

HON. JOHN MORRISSY GETS EXCITED

A Speech That Was Not on the Programme Stirs up the House and Results in a Scene Discreditable to the Government.

If Col. Sheridan closed the debate on the budget in a blaze of glory last night, Hon. Mr. Morrissey was responsible for a scene during the session of the committee on supply that was not on the programme and was neither creditable to Mr. Morrissey himself, or the government of which he is a member. There was no excuse for Mr. Morrissey's wanton attack on Hon. Mr. Robinson, or on the opposition as a body. True, Mr. Morrissey's department has come in for a large share of opposition criticism. The accounts for bridges, show that only an occasional one is let by tender, and that the vast majority of the expenditures for repairs to bridges have been done by day's work and not by tender as promised in the platform of the present government when in opposition. Nobody knew that the iron had pierced the soul of Honest John, and certainly no one suspected that he was nursing the grudge which developed to such an extent at 6 o'clock last evening. There is no viewpoint from which Mr. Morrissey's attack can be condoned. And no excuse can be offered for his unparliamentary language during the harrangue.

But Mr. Morrissey was not permitted to escape. He had been playing the part of an artful dodger in declining to answer awkward questions on the ground that the section of the act under which they were asked did not apply. "Nobody understood just what the chief commissioner meant in his replies, but last night it developed that Mr. Bliss under the government, engaged to consolidate the highway act and amendments, thought he must earn the fee he was paid, and numbered the sections so that the section in the pamphlet issued by the department is section 82, instead of 84 as it appears in the acts. Always anxious to take a technical objection, the chief commissioner has been telling the legislature that he could not see any connection between the question and the section. Perhaps now, after the deserved pounding he got from the opposition he will answer the questions he declined to answer before.

Mr. Morrissey's stubbornness and reiterated denials, that he knew anything about the expenditure—which, by the way, was at Spruce Lake, St. John county, and made during the election—compelled Mr. Hazen, who saw things were going far, to admit there had been an expenditure amounting to \$200, and that it had been made under the very section of the act Mr. Bentley had based his enquiry on. He promised the information.

The House met on Friday at three o'clock.

The bills to allow the city of Moncton to issue debentures, etc.; to further amend the school's act; relating to the holding of municipal elections in the City and County of St. John, and the Sackville Electric Light and Telephone Company were agreed to.

Hon. Mr. McLeod presented the report of the standing rules committee.

Mr. Munro presented the report of the municipalities committee.

Hon. Mr. Hazen, for Mr. Slipp, presented the report of the corporations committee.

Hon. Mr. Hazen asked permission for the corporations committee to sit this afternoon while the House was in session.

Mr. Pinder presented the petition of the Fredericton Gas Light Company, in favor of the bill relating to that company.

Hon. Mr. McLeod presented the petition of the Town of Marysville to amend that town's incorporation act.

Hon. Mr. Hazen presented the report of the law committee.

Hon. Mr. Flemming introduced a bill to incorporate the Hartland and Miramichi Railway Company.

Mr. MacLachlan introduced a bill relating to the Town of Chatham, also a bill to incorporate the New Brunswick auxiliary of the Canadian Bible Society.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell presented the petitions signed by large numbers of ratepayers in the parishes of Lancaster and Simonds, St. John County, against the bill relating to the city and police courts in St. John.

The petitions were read by the clerk and Hon. Mr. Maxwell, stated that the petitioners contended that if the bill passed, it would destroy the parish courts and take all the court business into the city.

Mr. Woods introduced a bill relating to the sale of lands in Gagetown owned by Queens County.

Mr. Byrne introduced a bill to authorize Gloucester county to issue \$10,000 debentures to pay indebtedness.

Hon. Mr. Landry, in reply, to Mr.

Upham's enquiry, said that Hugh Harrison of Woodstock, was temporarily assisting the superintendent of immigration making up a list of properties for sale in Victoria and Carleton counties, and examining and reporting upon same, and also in ascertaining what labor may be required next season. He has been paid \$2.50 a day and travelling expenses while he was engaged.

