

THE TERRITORIAL POSITION

AS PRESENTED BY PREMIER HAULTAIN BEFORE THE LEGISLATURE, 13TH SEPTEMBER, 1898.

The Present is a Year of Financial Jubilee by Reason of Large Revenues Coming From an Unexpected Source—In Future Years the Revenues Will Fall to the Old Figures, Small Enough Before, and Totally Inadequate Now—The School System and Other Institutions Whose Growth Means Outlay, Advancing by Leaps and Bounds—The Only Remedy is Provincial Establishment if Parliament Fails to Very Largely Increase the Territorial Grant.

MR HAULTAIN in moving the House into Committee of Supply on Tuesday, 13th Sept., 1898, stated at the outset that every item of the Supplementary Estimates which the House was asked to vote would be found to be of a purely practical nature. Besides the supplementaries for the year 1898, there was an Estimate of \$60,000 for 1899 to provide for carrying on the public business until the time that the House would be called to meet in that year, that was to say after the end of the present financial year. The reason for the policy of asking this \$60,000 vote he would explain later.

LAST YEAR'S EXPECTATIONS.

The House would recollect that last year Supply was voted for 18 months instead of for an ordinary year. This course was adopted for several reasons. Up to the present the Territorial financial year had ended on 31st August, and under the old system followed by Parliament in the voting of the North-West grants which compelled the Assembly to hold its sessions in the summer or fall, that date was the most expedient. Now, however, the Assembly grant from Parliament is paid half-yearly as a subsidy, which enabled the Assembly to alter their financial year and make it coterminous with the calendar year, which would be more convenient from many points of view. The reasons for the change were very fully discussed last year and he would not repeat them. It had been foreseen that the House at this session would be asked to vote certain supplementary items—for the expenses of this session, to provide for the expenses of the general election, and to provide the grants to agricultural societies. They had estimated for supplementaries for these purposes amount in round numbers to \$40,000. The amount now asked far exceeded that amount, and he would try to justify the excess. The total revenue arising from all sources from 1st Sept., 1897, to 31st August, 1898, amounted to \$42,772.11. At the 1897 session the House appropriated \$372,510.82, having then in view an additional \$40,000 to be voted as supplementaries this year as he had explained. However the actual balance between the amount voted last year and the total amount of the revenue was \$170,261.29. The House was now asked to vote \$163,925 24 instead of \$40,000, and even then there would be left in the bank a sum exceeding \$6,000 to go to swell the revenues of 1899, and this calculation did not include a sum of \$28,000 collected for trapping permits in Yukon which also would go to the amount to be voted by the new Legislature for the services of 1899. So he could say at once that while they asked an extraordinary amount for supplementaries they were not overstepping the limits, and were not encroaching a single dollar on the amount properly belonging to the new Legislature. Besides the \$6,000 balance, and the amount to come from Yukon, there would be several small unexpended balances to go to the fund for next year. It was thought that as the present Legislature ends with the present year and this was the last session, the Supply for 1899 would more properly come within the jurisdiction and work of a new House. There had been a very large temptation to do as was always done elsewhere, and as would be done here if this had not been the last session of an expiring legislature, namely, vote the Supply for the succeeding year. The Government could have brought down really magnificent estimates, adding next year's supply and this year's supplementaries together, an amount between \$500,000 and \$600,000. That would have made a splendid showing in one sense, gratifying to the House and to hon. gentlemen's constituents. But they deemed it proper to resist, and they had resisted, the temptation. It would be possible for the new Legislature to meet soon after the election; the new House would be called as soon as possible. It was the proper course for this House to leave to its successor the business of voting the supply for next year, and confine itself to dealing with what legitimately belonged to it. They would not, for the sake of making a good showing and bringing down splendid estimates, depart from a good sound constitutional principle, and they would not anticipate the business of the next year which came within the province of a House yet to be elected.

THE REALIZATION OF THE YEAR.

