ST. JOHN SEMI-WEEKLY SUN

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LEGISLATURE OPENED.

Address in Reply to the Speech Moved by Mr. Robertson.

Mr. Hazen Lays Down the Platform of the Opposition, and Criticizes the Government's Programme.

A Description of the Opening Ceremonies—The Speech From the Throne—Hon. George F. Hill of Charlotte Unanimously Elected Speaker.

FREDERICTON, March 23.—The first session of the ninth House of Assembly of New Brunswick opened here today. It was in every way a fitting day for such an occasion. The climatic conditions were fine; in fact, no one could find any fault on the score of weather. The roads were in such a good condition that country people were enabled to pour in as they saw fit, and they came in large numbers. The town was crowded with visitors from an early hour in the morning. Flags were displayed from all public buildings, hotels and many private residences, and the town took on a holiday appearance. The hotels, the Queen and Royal particularly, were crowded with people all day.

The members of the legislature met in the assembly chamber at 11 o'clock this morning and were sworn in by Chief Justice Tuck. The counties were taken alphabetically, Premier Emmerson and his colleague, Mr. Osman, being sworn in first.

Fully an hour was occupied in this ceremony, in which the chief justice was assisted by Clerk Rainsford and his assistant, Geo. Y. Dibblee. All the members were sworn in except Hon. Wm. Pugsley of Kings, Messrs. Leforest and Gagnon of Madawaska, and Mr. Mott of Restigouche.

At one o'clock people began to flock to the parliament buildings to witness the ceremonies connected with the opening of the legislature. The space immediately in front of the buildings was blocked with people when his honor the lieutenant governor arrived. The guard of honor, composed of 80 men from the R. R. C. I., in charge of Lieuts. Nagle, Winslow and Grant, with the band of the 71st Battalion, were in front of the building when his honor reached the house. Gov. McClelan was accompanied by his A. D. C., Lieut. Kaye, his private secretary, R. S. Barker, and Major Hemming, the present commandant of the R. R. C. I. There were also in the party accompanying his honor Sheriff Sterling, Coroner Coulthard, Major Loggie, Capt. Carpenter, Lt. Col. Surgeon McLearn.

The cannon on the bank of the river directly opposite the house, announced his honor's arrival, and the band played appropriate music.

The lieut. governor entered the chamber with his staff, and Clerk Rainsford read the proclamation summoning the legislature. His honor then retired while the house proceeded to the election of a speaker.

Immediately upon the retirement of the governor, Mr. Emmerson, the premier, in a happy speech, nominated Hon. Geo. F. Hill of Charlotte for the position of speaker. Mr. Emmerson referred to the services Mr. Hill had rendered the province in the past and said he was eminently fitted for the position for which he proposed him.

Mr. Hazen, in seconding the motion for the election of Mr. Hill to the speakership, said the opposition were pleased to have such a gentleman selected. Mr. Hill, he said, was one of the oldest, most experienced and most respected men in the house.

Clerk Rainsford declared Mr. Hill elected speaker, and then the usual formalities were gone through with, Speaker Hill retiring to put on the robe of office.

Among those who occupied seats on the floor of the house were: Mrs. H. R. Emmerson, Mrs. T. B. Winslow, Mrs. W. H. Burns, Mrs E. W. Henry, Mrs. Dr. Harrison, Mrs. H. M. Lettney, Mrs. C. J. Osman, Mrs. C. H. Labillois, Mrs. F. P. Thompson, the Misses Thompson, Mrs. W. T. Whitehead, Mrs. F. B. Edgecombe, Mrs. Alex. Gibson, Mrs. David Hatt, Mrs. James O'Brien, Mrs. J. W. McCready, Mrs Cooper, Mrs. Jos. Colter, Mrs. J. A. Campbell, Mrs. R. W. L. Tibbitts, Mrs. F. L. Cooper, Mrs. C. H. B. Fisher, Miss Burns of Bathurst, Very Rev. Dean Partridge, Dr. Inch, Auditor General Beek, Rev. Mr. Freeman, Chief Justice Tuck, James Hannay, C. J. Milligan and Thos. Dunning of St. John.

His honor the lieut. governor having re-entered the chamber, and the usual preliminaries having been gone through, the lieut. governor read the following speech from the throne:

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly:

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you as the people's representatives returned at the recent general election.

We have great cause for thanksgiving that the many blessings which our people have in the past enjoyed are through the mercies of a kind Providence still continued to us.