Hon. Mr. Flemming, in reply to Mr. Upham's enquiry, said the government was not aware of what quantity of school books were in Tompkins Bros. store in Bath county at the time of the fire there, and that S. Watts Tompkins, who continued the business, was making remittances satisfactory.

Hon. Mr. Morrissey, in reply to Mr. Copp's enquiry, said there had been no suspension of work on the Narrows bridge, Queens county, after Jan. 1st, 1909.

THE HOUSE IN SUPPLY.

Hon. Mr. Flemming, on the item of three hundred dollars for expenses of auditor general's department, said that the contingencies were now voted with each department, and the legislature contingencies kept in a separate account, and that the old contingencies item in the estimates had been done away with. Under the new system the auditor general said there was twice as much work to do in his department, and this no doubt, somewhat explained the fact that the amount voted for expenses in his department was somewhat greater than it used to be.

Hon. Mr. Flemming, in reply to Mr. Copp, said that the item of \$1,400 for the educational department expenses, was less than was spent last year.

Mr. Copp said that while the government deserved praise for including the item of \$1,000 for school houses in poor districts, he felt that the government should consider the question of increasing the amount just as soon as the finances of the province would allow. He knew of one or two instances where more money in this direction could be spent in Westmorland county.

Hon. Mr. Flemming said that the government realized that it would be well if more money could be spent in this way and that an additional grant would no doubt be made when the finances of the province would allow.

On the item of \$12,000 for the purchase and expenses of handling school books, Mr. Flemming said that the expenses last year was greater than it would be this year for stock had then been placed with the vendors. It was difficult to prognosticate the demand because the vendors did not get their large supplies the first of August when schools were about to open up.

Mr. Robinson asked if it was the intention to extend the number of books under the new system. He understood that the list now covered about all the books.

Hon. Mr. Flemming said that it was the intention to extend the list and by the start of the next school year he hoped to have all the books in use in the common schools on the list of those sold at reduced prices.

Mr. Leger (West.) suggested that the government should handle slates and slate pencils as there were complaints that they could not be purchased at some of the vendors' stores.

Mr. Lowell wanted to know why it was it had been impossible to get grammars much of the time in St. John County.

Mr. Sweeney said he had heard of similar complaints from Gloucester County.

Hon. Mr. Flemming said that when the government changed the grammar book at the request of the text book committee of the Educational Institute twice the average number of grammars sold for the previous five years in the Province had been ordered. There had not been enough, however, and while the distribution was done with the use of the best judgment of the officials, the supply had not been enough and there had also been trouble of the same kind although to not such a marked degree with other books. Much of the departments troubles was caused by vendors ordering either too many or too few books of the different kinds. The books were now all well in stock in the department and would be kept so in the future.

Mr. Sormany said that in one village in Gloucester County where a Mrs. Blanchard of Caraquet had a store, it was the place where school books had to be bought, but the store was only open on certain days in the week and this caused a lot of inconvenience.

Hon. Mr. Flemming said that recently a Mr. Allard, who conducted a store at that place had applied to be made a vendor, and he had sent

him the necessary blanks on which to make his first order.

Mr. Sormany said he was glad to hear this.

Mr. Bentley said he was glad the books had been cheapened to the consumers, but the explanations given today showed that it was a difficult and cumbersome system that was employed and would have been better if some other way to cheapen them had been used. It might be possible to have the school teachers act as vendors and give them 10 per cent commission which would add somewhat to their small salaries, and at the same time the province would be protected against loss because if they failed to remit the amount could be deducted from their government grant.

Mr. Robinson said he used to read that the high price of school books under the old administration was costing the province \$70,000 a year, and he would like to know if the \$12,000 of this item was supposed to represent all the school books to be used in the province during the year.

Hon. Mr. Flemming said the leader of the opposition had been drawing on his imagination, that all the books of the common schools were not on the list, that the high school books were not sold through vendors and that the reduction of 40 per cent. or more in the cost of the books made a big difference to the people of the province who thoroughly appreciated it.