The increase in the revenues for this year had been extraordinary and unexpected. The largest increase was from fees for wholesale liquor permits for the Yukon. From this source the revenue was \$122,000 to begin with. From fees for enrollment of advocates there had been considerable revenue, which also was caused by the rush to the Yukon. It was not surprising that there had been a rush of lawyers to that country. The great movement of people into the gold fields, the likelihood of many legal conflicts arising out of disputed claims, etc., and the large fees to be hoped for, were doubtless a great attraction for professional gentlemen, apart altogether from the possibilities existing for any man to become possessed of a valuable mining claim himself. The business likely to arise out of the gold claims was sufficient to induce a rush of professional men, and the Territorial revenues reaped some \$2,000 from fees for enrollment of advocates. Fees from appointment of notaries exceeded the estimate by \$250. In all the Yukon yielded a revenue of more than \$124,000—an amount not calculated upon at all in the estimate of revenue available for this year made at last session. The ordinary local revenue had also taken an unexpected jump. They estimated it at \$30,000. For a number of years the local revenue had been nearly a fixed amount, but this year it had exceeded the estimate and exceeded the amount derived from local sources in former years by between \$10,000 and \$12,000. So in addition to the sum of \$40,000 of their estimated revenue left unvoted last year,

they had now a further sum of about \$140,000 in round numbers belonging to this year, and which this House might be asked legitimately to vote.

NO LACK OF NEED FOR THE INCREASE.

If they had had a larger revenue this year, they found also that there were larger expenses to meet. The legislation of last session had led to an incalculable increase in the work of the public offices. The increase could not be put down to any particular new policy adopted, excepting the case of brands registration; but the ordinary everyday work of the offices had increased fully 40 or 50 per cent. No one not right in the spot could notice the increase or see the reasons for it, but it was a fact experienced in every department that the work had increased simply by leaps and bounds. Possibly it was partly due to the organization of government and the institution of regular departments under the change from the vague system under which no one was definitely responsible and there were no organized departments, to the system of organized departments and appropriate individuals being appointed for the public to write to. For instance he had himself the honor to hold the title of Attorney General. The man appointment of such an official had seemed to lead to a tremendous increase in the correspondence of the office. Every Justice of the Peace considered that he had a right to obtain information and advice upon all the business coming before him from the Attorney General, and others availed themselves of the opportunity afforded by the appointment of such an official. They had estimated for supplementaries for these purposes amount in round numbers to \$40,000. The amount now asked far exceeded that amount, and he would try to justify the excess. The total revenue arising from all sources from 1st Sept., 1897, to 31st August, 1898, amounted to \$42,772.11. At the 1897 session the House appropriated \$372,510.82, having then in view an additional \$40,000 to be voted as supplementaries this year as he had explained. However the actual balance between the amount voted last year and the total amount of the revenue was \$170,261.29. The House was now asked to vote \$163,925 24 instead of \$40,000, and even then there would be left in the bank a sum exceeding \$6,000 to go to swell the revenues of 1899, and this calculation did not include a sum of \$28,000 collected for trapping permits in Yukon which also would go to the amount to be voted by the new Legislature for the services of 1899. So he could say at once that while they asked an extraordinary amount for supplementaries they were not overstepping the limits, and were not encroaching a single dollar on the amount properly belonging to the new Legislature. Besides the \$6,000 balance, and the amount to come from Yukon, there would be several small unexpended balances to go to the fund for next year. It was thought that as the present Legislature ends with the present year and this was the last session, the Supply for 1899 would more properly come within the jurisdiction and work of a new House. There had been a very large temptation to do as was always done elsewhere, and as would be done here if this had not been the last session of an expiring legislature, namely, vote the Supply for the succeeding year. The Government could have brought down really magnificent estimates, adding next year's supply and this year's supplementaries together, an amount between \$500,000 and \$600,000. That would have made a splendid showing in one sense, gratifying to the House and to hon. gentlemen's constituents. But they deemed it proper to resist, and they had resisted, the temptation. It would be possible for the new Legislature to meet soon after the election; the new House would be called as soon as possible. It was the proper course for this House to leave to its successor the business of voting the supply for next year, and confine itself to dealing with what legitimately belonged to it. They would not, for the sake of making a good showing and bringing down splendid estimates, depart from a good sound constitutional principle, and they would not anticipate the business of the next year which came within the province of a House yet to be elected.

INCREASED WORK AND NEW OFFICIALS.