You are already aware that since the last session of the legislature her majesty has been pleased to appoint the Earl of Minto governor general of Canada. I am sure that you will join with me and the people of Canada generally in extending cordial greetings to his excellency, in whom we shall, I feel assured find a constitutional representative of our beloved Queen.

The expression of welcome which we loyally accorded to the new governor will not lessen in any degree the regrets which we experienced at the departure of the Earl of Aberdeen, whose untiring zeal and devotion to the general prosperity of the people of Canada signally characterized his administration and served in a marked degree to cement the bonds which attach our people to the empire.

The increased prosperity of the dominion during the past year in trade and commerce, and the extent to which the resources of Canada are becoming known throughout the empire and the world, encourage the trust that there will be not only a continuation of such conditions, but greater activity in all industrial efforts during the current year over all portions of the dominion, and that the high hopes of the people as to the future of our country will be abundantly realized.

The interesting character of the exhibit made by this province at the Sportsmen's show, held in Boston in March last, did so much to bring to the notice of the people of this continent the unrivalled opportunities which we offer to the sportsman and tourist, and was in all respects so promotive of good results that the expectations of my government in undertaking this display were, I am pleased to say, more than realized.

The awakened interest which I am glad to note is being taken in the mineral resources of our province has encouraged my government to take further steps to secure the prospecting and development of the heretofore dormant wealth of our country's undeveloped resources, and a measure having this object in view will be submitted for your consideration.

The efforts already put forth by my government in the past to stimulate and advance the agricultural interests of New Brunswick have been fraught with such favorable results that further advances in this same direction are deemed desirable, and there will be presented to you propositions to develop and promote that branch of animal husbandry known as pork raising, with a view to the promotion of pork packing establishments in our midst, thus enabling us as a province to more successfully compete with other provinces and states in the markets of Great Britain and other countries.

The pronounced success which has attended the efforts of my government to advance the cheese industry has encouraged them to make additional strenuous efforts to induce the manufacture of creamery butter throughout the province during the whole year. To this end there has been secured a model creamery and butter making establishment at Sussex, which is now in successful operation, and has so fully demonstrated the fact that butter of the best grade can be advantageously made in the province at all seasons, that the government confidently anticipate that similar industries will be established as the result of private enterprise at all suitable points; already one such industry has been started at Woodstock. This establishment at Sussex has incidentally enabled the government to provide the very best facilities for a provincial dairy school.

The desirability of encouraging the settlement of our public lands by our own people and by suitable immigrants from other lands has been recognized in the past by the government, and I feel assured that there is no abatement of that desire upon the part of the present legislature and the people generally. The authority given at their last session has been acted upon, with results that promise favorably, but it is realized that if we are to encourage any appreciable flow of desirable settlers from the old lands it will be necessary to have more and better information, in succinct form, as to the natural features and varied resources of our whole province, and of its adaptabilities for every branch of industry than has heretofore existed, with a view to its judicious dissemination and distribution among the people of Great Britain and other European countries.

The interest which is being taken by our people in the subject of improved highways, and the construction and maintenance of our common roads, has resulted in much intelligent discussion as to how these objects can best be obtained. In view of this you will be asked to make provision for the introduction of modern road machinery, to go to demonstrate to the people as far as possible its utility in making and maintaining proper roadways.

The long standing claim of the province against the dominion in the matter of the Eastern Extension railway has, during the recess, received attention, and you will be gratified to learn that my government has the strongest encouragement to hope that a speedy and satisfactory settlement will be effected in the near future.

The recent decision of the judicial committee of the imperial privy council dealing with the subject of the fisheries and the respective rights thereto of the provinces and dominion, confirms the claim made by the provinces to validate and tenative fishery rights over which the dominion government have hitherto asserted the exclusive property and control, and defines more fully than had before been done the respective jurisdictions of the federal and local governments over the subject matter of the fisheries, at the same time leaving unimpaired the duty cast upon the dominion to foster and protect all fisheries. A committee of my government, early this year, held a conference on the matter with a committee of the federal government, their report will be submitted to you, from which it will appear that the department of marine and fisheries claims that while the judgment of the privy council is explicit upon most points, it still, unfortunately, leaves open to question the claim of the province to proprietary rights in those shore fisheries located within the three-mile limit and below low water mark. In view of the circumstances and the importance of the interests involved, it is desirable that my government should be placed in a position to enable them to deal fully, effectively and promptly with the whole subject matter and with all conditions and phases of the questions which are liable to arise, and, to this end a measure dealing with the subject will be submitted to you.

