

Debate on the Address Collapsed Unexpectedly

The Motion Passed Without Division and a Committee Was Named to Meet the Lieutenant-Governor—The Last Speakers Were Messrs. Richard and Lordon of Gloucester and Melville of Carleton—The Budget Expected Next Wednesday.

The debate on the address in reply to the speech from the throne which has been going on in the Legislature since last Friday collapsed rather unexpectedly yesterday afternoon when the motion to adopt it was carried without division. The last speakers were Mr. Richard and Mr. Melville for the opposition and Mr. Lordon for the government. All spoke well, but had nothing new to offer. It was generally expected that there would be other speakers, but the speech of Premier Baxter on Wednesday seemed to knock all the pep out of the debate. There was nothing more for government speakers to say and as for the opposition, Leader Dysart had pretty well covered the ground.

Hon. Mr. Leger gave notice that on Wednesday next he would move the House into committee of supply, which means that the budget will be looked for on that date.

When the House adjourns this afternoon it will stand adjourned until three o'clock on Tuesday afternoon. Most of the members will return to their homes this evening for the week-end.

Assembly Chamber,
March 6th, 1930.

The House met at 3.15 p.m. MR. RICHARD (Kent) gave notice of inquiry regarding the amount of interest paid by the government for the last fourteen years, and the amount received.

HON. MR. BAXTER introduced a bill to amend an act respecting commissioners for taking affidavits; a bill to amend the Schools Act; and a bill to amend the act respecting Municipal Homes. Regarding the change in the Schools Act, he said that it was simply to change the population requirements for superior schools from six thousand to four thousand. Regarding Municipal Homes, the change was to vest the appointment of Alms House Commissioners in certain cases where the government now had the appointment, in municipalities.

HON. MR. LEGER submitted the report of the New Brunswick Fire Prevention Board.

Returns Asked For
MR. DYSART inquired if the government would, without the formality of an address, lay a few returns upon the table of the house: first, a copy of the report of the commission appointed some years ago on Mothers' Allowances; second, a copy of the final estimate on Public Works contract No. 77; third, the report of the Minister of Public Works to the government in the matter of black base roads.

HON. MR. BAXTER said that so far as the reports on Mother Allowances were concerned, this government had never been able to find a copy, but lately a copy had been discovered outside and handed to Mr. Justice Grimmer in connection with the inquiry his commission was conducting. He would hardly like to ask that commission to hand over the copy until they were through with it.

MR. DYSART said he thought, if the document was not too lengthy, that a few copies might be made for the use of the house.

Black Base Roads
HON. MR. BAXTER, referring to the request for the report of the Minister of Public Works in regard to black base roads, said that no written report had been given to the government, but that certain figures which he had obtained had been submitted in a verbal report and that no document on the matter existed.

The Minister of Public Works having taken his seat, Mr. Dysart amplified his request regarding contract No. 77.

HON. MR. STEWART said the hon. gentleman could have any documentary information on accounts previous to 1929, but many of the later contracts were not finally reported upon and it would involve some work to prepare them. However, they would be prepared for the hon. gentleman on request.

HON. MR. BAXTER called attention to a typographical error in the printed report of his speech, which, by the insertion of the word "not" completely changed the statement which he made.

MR. BORDAGE asked leave of absence for Mr. Doucet until Tuesday next.

MR. C. D. RICHARD
MR. RICHARD (Gloucester), resuming the debate on the address, said the opening of the session had been marked with such pomp and brilliancy and the quality of the speeches thus far made had been so high, that it was with some timidity he made a contribution to the debate. He had

found a touch of sadness in old friends this year in missing the kindly greeting of Mr. James Lewis. He wished to extend his sincere sympathy to his family and friends.

He congratulated the mover and seconder on their efforts as they had had a difficult task on account of their previous attitude regarding prohibition. In their race from subject to subject under discussion, they had dexterously avoided the dangerous "water jump." The speech which the government had put in the mouth of His Honor was disappointing. It was merely a repetition of a recitation of what the government considered its accomplishments, and devoid of all policy. It might have been expected that the government would have had some definite policy to announce, and there was none unless the black base road proposition might be considered a policy. As to that, thus far, no information had come out that it would mean any saving to the province. It, however, was a sign that the government had not yet done anything permanent to the roads.

