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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
FREDERICTON, N. B.

The New Highway Bill Discussed in the House

An Important Measure Designed to Revolutionize Road-Making Methods in This Province---The Government Not Afraid to Trust the People to Choose Good Men to Act as Supervisors---Breezy Discussion Over the Rule of the Road.

The Highway Act was under discussion in the Legislature for upwards of two hours last evening, and some fifteen sections of it were passed, while two were held over for further consideration. The Government was ready to go on with the discussion of the act in the afternoon, but owing to the absence of over half of the members of the Opposition it was stood over until evening at the request of Mr. B. F. Smith.

Good feeling prevailed among the members with respect to the bill. All appreciate its great importance, and seem anxious to make it as near perfect as possible. The main discussion during the evening centred around the section relating to the rule of the road. There is a strong agitation on foot to change the rule of the road to bring it into conformity with the custom which prevails in the United States, Ontario and Quebec, and Hon. Mr. Veniot has asked for an expression of opinion from the Legislature before determining the question. A number of the members gave expression to their views, and were inclined to treat the subject rather gingerly. None came out strongly for a change, but were inclined to think that it would have to be made at some not distant day.

Upon resuming at 8.30 p. m. the House immediately went into Committee, with Mr. Leger (West), in the chair and took up consideration of the bill entitled an act respecting highways. The first three sections of the bill, which give the interpretations of the terms used were adopted without discussion.

MR. BAXTER referring to the subsections defining trunk roads wanted to know that in cases where one or more roads passed through a village, if one of them would be designated as a trunk road.

HON. MR. VENIOT replied that a trunk road would be a road running through and beyond the village.

MR. BAXTER made mention of three roads running from St. John to St. Martins, one of which he said was but little used. He presumed that one of these roads would be designated a branch road.

The People's Interests.
HON. MR. VENIOT said that before making a division of the roads, he proposed making another tour of the province. He would not make a division of the roads until he had first consulted the people of different sections and members of the legislature, whether the latter were supporters of the government or of the opposition. The money collected from auto-licensing was to be expended on the roads and he wanted it spent in the interests of the people. He realized that that could not be done if they were going to play at politics. He was desirous of meeting the wishes of the people of every district in New Brunswick.

Section 6 of the bill requires road engineers to promptly report any unusual damage by freshet, needing more than ordinary attention and it also requires county structural superintendents to immediately report any damage to bridges having more than a 20 foot span.

HON. MR. VENIOT explained that this section was something of a new departure and he was hopeful that it would give very satisfactory results.

Mr. Baxter's Views.
MR. BAXTER said that he did not profess to be a road builder, but he had had some experience under the old system. He considered it only fair that the matter of improving the roads should be dealt with from a non-political standpoint. All had to use the roads and all were interested in their upkeep and were anxious to have them as good as possible. He was scarcely in accord with that section of the bill which proposed to have supervisors elected by the people of the district. He would admit that the policy was somewhat attractive but he did not think that the holding of an election in a parish or district was the best method of making roads. The plan would only be an experiment and he was sure that the government in a few years would be glad to get away from it. He could picture the manipulation that would be put on foot in small districts in favor of particular candidates. Political lines might be avoided, but he feared that a group of men, who hoped to gain some advantage, if a particular man was chosen, would manipulate the election. No doubt efficient men would be chosen in many cases, but the tendency would be to select those who possessed skill to manipulate things. He had not discussed the matter with his colleagues, but was giving only his personal views. He would prefer that the hon. minister would take the matter into his own hands and name the supervisors. If he relied on a good engineer, it ought to be possible with him to get the best men at least from one side of politics.

MR. POTTS said that if the district elected a man, there would be no guarantee as to his competency and the minister would really have no control over him.

Would Trust the People.
MR. McGRATH thought there was no occasion for hon. members opposite to worry over the selective power of the people. In the northern section of the province, at least, they had shown themselves capable of using that power judiciously. He thought in the matter of selecting road supervisors the people would use good judgment.

The People's Interests.
HON. MR. VENIOT said that he had invited suggestions from hon. members opposite, and he proposed to accept them, if he felt that they would improve the bill. He had noticed in his travels through the province

makers. In that respect the bill would put the government into closer touch with the people in the matter of road making than ever before. He had been asked what he proposed to do with an incompetent road supervisor chosen by the people. He would say in reply that the man was only elected for one year and if he failed to measure up to the standard the people would put him out. The bill required supervisors to post a statement of their expenditures in every district not later than the 15th of November. That statement would show how every dollar was expended and would be subject to a strict audit by the neighbors of the supervisor and if they found that an official had not done right they certainly would not support his re-election. The people were taking a greater interest in the roads than ever before and it was only right that the government should take them into their confidence.

