

GOVERNMENT DEFENCE.

Messrs. Burns and Murray Made Spirited and Effective Addresses in the Budget Debate.

Latter's Effective Answer to Opposition on Highway Act.

Two of the brightest speeches in the recent budget debate in the legislature were delivered by Messrs. Burns and Murray, the popular and energetic members for Gloucester and Restigouche.

MR. BURNS' ADDRESS.

Mr. Burns said—In rising to make a few remarks I do not wish to go into any extent of detail but simply to mention a few things which I think should be generally known.

The County of Gloucester from which I come, is one of the finest counties in the Province. Its sources of wealth are enormous, its fishing, mining and lumbering industries are amongst the richest in the Province, and I think I should be remiss in my duty to my county, if I did not say a few words on the budget.

We have many industries in the Province, fishing, lumbering, mining, agricultural, cold storage, and many others, but it is in connection with the agricultural policy that I wish first to speak.

What has this policy meant in these last few years? Untold wealth. The results cannot be estimated. Prices have doubled in the last ten years. In my own county ten years ago butter was offered 12 cents a pound and couldn't find buyers at that on account of the glutted state of the market.

Then we had no cheese factories, but as soon as these were started, the farmers had a chance to sell their milk with the result that soon there was a rise in prices, but later is now selling at 22 cents. All other agricultural products have gone up in the same way.

As I said last night a great many remarks have been made in disparagement of N. B. as a place to settle in. I am willing to take my chance with any young man and let him go to the west with his rod and his gun and live out in the wilds there for a week, and I will do the same here and I will very easily be able to show better results than he will.

There is any quantity of lumber for all domestic purposes and a ready market for every stick which a man wishes to sell at exceedingly remunerative prices, and a man has no longer to hew a farm out of the wilderness and burn his lumber to get it out of the way. A man has no trouble to exist in the forests of this Province if he possess a gun and a rod.

The policy of importing draught and sheep is one of the best ideas projected for many years. Speaking personally we have had to import half a dozen horses in the last year and we find that they are nothing like so suitable as the native bred horses.

Now a few words as to the lumber industry and in this matter I feel incapable of dealing properly with the task. Five or six million dollars worth are shipped away annually and there is no person man woman or child in the province no matter what walk in life they may be in that does not benefit from it. The lumbermen provide every dollar that goes into the roads and bridges of the country, and they have to keep open their own roads and get no assistance in this respect from the Govt. It will be said that they are making big fortunes, while no doubt the prospects of the industry are fairly good, look at the difference in the prices now and ten years ago. Everything required in the production of lumber has advanced nearly 100 per cent and the increase in the price of lumber has not advanced in corresponding proportion with the cost of the necessities for producing it.

Now as to the mining industry very little notice is taken of it at present it is "cried down." But I want to say that in a few years New Brunswick will become a very large mineral working province. The output of the Coal mines is at present 65,000 tons just double what it was a year ago and in a few years this amount will be doubled again. Look at the amount of cash distributed to the people in Queen's County where the mines are \$130,000. This will go a long way amongst the few inhabitants of the County, and will enable them to exist in very comfortable circumstances. The Imperial Coal Co. is also doing well. In addition to their coal they are going to make bricks out of a by-product to the number 25,000 a day. A short time ago a large deposit of iron ore was found in Gloucester County but it is very difficult to get capital invested in iron mines. I made application to the Govt. for some assistance and by the help of Mr. Sweeney I got put into communication with Mr. Lindeman a native of Sweden who had many years experience in the iron mining industry and he spent four months prospecting for iron in the County, and his resulting opinion was that there were millions of tons of iron ore and from borings we made we found 52 per cent of iron in this ore and I am in hopes of getting a company to work it. From this I

think it will be agreed that there is some prospect of the province becoming successful in the mining industry.

In manufacturing industries we are behind the times. I have often thought that the government should bring forward some scheme to assist it. What is the reason? We have the materials and if it was properly looked into I think it would be found that things could be procured in this country quite as well and as cheaply as they can be imported. As to the railroads, we have heard a good deal about these the last few days but there is one little railway that has not been mentioned that is doing as well as any one could wish. I mean the Carleton Place Railway. This is only a small line but it shows every sign of prosperity. The inhabitants of the district which it serves are able to get their supplies as well and as cheaply as they would if they had to go all the way to Bathurst. All this prosperity came in the wake of the railway.

I could dilate very largely on the prosperity of the county but I should have such a lot to say that I think I had better not go on any longer. Before I sit down I should like to say a word as to the election which will take place in the near future. Some of us may not come back here and there may be a lot of new faces, and whilst I hope that those of us who do come back will make new friends still it is always unpleasant to part with the old ones and some of the pleasantest hours of my life have been spent with the members of this House.

MR. MURRAY'S ADDRESS.

Mr. Murray said: The various subjects connected with this debate have been so thoroughly thrashed out by former speakers that it seems hardly necessary for me to say anything in regard to them, still there are a few matters in regard to which I will deal very briefly.