Hydro Matters

Perhaps the most pleasing item was the reference to hydro matters, and the admission that the commission would assume part of the cost in carrying power to sparsely settled districts. This was a striking declaration that public ownership was in the best interests of the province, a policy inaugurated by the late government. Musquash, after a few short years, had been proven a success, and one could conjecture what might have happened if Grand Falls had been developed under public ownership. The premier had said that Grand Falls had not one-twentieth the value of what the late government had offered for it. As to that, he would use the same deduction in regard to its value as the premier had used in regard to Musquash. In that case, it was urged that Judge LeBlanc had fixed its value, in the case of Grand Falls, the value had been fixed by the chartered accountant's report given of the property item by item. The Premier had said that there would not be sufficient power at Grand Falls for all the industries that could use it. The statement, he said, should mean that all other powers should be developed under public ownership. It could be done here as well as in Quebec or Ontario. Reliance was now being placed upon steam stand-bys. Why did not the government accept the recommendations of the hydro commission and proceed with the development of water power? Was there some sinister influence holding up the government? Utterances of the press and various rumors would lead to that conclusion.

The day was at hand when the Grand Falls fiasco could not be camouflaged by talking about the International Paper Company's investment of forty million dollars in the province. The people would not forget that not so long ago Grand Falls was a provincial asset and now it was not. The whole dominion was capable of giving a fair return for capital investment provided not too many of the natural resources were given away. He would admit the Dalhousie development meant much to the locality where it existed, but there had been given away for fifty years one of the greatest assets that the province had. This was wrong in principle, to tie up our assets for such a period.

HON. MR. BAXTER—If it was untied what would you do with it?

MR. RICHARD said no one could estimate the increase in value of the lands tied up. In twenty years they would be worth many times what they are at present and the province was getting nothing from this increase in value. Of course, he said, had these lands been handed over to a certain clique that was after them, they might have disappeared altogether.

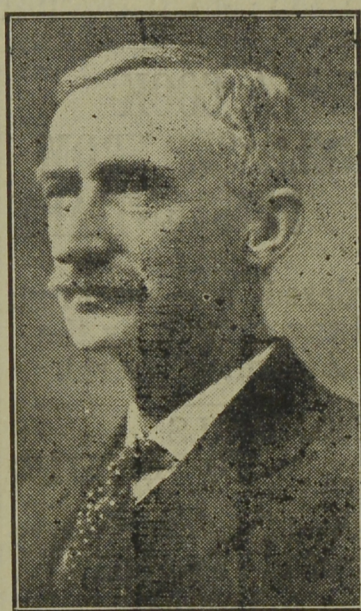
In Better Position.

The International Paper Company and Frasers Limited had been placed in a better position than their competitors in Ontario and Quebec, and therefore the province should be entitled to a share in their profits, and this share should be passed along to the people in the form of higher wages. These plants, in addition to the wonderful assets which had been given the companies, were as well situated as any elsewhere and why, then, should the workers be denied a living wage. Unless the laborer earned enough to live on, he was no asset to the province, but became a burden on the economic life of the country. These mills did not employ more than a small percentage of skilled labor at high wages, and the ruling wage for unskilled labor today was as low as twenty-two cents an hour, or even thirty-five dollars a month to seventy-five per cent. of the workers.

MR. DIOTTE—If they did not earn more than that, we would not keep them there.

Temporary Depression.

MR. RICHARD said that was what was being paid, and it was not a living wage for a man with a family. Half of it would go for rent, and what



E. W. MELVILLE, M. L. A.

Energetic Member for Carleton Who Closed the Debate on the Address.

was left but poverty. He would admit there was a temporary depression in the pulp and paper industry, but there was bound to be a readjustment and labor would expect a higher wage else there would be serious discontent, and we would have to come to the adoption of the minimum wage law. That would be an innovation, but no more so than the Workmen's Compensation Board nor Old Age Pensions.

He did not consider the minimum wage law class favoritism. It was just as fair to keep up wages as to keep up the price of wheat. Keeping up the price of paper was no more fair than keeping up the price of labor. Labor must have some continuity of earning power, if the laborer is to provide for his family and for old age. In his opinion, the progress of the province depended upon higher wages.

