

The valor and courage displayed by our Canadian soldiers on the many battlefields of France and Flanders in which they have been engaged, and in which the soldiers of our own Province have borne such a conspicuous part, have been such as to make our breasts swell with pride and admiration, and brings home to us the fact that those who are thus fighting our battles and enduring great hardships, and those dependent upon them, should not be forgotten. In this connection I most heartily commend the work done by the women of New Brunswick in their unceasing efforts to provide comforts for the men at the front, which are so greatly appreciated. The uncomplaining manner in which the people of the Province have borne the imposition of a tax of more than half a million dollars in aid of the Canadian Patriotic Fund is an evidence of their determination to do all in their power to assist the Empire to win the war.

I am pleased to inform you that my Government has under consideration a proposition of the Military Hospital Commission to assist in providing hospitals for the treatment of returned soldiers suffering from tubercular disease, and also for a Convalescent Hospital. You will be asked to make provision for the amount required to effect this most commendable object.

I am pleased to be able to congratulate the farmers of the Province upon an abundant harvest, for which they have realized good prices. The increased production of foodstuffs is one of the most important matters now commanding the attention of the Empire, and upon it depends in a considerable measure the successful issue of the war. My Government recently called a conference of all those interested in this important matter, which was very largely attended, and gentlemen of national reputation in agricultural matters delivered most interesting and instructive addresses. I have no doubt that the Provincial Committee appointed by the said Conference will forward the movement with energy and success.

My Government on assuming office found the Saint John Valley Railway, legislation for the construction of which was passed at the Session of 1910, still uncompleted. The construction of said line of railway will be continued as speedily as possible in order that it may be taken over and operated by the Department of Railways of Canada at an early date. A Commissioner has been appointed to enquire into the affairs of the Saint John and Quebec Railway Company, and the evidence taken and the report thereon will be laid before you when the same are received.

In order to ascertain in an authoritative form the actual financial position of the Province, and to introduce the most modern system of keeping the public accounts, a firm of Chartered Accountants of the highest reputation has been engaged to make a thorough audit of the finances and to report thereon which, when completed, will be submitted to you for your consideration.

The Act for the suppression of traffic in intoxicating liquors, which was passed at the last Session of this House, came into operation on the first day of this month in those Counties that were subject to the provisions of the Liquor License Act of 1915. My Government has appointed a Chief Inspector for the enforcing and carrying out the provisions of the Act.

Bills to amend the Election Act in several important particulars; to consolidate and amend the Public Utilities Act; to consolidate the Act relating to the solemnization of Marriage; to enable cities, towns and municipalities to purchase outstanding Sterling debentures; to amend the Audit Act; to amend the Acts relating to our Crown Lands and the Prohibition Act, and other measures of importance will be submitted for your consideration.

The question of permanent roads has already received our attention, and a competent engineer has been engaged and a survey has been arranged for with a view to establishing promptly a comprehensive system of permanent roads, which work it is the intention of my Government to have well started during this season, and to devise ways of providing moneys for the work without imposing too great a burden upon the taxpayers.

My Government proposes during recess to prepare legislation relating to our Crown Lands after making as full an inquiry as possible into the present methods of management, and also to make provisions for the better protection of our forests from fire.

I have directed the accounts of Income and Expenditure for the past year as well as a statement of the Receipts and Payments of the current year up to the opening of the present session to be laid before you.

Estimates of the probable Income and Expenditure for the current year will be submitted to you and I believe you will find that the Estimates of Expenditure have been prepared with a due regard to economy and the requirements of the public service.

In conclusion I desire to assure you of my confidence in your patriotism and zeal for the public good, and to express the hope that your deliberations will insure to the welfare and prosperity of the Province.