First, with reference to our new subsidy of \$130,000, I am glad to see that there has been a change in the tone of the opposition since this debate commenced. When the member for Carleton started out his idea was the province would suffer an actual loss of \$13,000 a year by accepting this subsidy.

Now, the opposition seem to have come to a very different conclusion. They think it is all right to take the subsidy but claim that we should get more. They are, in fact, taking the advice of The Chatham World in this matter.

The opposition have endeavored to rise into power by means of the highway act, but I take issue with my colleague, Morrison, from Northumberland, in regard to this act. He is entirely wrong in his statement with regard to the state of the roads. I have travelled through three of the northern counties, Gloucester, Northumberland and Kent, much more than he has, and I can say that the roads are now in a far better condition than they were a few years ago. This cry against the highway act will not prove an effective card. Some time ago a person told me that he intended to run an election for councillor in a certain parish against the highway act and nothing else and he claimed that he would sweep the parish. The result was that he was beaten two to one. I am in full accord with the principles of the act, although no doubt it might be improved in some details.

But if the opposition came into power would they have the old act restored which everyone knows was a complete failure. Under the statute labor system a man was taxed so many days work and as he was allowed only 50 cents a day he loafed on the side of the road and did not do two hours work. Under this system the roads were going down but now the man who is hired to do road work receives a dollar and a quarter to a dollar and a half a day.

Some of the members of the opposition would like to make the highway act responsible for everything. Look at the snow storm we had two weeks ago. No doubt the highway act was responsible for that. The member for Charlotte said that since the highway act came into operation the young trees have grown so fast that they knocked people out of their buggies. If that is really the case, the surveyor general ought to annex it to his department and then there would be no need for reforestation.

How could the act be better managed by the municipal councils, which would appoint new men every year than by the government? The opposition say that road superintendents are appointed from the political friends of the government. Do they ask us to believe that the municipal councilors would select road masters from their opponents? At present when we find that a superintendent is not doing good work we change him. The last appointment in my county was that of a man who is an opponent of the government, but who is a good man in other respects.

It is claimed that the government should give the municipalities so much money to keep up the roads. I dissent entirely from that proposition, for, if that took place, the responsibility for maintaining the road would be thrown on the municipalities and taxation would be increased. I am glad to know that the government will not shirk its responsibility for keeping up the roads and bridges. The more so as I know that the road grants must be increased in consequence of the cost of labor and material being fifty per cent more than it was a few years ago. As an illustration, of the inconsistency, and I may say indecency, of some of the opposition, I may quote a statement made in The Sackville Post, which, as a proof that the people have been over-taxed, stated that in the county of Westmorland, there was ten thousand dollars in the banks to the credit of the road act which was not needed.

Now, we all know that although taxes are levied in the spring, it is late in the fall before all the money is paid in, too late to do any good work but this money is available next spring.

The member for Carleton has called it the onerous highway act, but I fear he has been living in the wood and not looking abroad for there is a similar act in the State of Maine which is a great success. In Prince Edward Island, also, they have had a similar act for the past twelve years under which the roads have greatly improved.

The member for Carleton says that he has never opposed anything for the benefit of the Province, yet almost in the next breath he was denouncing the N. B. Coal and Rail way. He called this railway a sinkhole, yet he voted against leasing it for \$21,000 a year by means of which the Province would have been let out without loss.

The same gentleman complains that this railway is put down as an asset for the sum of \$1,150,000 to the credit of the Province. Now, the intention of the Province is to sell this railway and to get the best price they can for it. Would it therefore be sensible for them to put it down at a low figure of \$700,000 or at the value which the member for St. John places it?

The member for Carleton says that the government is spending all the increase in the revenue. Why should they not do so? They have to keep roads and bridges in repair to build large new bridges and to maintain the public services of the country. Any increase in the revenue has been fully met by increase in wages and material.

The opposition talk of extravagance but they cannot point out where the extravagance is and they do not dare to come before this House and say that such a bridge should be built here or such a road kept in repair. They are always making enquiries, but they do not find anything to the discredit of the government. No doubt when they get in the country school houses making election speeches they will tell all sorts of stories of graft, which they dare not say in this House.

Much has been said by the financial critic of the \$18,000 on exhibitions carried over from the former year. This matter is a very simple one for exhibitions are held near the close of the fiscal year which ends on the 31st of Oct., and the matter cannot be closed up until the new year is commenced. It is absurd to suppose that any year can be ended without accounts being carried over.

They make a great boast of the result of the Restigouche election and say that the government majority was reduced, but they know very well that the large majority obtained at the former election was entirely due to the fact that Mr. Mott could not get any one to run with him. With that exception the majority of 14 in Restigouche in the last election was the largest that has been obtained for twenty-one years.

At the general election of 1895, the majority of Mr. Mott, who was then supporting the government, was only 29, while that of Mr. LaBillette, who was then a member of the government, was 76.

At the election of 1899 the majority of Mr. LaBillette was 79, although at that time as now, he was chief commissioner of public works.

These facts completely upset the theories of the opposition with reference to the Restigouche election. In conclusion let me say that notwithstanding the boast of the opposition, I feel confident that when next an appeal is made to the people the present government will be triumphantly returned. (Cheers.)

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