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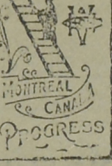
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THE DEBATE ON THE BUDGET.

Hon. Mr. Jones Successfully Answers the Opposition Criticisms.

MR. MAXWELL REPEATS SOME STALE OPPOSITION CANVASSES.

Mr. McLatchey's Eloquent Address.

In resuming the budget debate in the Legislature Monday afternoon Hon. Mr. Jones said:—When I was speaking on Friday last I was referring to the criticisms of the hon. member for Carleton in regard to increased subsidised. I regret that all political parties are not agreed on this question, because the attitude of the opposition is calculated to strengthen the hands of those at Ottawa who are unwilling that these concessions should be granted. All patriotic men must see that it is necessary that our claim should be pushed vigorously. Hereafter, when the history of the province comes to be written, people will be astonished that any party in this province could be found to oppose an addition to its income that is so much required. The Dominion of Canada has been very prosperous recently, and last year it had a very large surplus. That being the case, why should this province suffer from a lack of sufficient revenue when large grants are demanded for every public service. Sir Wilfrid Laurier said that he will call together the representatives of the several provinces, and discuss these subjects. Some people say that our share of the increased subsidy is not large enough, but this is a matter of compromise between the provinces, and no doubt our representatives at Quebec made the best terms possible. Various causes have combined to reduce the income of this province. Our public debt has been increased, but who is responsible for that? At the time of confederation it was never contemplated that the provinces would be obliged to give large subsidies for the construction of railways, but prior to the year 1879 there had been withdrawn from our credit account at Ottawa \$2,305,564, given for railway subsidies. In addition to that when Mr. Blair's government came into power in 1883 there was a debt of \$1,299,444, besides almost a million of dollars which had been authorized by legislation for railway subsidies. Then, no less than 1,600,000 acres of land worth at least a dollar an acre has been granted to a railway company, and between



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confederation and that date upwards of 200,000 acres had been sold. Although the province was involved to the extent of \$6,313,000 by the former government between confederation and 1888. That is to say its resources had been depleted to that extent. This was the means of reducing the revenue of the province so that when Mr. Blair's government went into power it was in the position of an heir to an incumbered estate. I am not criticising the action of the former government as to this expenditure. I merely wish to point out why the ability of this government to provide liberally for the public services has been impaired by the action of their predecessors. The financial critic of the opposition has complained that this government is not expending enough for education and that 400 schools have been shut down. In 1865 before confederation our expenditure on education was \$112,940. In 1890 after the new school law had been in operation for many years it was \$167,390. Last year our education cost us \$205,745. I have in my hand a letter from D. W. Hamilton, which was written from Kingston to the chief superintendent, which shows that the Consolidated school there is in a most prosperous condition and that the experiment now being tried is likely to be a great success. The government is ever alive to the interests of education. With regard to the assets of the province they are far more than ample to meet all our liabilities and to yield a very large surplus besides. The government has been careful in its expenditures and has been anxious to promote the interests of the province in every way. The enterprise which is likely to be established at Grand Falls is one which will mark an era in the history of this province and for which in future years all parties will give them that credit which is now denied them by the opposition.

AN OPPOSITION VIEW.

Mr. Maxwell.—I have listened with attention to the speech of the leader of the government and of the hon. member who followed him in criticism of his budget and I find it will be difficult for me to add anything to what was said by the latter. The gentleman who spoke last has not attempted to answer any of these criticisms. It seems to me that it might be right for me to refer to some of the financial operations of the government. All the Premier's eloquence was wasted on the things of the past. He had nothing but apologies for last year's operations. Look at the dealings of the government with the New Brunswick Coal and Railway. They have guaranteed the bonds of this road to the extent of \$450,000 on condition that it should be completed. The bonds have been given yet 25 miles of that railway has not been built. Then there was a loan of \$30,000 to this railway, which was wholly unjustifiable, being given without the authority of the legislature. Then we find that 523 shares of the stock of this line have been issued paid up, although not a dollar has been paid for them. Such transactions are worthy to be classed with the wildest chapters of frenzied finance. Then we have the Beersville railway which has been bonused by the government. The Premier made a most eloquent speech last year in which he said that the output of the mines by July would be 250 tons a day, whereas the average output has not exceeded 25 tons. I find by reference to the report of the minister of railways that this road has received \$21,575 from this province and \$27,716 from the Dominion government, besides issuing bonds to the extent of \$35,000, a total of \$84,191.

Hon. Dr. Pugsley.—You are mistaken as to the provincial subsidy. It was only \$11,000.
Mr. Maxwell.—Then my hon. friend had better correct the minister of railways. The company has received nearly \$15,000 more than the railway cost them. And notwithstanding the fact that this railway was built to aid the coal industry no coal is being carried over it because the owners of the railway and the owners of the mine have quarrelled. It shows great carelessness on the part of the government that they should bonus a railway without making provision for running it.

Then look at the enormous expenditure that has been incurred in the representation case. The only proper cause for the government to have pursued was to submit a resolution such as that was passed the other day. Instead of that they sent the Attorney-General on a pleasure trip to England at a cost of \$5,000 which I think was an outrageous charge. Then we have more expenditures on the fishery case and the subsidies case for the benefit of the Attorney-General. Some of the great departments of this province have been starved to death for the purpose of putting money in the pocket of the hon. gentleman opposite. Surely it was his duty as a member of the government to look after the interests of the province. If the Commissioner of Public Works was to charge a commission on every bridge he built, his conduct would be quite as justifiable as that of the Attorney-General. Take the succession duties as an example. Five per cent. of the sum collected is appropriated by the Attorney-General. This government is availing themselves of a new method of taxation and now the Premier proposes to reduce the value of an estate liable to succession duties to \$25,000. This is a literal robbery of the widows and orphans. Take an estate of \$25,000 and between succession duties and law expenses it would be reduced to \$20,000, the interest of which would not be more than \$800 a year, half of which would be taken by the city of St. John in taxes, leaving a mere pittance to the widow and children.