He was not pessimistic about the North Shore. He believed that in the next ten years the three northern counties would show more progress than any other part of the province, but, at the present time, he saw there poverty that was cramping many men and many families. He believed that industries, in making up their costs, should be compelled to figure on a fair living wage.

Agriculture.

He would not attempt to deal exhaustively with Agriculture. The ability of the Minister had been lauded by the mover and seconder, and he concurred. He believed there were no politics in the agriculture department, and he would like to see this policy adopted in some of the other departments. The Minister did not get enough money for his department, and all governments during the last twenty years had neglected this important work. At present the government was spending about as much money on police as on agriculture.

HON. MR. SMITH—You are only about one hundred thousand dollars out.

MR. RICHARD said he was glad to have that assurance, for it was not so last year. He condemned the government for its lack of interest in agriculture and for breaking its pledges to adopt an aggressive agricultural policy.

He noted there was to be revamping of the educational system through a commission. He would suggest that the French population of the province should be adequately represented thereon, and gave an instance of how difficult it was sometimes for French speaking people to make themselves perfectly clear before a purely English speaking commission or court. In many cases the appointments as between French and English speaking people were not proportionate. He did not wish to excite any race prejudice in making these remarks, for both great races were striving to make this province a better place in which to live. A beech and the maple grew side by side to beautify and strengthen the forest, so should the French and English peoples live together. Each should receive the right proportion of sunshine, and grow and develop without injury one to the other.

Mr. Lordon's Speech.

MR. LORDON referred feelingly to the late James Lewis, member for Saint John city, whom he said was ever loyal to his party and very attentive to his legislative duties. He also extended congratulations to the mover and seconder of the address. He was in accord with the mover's statement with respect to the importance of pay-rolls, but regretted that they did not have application to all sections of the province. He was glad that a new paper mill had been established in the Town of Dalhousie, but considered it to be the outcome of a policy inaugurated prior to the year 1925. He was glad that the seconder of the address had stressed the importance of a further extension of hydro-electric to the rural districts of the province. In this connection, he would point out that the hon. chairman of the Hydro Commission was to be the Moses to spread light and power and correct the faults of the old Hydro Commission. He had started out by

dismissing survey parties and condemning the public ownership policy of the Veniot administration. He (Lordon) was glad to learn that the hon. chairman was now a real convert to government ownership. Cheaper electric current was of great importance to many towns and villages of the province. Under government ownership the rate for current was in the vicinity of three cents per kilowatt hour, which was much lower than in localities where private ownership prevailed. The hon. chairman, by dismissing thirty or forty men engaged upon a survey, claimed to have made a saving, but the saving had been made at the expense of those who were using electric current generated under private ownership.

The Stumpage Rate.

He was glad to note that the hon. premier, in his speech of yesterday, had acknowledged that the stumpage rate had been fixed for five years, and that leases had been granted for a term of fifty years. The people all along had been given to understand that there had been no long leases granted and no fixed rate of stumpage, and it was a good thing to have the facts. What the hon. premier had stated corresponded with a letter which he (Lordon) had read to the house last session, in which it was stated that the government had met the demands of the lumber lords by a fixed rate of stumpage and perpetual leases of crown lands. The hon. premier had stated that the leases were for a period of fifty years, and he might have added that there was an option of renewal for another fifty years.

He had been interested in a statement of the hon. premier that because of financial depression he had been unable to force the erection of a pulp mill on the Miramichi river. It was good to have the hon. premier stand up and make an acknowledgment of his failure, but how did he get away from the fact that he had given a promise that there would be two mills established on the Miramichi in the years 1928 and 1929? That promise had been given to the representatives for Northumberland County, and the fact that it had not been carried out would no doubt place them in an awkward position with their constituents and make trouble for the government and its supporters.

It had been stated by the hon. premier that when his government assumed the reins of power they found the treasury about empty, but he wished to point out that during a period of five years they had been able to roll up a debt of about fourteen million dollars. It was in that way they had improved the condition of the provincial treasury. In his opinion, it went to show that the hon. premier was the most wonderful mathematician in the province.

Farmers' Woodlots.

