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St. John Globe: The Provincial Department of Public Works endeavored to insure the protection of the country roads leading out of St. John on Sunday by placing men at the entrance to the Loch Lomond and Golden Grove Roads as well as at Rothesay where the permanent road ends. The result was that there were only one or two violations of the law and both two on the Golden Grove road were promptly reported to the magistrate for the district, George Adams, and the guilty parties will no doubt, have to bear the consequences. There were thousands of cars on the beautiful piece of road between St. John and Rothesay and it was surprising how leisurely the occupants of the cars apparently made up their minds to enjoy the outing as there was little if any speeding. Supervisors on the Westfield Road have appointed men to report any cars running in that direction outside the Fairville district limits.

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YORK STREET

MASTERLY SPEECH BY HON. MR. VENIOT YESTERDAY

Assembly Chamber,

April 13, 1920.

The House met at 3 o'clock. MR. BURCHILL presented the report of the Committee on Corporations.

HON. MR. BYRNE introduced a Bill to amend the Woodman's Lien Act; He explained that extensive operations in connection with pulp wood were to be carried on in the Province during the present year and the object was to extend the provisions of the Act to that class of lumber.

HON. MR. BYRNE introduced a Bill to amend Chapter 188 of the Consolidated Statutes respecting fees.

HON. MR. BYRNE introduced a Bill to amend the New Brunswick Companies' Act, 1916, and also a Bill to amend the Probate Courts Act.

HON. MR. ROBINSON introduced a Bill to amend the Act for the protection of certain persons employed in factories. He explained that it was proposed to bring the factory inspector under the control of the Workmen's Compensation Act. The amendment would eliminate features of the Act which were now within the scope of the Department of Health.

HON. MR. SMITH introduced a Bill to purchase lands from the New Brunswick Railway Company. He said it was proposed to acquire four thousand acres adjoining a settlement in Madawaska County. The Company had indicated its willingness to sell for seventy-five cents per acre and the Department proposed to turn the land over for settlement at that figure plus the general expenses.

HON. MR. ROBINSON moved that Rule 78 be suspended to permit of the introduction of a Bill to enable the City of Moncton to issue debentures.

HON. MR. VENIOT, on the order of the day being called resumed the debate on the budget. He said that it was a pleasing duty for him to furnish to hon. members of the House and to the public at large detailed information as to the workings of his department. The department was the property of the people and it was only right that they should have the information fully and courteously on all occasions. That was the rule he had adopted and he proposed to follow it in the future as in the past. The books of his department were open to hon. members of the House at all times and he would especially invite those sitting on the left of the Speaker to make an examination of them when ever they were so inclined. There had been a great deal of criticism launched against his department but not an hon. member who had spoken had been able to point his finger at one single case of wrong doing. He was not speaking in a boastful spirit but when the fact was considered that \$3,000,000 had been expended on Public Works, and the big guns of the opposition had been unable to point to one specific case of wrong doing it was certainly a matter over which he should feel some pride. True hon. members opposite had made general statements and had charged extravagance but the public would not be satisfied with that kind of criticism. They should come forward with specific charges and if they did that he would assure them that he would be only too pleased to grant an investigation. It would be different than was the case under the old Government. When charges were made under that administration every influence had to be brought to bear in order to secure an investigation. If hon. members opposite knew of any wrong doing they should have the courage to make their charges on the floors of the House.

During the last session it had been announced that the Dominion Government, after a series of conferences with road officials of the different Provinces, had decided to grant Federal aid to highway construction. The first attempt had been made to carry out such a policy in 1912. At that time a Bill passed by Parliament was amended by the Senate and according to the Government that amendment had killed the Bill. It was originally proposed to construct a Dominion highway extending from coast to coast but the project was not proceeded with. The Act remained a dead letter until the Fall of 1918 when the Dominion Government, after conferring with the various provincial departments of