Hon. Mr. Flemming on the item of \$550 for expenses in the attorney general's department said that the cost of contingencies in which the item used to be included had been greatly reduced.

Hon. Mr. Flemming on the item of \$700 for the expenses of the receiver general's department said the work of this department had greatly increased as under the new system all accounts were paid not by warrants for bulk sums, but by single checks. The education department under the old system used to get quarterly warrants and now over \$300,000 was paid out in small checks through the receiver general's department, making much more work than the four warrants that had to be issued under the old system.

Hon. Mr. Flemming in reply to Mr. Robinson said that there was the same number of officials on the staff of the Receiver General and Provincial Secretary as there used to be, but they were divided differently between the two offices.

On the item for expenses of factory inspector the Hon. Mr. Maxwell said he wished to make a few remarks on the attack made by the hon. member for Westmorland on the present factory inspector in his speech the other evening, in which he charged that the inspector was using his position for partisan purposes. He had a letter from the inspector, with a copy of a report, a portion of the latter he would like to read.

Mr. Maxwell then read a letter from the inspector, setting out the exact circumstance of the case, and denying that he had in any way announced his intention of going to the newspaper office to interfere with it, or that he had discriminated against anyone at all.

Mr. Copp said the remarks he had made were based on information which he had every reason to regard as reliable and he did so regard it. Others besides his informants had heard the inspector announce his intention of going to Fredericton to the newspaper office and in his own words, "put it on the hog."

On the item for immigration, Hon. Mr. Flemming said that since the last appropriation many things had happened. The Agent General had died and it wasn't yet decided whether he would be replaced. New officers had been taken on his recommendation for three years from June last the rent of which would have to be paid. The Immigration department in this province was doing exceedingly good work and the last few months a special representative had been working in England in the interests of the province. He was expected to return in the course of the next few weeks bringing a large number of suitable immigrants for whom locations had been found on this side. Last year the Immigration departments satisfactorily settled in the province no less than three hundred persons from the other side.

On the item for the Tilley Memorial Mr. Copp said he had no objection to this memorial, but he felt that St. John was not the place where it should be erected. When it was desired to perpetuate the memory of men who had been prominent in the public life of the country, Fredericton was the place where the monument should be erected. The people of the province generally had no particular interest in St. John as they had in Fredericton, which being the seat of government and of the University, and as such, naturally appealed to them.

Hon. Mr. Hazen quite agreed, but said that it was St. John which was erecting the monument and not the province, the latter was only making a contribution to the cost as was the Dominion government also. He quite agreed that Fredericton was the proper place for the site of a public memorial erected by the province.

On the item for Natural History Societies, Hon. Mr. Hazen said in reply to an inquiry that the amount of the grant to each society was based on the work they did. The St. John Society had a large museum which was very instructive and it also provided lectures and practical demonstrations on subjects pertaining to Natural History. Chatham did

much the same but to a lesser extent but the Fredericton society seemed to do little or nothing in the way of active work. It was open to any society which was doing any work to apply to the government for a grant and if the latter was satisfied that the application was deserving of consideration it would probably get it.

On the item of \$500 for bacteriologist Dr. Bourque asked what were the duties of that official. Medical men who were in the habit of sending samples of sputum and other things for analysis were charged a fee of \$1 and he wished to know if it was in order.

Hon. Mr. Hazen said the duties of that official were not very clearly defined but that he hardly thought that for \$500 he was expected to make free examinations of any cultures which might be sent to him from any part of the province.

On the items for roads and bridges, Hon. Mr. Morrissey said that many complaints of graft had been made during the course of the debate against the structural superintendents and others engaged in the work of his department and it was a suitable opportunity for him to show how impossible it was under the system now in use in his office for any such thing as graft to exist. The superintendents were in charge of the work on the bridges sometimes doing the building themselves, other times overseeing other men. It frequently happened that the work had to be done in a hurry. In consequence of the manner in which the bridges had been neglected by the late government the work was often so urgent that it had to be started three or four days before instructions were received. In such cases the work had to be done by the day and when it was completed the accounts were sent to the office where they were passed on by the engineer, the commissioner and the auditor general. In that way it was impossible for any man to be otherwise than honest or he would soon be found out. When the accounts were passed individual cheques were drawn and sent to each person entitled to them.

