.

Mr Robinson continuing, said that he did not think the government was justified in dismissing officials all over the province simply and solely because they were opposed politically to the administration. The province had never before seen such a scramble for office as it had witnessed last year. This government came into power with a big majority and a great flourish of trumpets, but not satisfied with that, they had tried to deliver the province into the hands of the Conservative leader at Ottawa, but had miserably failed. If they had given as much attention to developing the province they would today stand much higher in the estimation of the people.

Everybody knows that this government has in these few short months forfeited the confidence of the people. We have had two elections recently, and the people had said in no uncertain way what they thought of this government. Mention of these elections was omitted from this chronological speech from the throne.

He had expected mention would be made in speech of the St John Valley Railway. This was a matter of very great importance, and one which the government should give most earnest attention to. They should do all possible to aid and encourage such enterprises.

The statement had been made by no less a person than the president of the council that in past years the province lost no less than \$200,000 through failure to adequately collect the stumpage. He noticed that there was very little increase in the territorial revenue last year, when the lumber cut was up to the average. If the old government was losing \$200,000 a year by not collecting all the stumpage, what about the present government last year? Why does not the government collect all the stumpage, and with this \$200,000 extra build the valley railway? It would pay the interest at 4 per cent on \$5,000,000, equal to the whole debt of the province.

He had heard the statement made that the crown lands were not administered in the interests of the province, but in the interests of some Conservative candidates.

Mr Hazen—Do you make that statement on your own responsibility as a member of this house?

Mr Robinson—I have no personal knowledge of this, but have heard the statement made. It was made publicly and the government has not taken any action.

The provincial expenditure last year was more than \$1,000,000, the greatest in the history of the province, and this from a government which when in opposition preached economy. He said the government had failed to keep its pledges and promises made when in opposition.

Mr Robinson was followed by Mr Hazen who in a short speech moved the adjournment of the House until Friday morning when the debate on the address continued by Hon Mr McKeown.

Mr McKeown said that he must congratulate the mover and seconder of the address upon their admirable speeches. He deeply regretted the destruction of the Kingston Consolidated School and hoped it would soon be rebuilt. He had recently visited the splendid new school building at Sussex and believed it superior to any thing of its kind in the province. It was not only a credit to the town of Sussex but a tribute to the free school system of the province.

the nature of superannuation allowance and he hoped legislation along those lines would be introduced.

He very much regretted that some pleasantries indulged in by the leader of the opposition had caused such an exhibition of anger on the part of the premier as was seldom seen in this house. Last year the leader of the government was bright and buoyant and glad some, but a great change had taken place during the past few months and now there is a note of melancholy and disappointment in his tone. Power brings with it responsibility and calls for that exercise of a strong will, the repressing hand, calmness, decision and coolness undisturbed which the premier had not shown. The events of the past ten months had caused the members of the government to ask themselves the question of the position they now hold in public esteem. They have fallen in the estimation of the people.

A statement has been made that there is a reduction of 40 per cent in the price of school books. On the face of it that would seem to call for commendation. It is proper, however, to enquire how this reduction came about and it is also proper to enquire whether the government should enter into competition with those who get their living by buying and selling.

School books were made and sold as a legitimate enterprise, the same as other articles, and he would ask was it right in principle that the government should take hold of the distribution of school books and wipe out the wholesaler and retailer? If proper for the government to do this as regards school books why not let us go the whole way and deal in all kinds of merchandise? He did not believe it was right for the government to enter into competition with any branch of trade or industry. The government had struck off the wholesalers profit of 15 per cent and the retailers 25 and that was all there was to it. More than that the government has discriminated in the distribution of these books. They bought them from the manufacturers and shipped them out to political supporters. He could produce dozens of former dealers in school books who had been refused permissions to deal in school books under the new regime. When the provincial secretary states that anybody can obtain these books he states what he knows to be incorrect.

Hon Mr Hazen—I take the point of order that the honorable member should not say that the provincial secretary knows it to be incorrect.

Hon Mr Flemming said that he had risen and addressed the speaker, wishing for the privilege of correcting the statement made by the honorable member, but the honorable member refused to allow him to proceed. During the ten years he (Flemming) had been in the house such privilege of correcting an honorable member had never before been refused.