Hon. Mr. Pugsley.—Every civilized state has succession duties.
Mr. Maxwell.—The Attorney-General stated the other day that the New Brunswick Coal Company's railway was in an exceedingly good condition except some bridges, and the next day he read a letter from the president of the Company, written on the 17th of this month, stating that large expenditures were necessary to put the road and bridges in good condition. A man who was over the road the other day told me that it was all gone except a pair of rusty rails. The Premier was very eloquent and bold in regard to the bye elections, but why did they leave the position of solicitor general vacant for a whole year, and that of surveyor general for nearly as long? That did not show very much courage for it looked as if they were afraid to open a constituency. The Premier referred to my election for the City of St. John. He knows that in 1903 if it had not been for the late minister of railways and the resources of civilization which he used, he would not have had a single supporter in St. John, and at the late election no convention was called on behalf of the government and the candidate who was selected simply announced himself as the candidate of the Liberal party. The Premier has insinuated that I do not represent the business people of St. John, because there was a majority on the east side against me.

I present that statement on behalf of my constituents on the western side who do just as much business as those on the eastern side, and I claim to represent the whole electorate of St. John. The solicitor general undertook to defend the agricultural policy of the government. For years past the agricultural department has been literally starved to death, while expenditures on every other department has been increased. The result has been a decline since 1900 in all our crops. There has been a decline in wheat of 6,000 acres, and a decline on very other crops which we produce. If you turn to the auditor general's report you will find that out of \$27,000 expended by the department of agriculture \$11,000 was taken for the pay of the

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The same thing applies to our schools. Several years ago the predecessor of the present premier reduced the salaries of the teachers by 10 per cent. and this, with the increased cost of living, makes a reduction of about 35 per cent. in their earnings. The result is that teachers cannot be had and that four hundred districts last year were without teachers.
I had not intended to speak in this debate but after what has been said on behalf of the opposition it seems to me that I ought to put myself on record. I think I can congratulate the member who spoke last of being an accession to the debating talent of the house, and he is not likely to be a silent member. But the members of the opposition all tell the same story.

They begin by calling to the bar of justice the members of the government one by one. Economy is their cry. The government is spending too much money, but before they sit down they tell you that the different branches of the service are being starved and require more money. How are we to reconcile these statements? They tell us that the government is running the province, but it would seem as if this province takes a great deal of running, because it is more prosperous than ever it was. Hearing the statements of the opposition one must come to the conclusion that no matter what the policy of the government is, it is sure to be wrong, although one might expect that occasionally they might do right. Take for instance the highway act. No one can doubt that this was an honest effort to benefit our highways. But when the matter came before the house there was bitter opposition on the part of our friends opposite, but no suggestions for improvement. Before the act had been put in force we find members of the opposition running up and down the country and trying to get resolutions passed in the municipal councils condemning the act. One would have thought that they would have waited to see how it worked, but they refused to give it a fair trial.

Then with regard to agriculture we find them condemning the agricultural policy of the government because last year the crops were below the average. They condemn the government because the season was unfavorable for crops. I believe that the agricultural policy of the government is one to be commended because it is an honest effort to better the condition of the agricultural classes, and there is ample evidence that it has been successful.

Then the opposition tell us with a note of joy that 400 schools have now been closed. Why blame the government for that? They say you must pay the teachers a higher salary. But higher salaries mean more money and they tell us that the government is spending too much money and then when the government attempt to obtain more money from the Dominion government to enable our services to be better maintained the opposition have nothing but jeers and sneers for them, and do their utmost to defeat their efforts. I am glad that we have a government that is not afraid to press the claims of this province and I believe they will succeed in having these claims recognized and then the teachers will get more pay.

I have been somewhat struck with the remarks that have been made on what the last speaker called the cowardice of the present government. I failed to see any evidence of cowardice on the part of the government, but I think the opposition who allowed the government candidate to go in without a contest in Westmorland, Northumberland and Carleton might be open to that charge. As to the financial criticisms that have been made it is hardly worth while to waste time on them for the opposition have been telling the same story for the past twenty years. They are making a great outcry now because the Attorney general got too much money for arguing the

representation case. I do not know how the member for St. John knows that. I am a lawyer myself and I do not know it. Is there a man who has followed this question who will say that we should not have taken our case to the highest tribunal in the empire? No other honorable course was open to the government and if we grant this where could we find a lawyer who was more likely to be successful than the attorney general? Every member of the opposition knows that he has no superior in this province. We employed the very best counsel obtainable. It appears strange that session after session there should be so many attacks on the attorney general. He is like a tall tree in the forest which receives all the force of the blast.

In conclusion I would like to say with regard to the Central and Beersville railway, that the opposition have had all their questions answered and full information given by the

government. If we are to encourage the mining of coal at Beersville, could we do it in a better way than to assist a railway? So far as I am concerned I have followed carefully the different measures and acts of the government, and I believe them to be working for the betterment of the people. They are doing what they can to encourage mining, manufacturing and agriculture. Indeed if I was to find any fault with them I would say that they are too paternal and are trying to do too much, but that is a fault which people will forgive. The people know that they will receive justice at the hands of the government, and every member who had the interests of the province at heart should do what he can to uphold the present administration.

Mr. Tweeddale followed in an effective speech which we shall publish tomorrow, and Mr. Hazen moved the adjournment of the debate.

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