People might say that there might be a rake off on the lumber and other materials supplied but the Auditor knew the price of lumber which was the same all over the province and would find out in a minute if more was being paid than it was worth. Every man was not a grafter through the opposition seemed to think every one connected with the Public Works Dept. was. It frequently happened that men put in a price for the Supt. in excess of the market value. They asked more than it was worth and admitted that they did, and they gave as the reason that the old Govt. allowed it. One man asked \$50 a thousand for spruce and said that was what he had been allowed by the old Govt. The leader of the opposition had had a lot to say about the bridges of the Province, but did not appear to know much about them. One bridge he said which had been built twenty three years ago at a cost of seven dollars now cost two hundred. Did the Hon. gentleman think a bridge could be built for seven dollars. He couldn't build a goose house for that money. If members opposite had any charge to make, let them formulate it in the proper way and sign it and he could promise them it should be investigated. And if it was proved that man would have to go out but if he was found to be blameless, the hon. gentleman would find that he had the Chief commissioner behind him and he would not only have the Chief commissioner's support but he would also have Morrissey's money to help him if it became necessary for him to clear his character. He would refuse to sit in his place and hear employees of his dept. called thieves and liars and if anyone came to him for justice he would see that they got it. The comments of gentlemen opposite were based on nothing but guttersnipe gossip. They had got in the habit of saying nasty things about their neighbors and were willing to ruin them both morally financially and if they could spiritually. He had made it quite plain that there was no chance for graft in his department, but it must be apparent to any man who stopped to think that in many cases it was impossible to ask for tender. In lots of the jobs, they did not know until they started work what would have to be done and it was often cheaper to do them by day's work than by tender.

His colleagues had acted in what they believed to be the best interests of the Province and that had been their one idea and ambition in carrying out the duties of the office. They wished to build up the province and he cared not whether it was liberal or conservative there was nobody who could stand up and say that he had not treated all alike. He had never known liberal or conservative in the administration of affairs of his office. He had been a liberal all his life.

Mr. Byrne—All your life?

Hon. Mr. Morrissey—I followed a man, Michael Adams, when you were down ducking around Sussex and before you were ever on the North Shore.

Hon. Mr. Morrissey said that he went into opposition on the Northumberland deal and he had remained in support of that party in provincial politics until they took over the administration of the affairs of the province in March 1908.

There was no man who could say that he had not been fair and square

(Continued on page three.)

D. J. SHEA

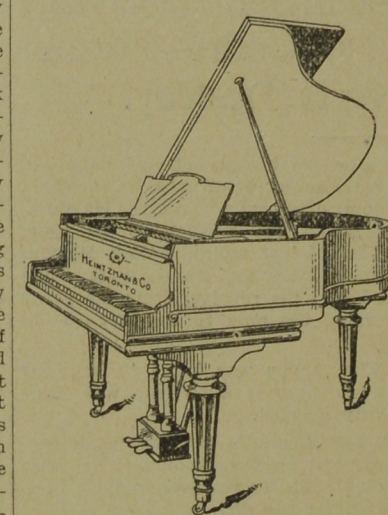
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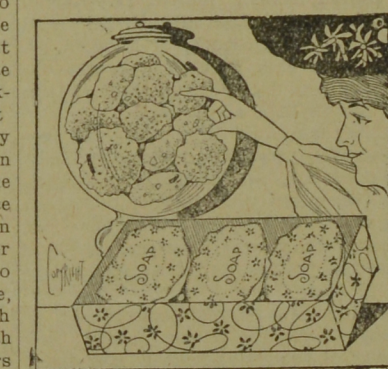
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Dated at Fredericton aforesaid, this twenty fifth day of February, A. D. 1910.
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Solicitor for the Mortgagees.
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