Mr. Potts' Views.
MR. POTTS said that he had served as commissioner if public works in the City of St. John and he did not think it would be feasible for every ward in that city to elect a man to take charge of the roads. It looked to him as if that feature of the bill relating to the election of supervisors, was playing politics and nothing more.

HON. MR. VENIOT said that if it was the sentiment of the House that the minister should have power to dismiss and elect a supervisor, he would accept it, but he had not felt like taking such power upon himself.

MR. SMITH (Carleton) said he would like some information with respect to the road division.

HON. MR. VENIOT said he would be in a better position to supply the information after he had completed his division of the roads. He had seen it stated in the press that the government was running away from its policy of making school districts into road divisions. He wished to say that nothing of the kind had ever been ad-

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Headache seems to be habitual with many people. Some are seldom, if ever, free from it, suffering continually with the dull throbbings, the intense pain, sometimes in one part, sometimes in another, and then over the whole head, varying in its severity by the cause which brings it on.

The varieties of headache most common are sick or bilious headache, nervous headache, headache from constipation, debility or indigestion and periodical and spasmodic headache, and undoubtedly the cause must be removed before permanent relief can be had.

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vocated by members of the government when they were in opposition. What they had stated was that road supervisors should be chosen in the same manner that school trustees are selected. It was proposed to divide parishes according to their size and the number of roads. While some parishes, such as McAdam, in York county were large, the road mileage was small.

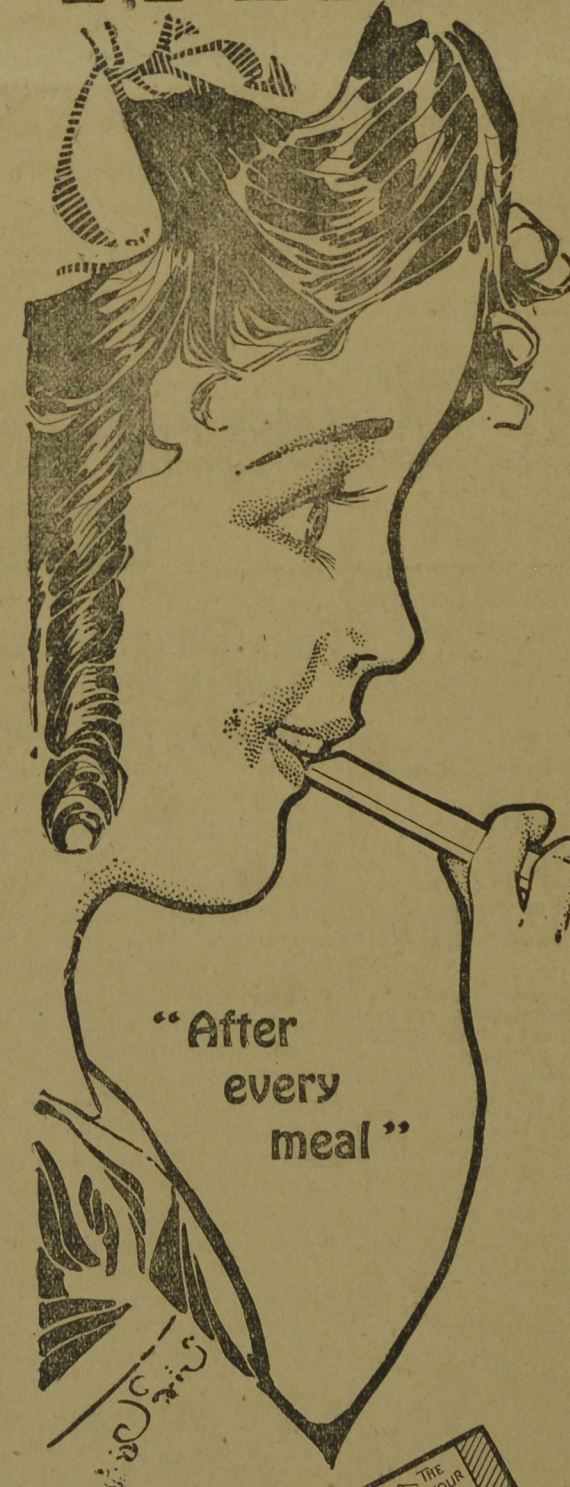
MR. SMITH (Carleton) said that unless districts were clearly defined it would be difficult to tell who was entitled to vote.

HON. MR. VENIOT replied that the matter had received careful attention.

MR. ROBICHAUD felt that the minister should have the right to remove

Continued on page 3.

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