Public Works, decided to introduce a new bill. Under that bill the proposal to construct a cross Canada highway, was abandoned, and as a substitute it was decided to grant Federal aid to the different Provinces. Ontario and Quebec afterwards submitted certain standards for highway construction. A further conference was held and a certain standard was adopted which he (Veniot) had declined to accept for New Brunswick as he did not consider it to be well adapted for rural districts. His stand was endorsed by Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island; British Columbia was willing to accept it but Saskatchewan and Alberta stood aloof. It was finally decided to adopt the standard set by the good roads conference which met at Quebec last year. The law was to have come into force on the first of March 1919 but it did not actually come into force until the first of July. The law debarred the Provinces from receiving the Federal grant on any work performed during the year 1919. He considered that an injustice and had taken the ground that New Brunswick having followed instructions was entitled to the Federal allowance for its road work for 1919. He pressed his views strongly on the Federal Government and finally succeeded in inducing Mr. McGrath and Mr. Malarky of the Federal highway commission to visit the province. They had met representatives of three maritime Provinces at Moncton and afterwards on his invitation had made an inspection of some of the improved highways of New Brunswick. So well satisfied were they with the work done on New Brunswick roads that upon returning to Ottawa it was announced that they had accepted them as the standard for the whole of Canada. Not only had they accepted them as the standard, but they changed the regulation so that work done up to July 1, 1919, which conformed to the standard, would be paid for by the Federal Government on a forty per cent basis. He considered Mr. McGrath and Mr. Malarky thoroughly qualified to form an opinion on highway work, and in the face of the action taken by those gentlemen the criticism of hon. members opposite fell to the ground. While he was proud of the fact that the highway work in New Brunswick had met with the approval of the Federal authorities he did not take the credit to himself but attributed it to the faithful honest work of the chief road engineer whom he considered one of the best in the Dominion of Canada. Employed under him were three district engineers who had given honest and faithful service to the department. To those men more than to himself he attributed the great success which had attended the operations of the past three years.

The Federal Government having reached an agreement to contribute forty per cent, on a maximum of \$230,000 per annum, the department had to make ready to meet those provisions. He had at the outset taken the ground that New Brunswick could not meet the conditions proposed because the arrangement was based on the fact that in some of the Provinces the municipalities contributed heavily to the cost of road construction. He had taken the ground that unless New Brunswick received better terms it would not be in a position to take advantage of the maximum percentage of Federal aid. The auto fees, no matter how large they might be, would not during the next five years be sufficient to meet the requirements of the ordinary and main trunk roads under the terms proposed by the Federal Act. It was with the object of taking advantage of Federal aid that he had introduced during the present session a Bill empowering him to borrow money to be expended on ordinary and semi trunk roads. As the auto fees increased they would be used for the improvement of bye roads and the principle branch roads of the Province. That would enable them to give a better service and would assist the farmers in getting their produce to market. He hoped before long to be able to place the branch road system in such a condition that nobody would have reason to complain. It had been charged that the Government was doing nothing for the farmers and was neglecting their interests in the matter of road improvement. An hon. member for St. John County had said that people who lived in glasshouses should not throw stones. The hon. member should have applied that maxim to his political friends when they were in power. He would defy him to point to one movement to improve the roads carried out by them when in office. His hon. friends opposite had auto fees in 1916 but threw them into the general funds. It was not until their dying hours in office that the hon. ex-minister of Public Works thought out a plan by which he hoped to hoodwink the farmers of New Brunswick. He had launched a programme for the borrowing of \$500,000 which was to have been expended on the very type of roads they were today describing as ordinary roads. The hon. ex-minister had not intended to pave the roads or give them a rock foundation, his plan being simply to widen and ditch them and put in concrete culverts. There was no provision even made for a coat of gravel. It was a fact that his hon. friends had lived in glass houses all of the time they were at the head of affairs. They now held up their hands in holy horror because the Minister of Public Works was following out the programme which they had laid down on the eve of an election. They had also charged that he (Veniot) had stolen the ex-Ministers' policy. Heaven forbid that he would steal the kind of policy that was placed before the Country in 1916. If he were

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to follow that policy road work would be confined to the opening of ditches, the widening of roads and the installation of culverts. The hon. ex-Minister would find in his own county evidence of the high class of work being done on the roads by the present administration. Even the newspapers of Houlton were praising the work done on the Woodstock end of the Houlton road and were holding it up as an example to their own town authorities. The hon. ex-Minister had been applauded when he brought down his policy for the expenditure of half a million dollars on the roads. The policy he brought down was not of the kind that would last. The present Government had gone over the secondary trunk roads and had the

(Continued on page 3.)

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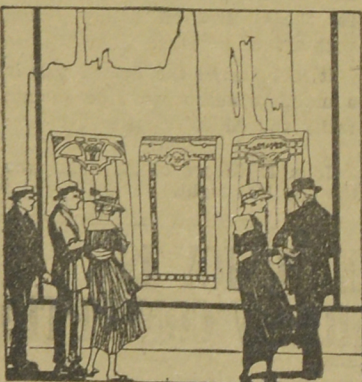
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