In going over the accounts in connection with the settlement of British families in the province, he noticed some items which, while perhaps not extravagant, seemed to him to be extremely high. He had reference to the cost of property transfer deeds and other such matters. In the end, the newcomers would be called upon to make good the expense and it

should be kept as low as possible. He observed that in the County of Kings a wood lot of twenty-five acres had been purchased for one new arrival at a cost of \$125, which did not seem to be excessive. He thought in matters of that kind there should be equal rights in all parts of the province. Since many large saw mills had closed down there were people who experienced difficulty in procuring an adequate supply of fuel wood, and to help out, some arrangement might be made by which they could obtain a supply from public lands without interference to the pulp and paper industry.

Advertising Hotels.

The hon. premier had made it clear that no member of his administration was connected with the brewing industry of Saint John. He (Lordon) had never heard it stated that the Admiral Beatty Hotel was a brewery, but some politics may have been brewed there. He had no fault to find with the opening of a liquor store close to the hotel, but he could scarcely understand why it had been necessary to give the matter so much publicity. Possibly, it had been done with a view of acquainting American tourists with the information that they would not have to go far for their drinks. He thought all hotels should have the same consideration in the advertising matter used for the encouragement of tourist travel. Other hotels might not have the same attraction as the Admiral Beatty but they had facilities for recreation and plenty of fresh air.

Industrial Activity.

He did not think that the development of sixty thousand horse power in the province had been altogether responsible for the industrial activity that had taken place. It must be remembered that the province owned the raw material, and that being so, development was sure to come, especially when the condition of the pulp and paper industry in the United States is taken into consideration. The province had the raw material, and should obtain for it the best price possible. It had been stated that from thirty to forty million dollars was being expended in the province for industrial development, but with the natural resources of the province held as security, it should not be a difficult matter to finance the new industries. The holdings of the pulp and paper companies in Restigouche and Gloucester alone were worth far more than that. There were also valuable holdings on the Miramichi which should provide security for the necessary capital for the construction of a mill.

Old Age Pensions.

He was a believer in Old Age Pensions, but was not altogether in favor of the commission idea. There had been a commission appointed to inquire into the condition of the lumbering industry, and the commissioner must have been a very good doctor as he had made a complete cure. It had not been necessary, however, for the government to appoint a royal commission when it wanted to give long leases of the lumber lands, nor had the necessity of a provincial police force been recommended by a royal commission. The police force had been given a commissioner who

had been clothed with very large powers. A reference by him (Lordon) to the provincial police force during the last session had called forth an exhibition of temper on the part of the hon. premier. The statement had been made that because the Mayor of Fredericton was in favor of prohibition he had refused to co-operate with members of the provincial police in the enforcement of the liquor law. Those who knew the mayor of Fredericton and of the esteem in which he was held, could scarcely be blamed if they refused to accept that statement. He wished to say that any statement that he (Lordon) had made with respect to the provincial police he was prepared to prove. He had affidavits in his possession which would clean up any charges which he had made against Captain Salt, the late commissioner, but as he had removed from the province, it was not his intention to read them. He would add that decent, respectable men, whether on the force or elsewhere, would always be respected, and he was pleased to note a greatly changed attitude on the part of the police. The bully with a gun who was seen around the liquor stores during the year 1928, had been replaced by the man with an enticing smile. He wished it understood that he was ready at all times to wash his own clothes, and was ready to assume responsibility for any statements he had made in connection with the provincial police.

MR. MELVILLE'S SPEECH

MR. MELVILLE said that he wished to concur in the words of sympathy spoken with reference to the late James Lewis, and he wished to congratulate the mover and seconder of the address on the impartial manner in which they had discharged their duties. He considered the purchase of the Valley Railway by the federal government a matter of great importance to the province. That road had been a great financial burden on the bonded indebtedness of the former administration, and on the ordinary revenue of the present government. While the expenditure made by a former government on the Valley Railway had been criticized, the road had served some of the best sections of Carleton County and was undoubtedly a necessity. Boards of Trade along the line of railway were now organizing to petition the federal government for its extension from Centreville to Grand Falls, and he hoped their efforts would be crowned with success.

The School Law

He was much pleased to learn that the government had in mind a change in the school law. There had been a great change in conditions since that law had been framed; people had removed from back country districts and it had become very difficult for those districts to maintain a school. He knew of a district in his own county where the rate of taxation for school purposes was \$7.50 per hundred. In the light of such conditions, was it any wonder that the people were moving to towns or to the United States? He was sure that government assistance to such districts for school purposes would be more appreciated than would a present to the municipality.

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