The unprecedentedly high price realized from the sale of provincial 3 per cent. bonds issued in February, 1898, to redeem outstanding debentures then maturing was most satisfactory, demonstrating, as it did, the very excellent standing of the province in financial circles. Since then my government have effected the sale of 3 per cent. bonds at par, thus evidencing the fact that the financial credit of the province not only stands very high, but is advancing in a marked degree. A measure will be submitted to you giving authority to redeem, from time to time, as they mature, bonds bearing a rate of interest above three per cent. by other bonds to be issued and to bear interest at a rate not exceeding three per cent.

I have directed the accounts of the income and expenditure for the past year, as well as a statement of the receipts and payments of the current year, up to the opening of the present session, to be laid before you.

Estimates of the probable income and expenditure for the current year will be submitted to you, and I trust that you will learn that the estimates of expenditure have been prepared with careful regard to economy and the requirements of the public services.

In addition to the legislation already mentioned as being in contemplation, bills relating to the settlement of crown lands, to amend the law relating to the protection of game, and various other measures of importance will be submitted for your consideration, and I confidently trust that your deliberations, under divine guidance, will inure to the general welfare and prosperity of the people.

His honor the lieutenant governor having retired and Mr. Speaker having resumed the chair, Hon. Mr. Dunn introduced a bill amending the game law, which bill on the ground of urgency, was read a first and second time.

The reading of the speech by Mr. Speaker was dispensed with.

MR. ROBERTSON,

in moving the address, paraphrased, with his characteristic eloquence, the least important paragraphs of his honor's speech. He took courage over the awakening interest that is being manifested in the mineral resources of the province, and while not expecting to rival the Yukon in the gold output, felt assured that if our people made the proper effort they would find coal in abundance. There were wealthy gentlemen ready, he said, to test the coal oil producing capacity of New Brunswick. He warmly praised the agricultural policy of the government, particularly its efforts to promote the production of cheese and butter for export, and waxed especially eloquent over the fact that it was intended to introduce legislation to develop pork raising and pork packing in the country. He spoke at considerable length on the success of the flour mill policy, and predicted our farmers would raise more wheat this year than ever before. Mr. Robertson devoted considerable attention to the financial position of the province, which now stood high in the money markets of the world; and after giving the government credit for having done much to aid many and varied interests in the province, he appealed to the people at large to co-operate with the administration in bringing about the highest attainable stage of development. He closed with these words: "As descendants of the loyalists; as descendants of the Anglo-Saxons; as descendants of the Normans and the Celts, and as descendants of the Acadians, New Brunswickers should have all the energy necessary to make this province the great one that nature intended New Brunswick should be." (Great applause.)

MR. LAWSON,

who seconded the address, after complimenting Mr. Hill on his election as speaker, expressed surprise that such an advocate of woman suffrage as the premier had countenanced a speech that contained no word of regret at the departure of Lady Aberdeen. He felt that New Brunswick was taking a prominent part in the new era of prosperity that had dawned upon Canada and while not a believer in paternalism, he hoped the legislature would do all in its power to assist in the development of the natural resources of the province. Mr. Lawson's maiden speech was well received by the house and he was repeatedly applauded.

MR. HAZEN

said, before the motion was put he desired the opportunity of making a few remarks. He felt that even though in those remarks he might fail to strike a responsive chord in his hearers with regard to questions of general public moment, the house at least would agree with him in extending hearty congratulations to the mover and seconder of the address for the admirable manner in which they had fulfilled their responsible duties.

The hon. member from St. John (Robertson) had referred to this administration as a paternal government. The hon. gentleman had doubtless been so long actively associated with the liberal conservative party that he still used the felicitious phrase formerly used. The leader of this government (Emmerson), however, was not a paternalist; he was a free trader, who believed in the maxim that we should sell in the dearest market and buy in the cheapest. Perhaps, however, this was a paternal government after all, for bonuses amounted to the same thing as protection and the paying of two prices in order to maintain local industries was a very high type of paternalism.