Proceeding Mr McKeown said he was sorry that his remarks had caused his honorable friend to give such an exhibition of temper. He did not agree with the doctrine that the government could deal in school books, but he believed that the government would find that they had made a big mistake in stripping the wholesalers and retailers of their legitimate profits. He understood that the wholesalers and retailers of their legitimate profits. He understood that the wholesalers and retailers of their legitimate profits. He understood that the wholesalers and retailers of their legitimate profits.

In regard to the school book arrangement made by the government the ghost was not yet laid. Unless the government's policy resulted in more benefit in the future than it had brought up to date the government would be covered with ridicule instead of glory by the policy. The saving of 40 per cent on the price of the books was not taken out of the manufacturer. The wholesaler and retailer had to bear all the loss. No other government in any civilized

country had ever done such a thing. The appointment of vendors had also been badly managed. It was most unfair that one dealer should be given the privilege of selling books on commission while another had to pay cash. A man who was not a pet of the government could not complete with the other dealer.

Hon Mr Hazen suggested that Mr McKeown might consult the firm of J & A McMillan, the King Lumber Co. and various other dealers who were vendors for the government as to the justice of his remarks.

Mr McKeown said it was not so much a matter of partyism as it was to the principle that one dealer should get books without cost and another have to pay cash. He also objected to the character of some of the men who had been appointed vendors, such as men convicted of illegal liquor selling. He thought it was an outrage to compel children to go to a place where liquor was illegally sold to buy their books. The government should try and uplift the morals of the people and not do things to prevent them.

In this city of Fredericton two leading bookstores were not vendors, but instead the business had been given to a grocer and a variety dealer. He understood the government had made a three years contract for their books and he thought that the mere fact that the vendors would have a large amount of books on hand at the cost of the government when the contract expired would be a strong lever for its continuance.

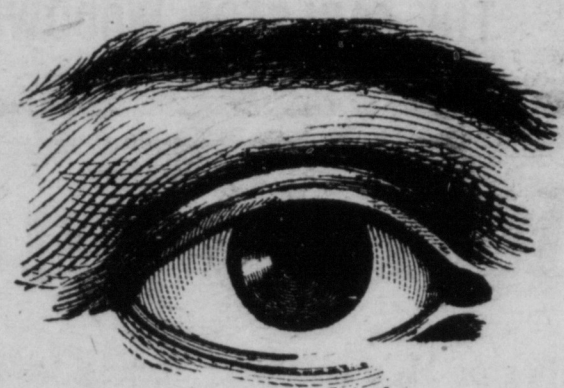
By the auditor-general's report he saw that the government had paid \$11,555 for books and up to October 31, had only received some \$1,600 back. How was the government to know that the money for the books would be forthcoming from the vendors? There had been some protested checks, he was informed, and the government was running considerable risks. When the matter came to be sized up and everything taken into consideration he was bound to give his adhesion to the belief that it would have been cheaper and better in the end to have had free school books outright.

He might say for the opposition that it did not intend to act as a drag on the work of the house. In all matters that came before them for consideration they would not hesitate to criticize but it would not be a carping criticism and where circumstances would warrant it they would not hesitate to approve. But there were some matters of which they could not approve.

Turning to the highway act, when that bill was under discussion last session the opposition made many suggestions in the interests of good roads, all of which were turned down, and the act went out to the country in the form prepared by the government. Several times the question had crossed his mind as to whom the premier had consulted on that measure. He saw around him on both sides of the house many men in whose judgment he would have every confidence on matters pertaining to the highways, particularly his honorable friend, the member for Queens. He would take his judgment with pleasure, if left to himself, but if the red herring of politics had been drawn across him he would not trust him a yard away from his leader. He had been informed that the act was the work of a St John lawyer, not the attorney-general, that the bill was Ald Baxter's bill. Was not the sum total of the knowledge of the various supporters of the government sufficient without going to a St John lawyer? The bill was anything but satisfactory to many of the government supporters, but they had been whipped into line and the result was that when the bill came to be discussed in the country it came back to the house again torn, mutilated, carved and divided beyond recognition. The honorable member who moved the address spoke in glowing terms of the act, the creation of the "much ridiculed" and much derided Hazen government; he (the speaker) did not use that expression as his own, but it pretty well fitted in with the ideas of the greater part of the electorate of the province.

The provincial secretary had stated in Carleton county during the period of the last dominion election that the act would come into force on Jan 1, whereas his leader had distinctly stated in the house last session that it would not come into force before another session, and the

(Continued on eighth page.)



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