He could not pay a better tribute to the late leader of the opposition (Dr. Stockton) than to quote the estimate expressed by his (Hazen's) opponent, Mr. Morrow, on declaration day, when he said that he felt that the defeat of Mr. Stockton was a loss to the house of assembly, because with his knowledge of law and of the constitution of the country, he had been able, with his obliging disposition and great industry, to render valuable service to the country. In saying this, Mr. Hazen said he believed that Dr. Stockton was only out of public life for a short time. He would soon again be to the front to represent the constituency in which he lived and which he had so faithfully represented. He (Hazen) deeply regretted not only from the opposition standpoint, but also for the sake of the public service, that he was not now on the floor of the house. (Applause.)

If ever the moss-grown saying that "the speech was more remarkable for its omissions than its contents" was justified, it was justified in the present case. It simply bristled with omissions. This poverty on the part of the speech had not been made good by any information as to inended legislation supplied by the mover and seconder. The speech was chiefly reminiscent.

He agreed with the speech as to the prosperity Canada was now enjoying, which he believed was due in the most direct possible way to the wisdom of the fiscal and tariff policy adopted by the conservative government in 1878, and which no succeeding government had ventured to lay its hands upon. He agreed also with the speech as to the importance and value of the exhibition made by the government at the Sportsmen's show in Boston. He could only express his deep regret that the government had not felt warranted the present year in following up the step they had taken by aiding the tourist associations of the province in making a similar display at New York.

During the election campaign the country had been led to expect that the leader of the government was going to wave a magic wand which would cause oil to spout from the ground in all directions. It now appeared that there were capitalists who believed that there was oil in the province and who wanted an opportunity to search for it. Of course it has been known for many years that oil existed in Albert and Westmorland, but the impression was that it would not pay the expenses necessary to develop it. He would, however, favor any well considered legislation that would aid in this exploring movement.

Mr. Hazen said he was surprised to observe no reference in the address to the great wheat raising policy of the government. Were they going to abandon that and substitute pork packing, which was the policy of the opposition leader (Dr. Stockton?) He (Hazen) believed that if the packing industry would be so established that the farmers would have a certain market at fair prices at all seasons of the year, such a policy would prove to be much more popular in the country and productive of more beneficial results than could possibly be attained by the government's wheat policy.

He observed that the government proposed doing something for immigration. While it was very desirable that our population should be increased, and especially that our own people should be kept at home, still we could not shut our eyes to the fact that under the present economic conditions of the world it was doubtful whether in these eastern provinces and states it was possible to attract any considerable portion of the tide of immigration now flowing from the old world. The tendency seemed to be westward, to the land where farms had not to be cleared by years of toil, and where greater opportunities for wealth seemed to exist. While he (Hazen) wished the administration the greatest possible success, still he doubted whether under existing conditions any large expenditure would be justifiable.

The language of the speech with reference to the prospect of the long-standing Eastern Extension claim being paid was very strong, but not so strong as the language used in the speech last year. If the reception then met with was so favorable as to lead to the conclusion that a reply would be received before the close of the session, it was passing strange that no reply had yet been received. In this connection, Mr. Hazen said he wished to refer to a statement of the hon. provincial secretary (Tweedie) during the recent campaign, that the claim would probably have been paid long before but for the fact that Messrs. Foster and Hazen were afraid that by its being paid to a government led by Hon. Mr. Blair, an advantage would be gained by that government. He (Hazen) desired to say that while a representative at Ottawa, he had never opposed the Eastern Extension claim; on the contrary, when the late Mr. Mitchell came there he had given his best efforts to secure its payment, for he believed the claim was just. If it was right that the dominion government should pay the principal money of this claim, it was certainly right that they should pay the interest. If the justice of the claim was undoubted, why refer it to arbitration? Mr. Blair was a strong personality, yet though nearly three years had elapsed since he went to Ottawa, he had not succeeded in having this claim paid. What assurance was there if the matter was referred to arbitration that the amount would be paid to the province? There had certainly been a long delay which had not been properly, nor fairly accounted for.

On the question of the inland fisheries, Mr. Hazen said while the question remained in doubt as to the right of the province to control those fisheries, without the three mile limit, it was undesirable that the province should take a course which might lead to future contention and conflicts.

Referring to the financial question, Mr. Hazen said there was nothing in the statement that the excellent financial position of the province, as shown by the sale of bonds, was due to the superior management of the government. The bonds of the province deservedly command a high figure, but this was largely due to the fact that there was in the money centres of the world today an enormous amount of money seeking investment, for which no investment could be found.

He could not help thinking that the hon. gentleman had been decoyed into moving this address under false pretences. One would have also thought that there would have been some references in the speech to that delegation that came from St. John last night to interview the government on the subject of a grant for a provincial exhibition. There was no reference to the exhibition of last fall, though that had been a decided success, and not one word about any agricultural exhibitions in the future.

He would have thought that the government might have had some legislation to propose to prevent the recurrence of practices that had prevailed in the recent election; legislation that would have given the people a secret ballot and that would have enabled employes, especially government employes, to vote without such shameless intimidation and coercion as had prevailed in St. John, Moncton and other places.

He admitted that the charges of bribery and corruption could fairly be made on both sides, and perhaps while people were willing to take money, it was natural that it should be offered; at the same time there should be a law on the statute book that would put a check on such improper practices as far as possible. The present system would eventually bring the country into disrepute and dishonor. If the people are debarred from honestly exercising their opinion at the polls, they cannot depend upon legislation being passed that will be in the public interest.

He had stated that the speech bristled with omissions. He had almost lost his breath on beholding his hon. friend from St. John (Robertson) rising to move an address in reply to a speech that did not contain a single word of favorable reference to the winter port of Canada. The hon. member's candidature in St. John was based entirely on the immense benefits that would flow to St. John by the influence he would bring to bear upon the government, yet the speech had ignored these great projects altogether that were to make St. John the Liverpool of Canada. When was the sun of prosperity that these people had predicted going to rise on St. John?

Passing on, Mr. Hazen said that during the campaign which had recently closed, much debate had taken place as to the contracts for superstructures upon permanent bridges being let without contract and at double the price paid in Nova Scotia and by the Intercolonial railway. A variety of statements had been made, but the charge itself had never been met. He had hoped that the government would have promised the introduction of a bill providing that in future all public works should be let by competition and tender, and that in the near future a commission would be appointed to investigate these very serious charges. He also thought same legislation should be forthcoming to conserve our forest wealth in view of the large number of pulp mills being promoted, which would be very destructive to our forest unless placed under a proper system of regulation.

Referring to the recent election, Mr. Hazen contended that while the government won a sweeping victory, the number of seats carried by the opposition did not adequately represent the proportion of votes polled by their candidates. The effect of the Moncton convention was good, if for no other reason than that it aroused an interest in provincial affairs that had not been taken for years. Though the leader of the government loudly declaimed against the introduction of dominion issues, at that very moment Mr. Blair, in his private car, was hastening from Ottawa to meet the hon. member in order to perfect arrangements for using all the patronage and power of the dominion government in the contest.

Mr. Hazen here gave figures showing that 50,457 votes had been polled in the recent election, of which 25,766 had been cast for the opposition candidates, or 46 per cent. The government only had a popular majority of 4,925, more than half of which was obtained in Kent and York. In many counties the government's majority had been greatly cut down as compared with previous elections. According to the Parliamentary Companion Mr. Osman had beaten Mr. Peck in 1896 by 600 votes.

Hon. Mr. Emmerson—That is wrong.

Mr. Hazen—I have taken it from a source that the hon. member will not dispute.

Hon. Mr. Tweedie—I dispute it, as that same authority says I am a Methodist, and I never was. (Laughter.)

Mr. Shaw—Nobody will believe that. (Renewed laughter.)

Passing on, Mr. Hazen said that in certain constituencies, which he named, 24 members had been returned supporting the government by an aggregate majority of only 1,210 votes. A change of a little over 600 votes would have put the government out of office.

Mr. Tweedie—Then your conclusion is that the opposition is elected?

Mr. Hazen—My conclusion is that the hon. gentleman should conclude with the Grecian general, Pyrrhus, when he defeated the Romans, "another such victory and I am done."

Mr. Emmerson—We can stand several of them. (Laughter.)

Mr. Hazen said he had fully expected that there would be some change in the personnel of the government. He had thought to see his hon. friend from St. John (McKeown) coming here as solicitor general. Were the government afraid to risk a fight in St. John, owing to complications there? Or had they decided in accordance with what everybody knew, that no necessity really existed for the office of solicitor general?

OPPOSITION PLATFORM.

In conclusion, Mr. Hazen said the opposition in this house did not intend to give the government a factious opposition. They had been elected to do their duty and would support any measures emenating from the government that were for the well-being of the people. The opposi-

(Continued on page 2.)

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