Two notable items in the Estimates were asked to provide salaries for two new officials who had been appointed since the House last met. The House was asked to vote the salary for, and ratify the appointment of Mr. Robson as law clerk, and for Mr. Peterson as deputy in the Department of Agriculture. In neither of these instances did he think there any call for apology. He could personally assure Mr. Robson that he was a first rate man for the work. There had for a long time been a constant demand for a law clerk in the House. The want had been long recognized of an official skilled and trained in the work of drafting legislation. There was a long standing feeling that the sooner they could see their way clear to the engagement of a law clerk, the better it would be for their legislation and general business. Mr. Robson would, too, fill the post of deputy to the Attorney General. In that regard he could only say that in view of the increase in the business of the office it had become a physical impossibility for the political head of the department to give the attention demanded to all the routine of the office. The House could have no idea of the number of points involving professional opinions, which came to the Attorney General's office, not alone from the outside public, but arising from the work of the other departments. From the work of the Public Works department there arose an innumerable and constantly increasing number of references—from the Statute Labour system, in regard to elections held under it, powers of Overseers and questions of assessment. So with the Education department. Under their system of schools there were constantly arising difficult and complicated questions which properly belonged to settlement to the law department of the government. From all their departments, in fact, there were points continually coming up which had to be considered in the Attorney General's office. Under the Public Works department, again, there were questions of trails and road allowances, often intricate questions relating to titles involving business with the registry office, and which could only be handled by the Attorney General. The same was true of the Irrigation administration. He needed only to mention some of these points, and to leave the House to understand and appreciate the nature and amount of this kind of work. All the subsidiary work respecting municipalities and like institutions brought the departments into very direct contact with the people on many questions involving legal points and questions of very important and often serious public interest—points and questions upon which the departments must be in position to give well-considered opinions. Again, prosecutions under the Ordinances

yet it took him two whole days to reach a determination. In those two cases, this fact would enable the House to have some idea of the difficulty and amount of work which had been done. A great deal of the work done in the office in the past year was new work, and there had been a redistribution of the officials. While the total expense had increased, the increase was entirely due to new work. The general tendency was to simplify the work. In the Education and Treasury offices, and in some of the subsidiary branches there had been certain simplification and saving of expense. There were fewer offices in these offices than formerly, while the work had certainly not become less. New work was being dealt with in the new departments, and new offices were established only when they became necessary from the point of view of usefulness and convenience to the people of the country. The Government could claim that they were keeping to their policy and their traditions and were doing the work with the smallest staff compatible with the public interest. No one knew the work which had to be done could cavil, and he stated a fact when he said that there was not a single unnecessary official in their employ. During the year the staff had worked night and day endeavoring to keep up with the business arising—the officials had worked over hours not only for weeks but for months at a stretch, and even then there had been absolute necessity for the employment of extra temporary clerks. He had taken the ground in conversations with his colleagues, that whenever it was shown that the staff was unable to cope with the work, he would rather take the responsibility of employing additional assistance and depend upon the House to sustain the action, than to come down to the House and meet the complaints which were sure to be heard if the work were not done. He could honestly say and claim that in every case where they had engaged an extra clerk or had made a new appointment, there had been an actual requirement.

ITEMS OF THE ESTIMATES.

The Public Works items he would leave to Mr. Ross to explain, who was better qualified to enter into the details. In a general way he might say that in the supplementaries there were votes asked for a few new items but the bulk of the items were for works which had been pressed for last year but could not be provided with the means then at the disposal of the House. The works for which votes were now asked were works which could be done and would be done this year; of course they would need money to be done this year or the money would lapse. Of the new items, there was one present a very up-to-date map of the Territories. The map would include the electoral districts to be made at this session. The House was asked to provide for 10,000 copies, and they would be ready very shortly after the House rose. Including the Statute Labor, School and Legislative Assembly districts, the map would contain a large amount of very valuable information taking the place of letter press description. The showing of the useful institutions of the country would constitute a valuable object lesson. It would be an unwritten pamphlet on the North-West Territories. There was a vote for the expenses of the inspection of steam boilers, which service is expected to return sufficient in fees to pay for itself and perhaps show a slight margin to the good. There was a vote to pay a portion of a bonus to a man at Wetsaskiwin, the circumstances of which were the following: From the district grant a bonus of \$500 had been promised to the man in consideration of his building a flour mill and operating for three years. After one year's operation the mill was burned. It was insured in favor of the Government, who received the \$500 from the policy. The man had operated the mill for one-third of the term of his agreement, and it was thought right that he should receive one-third of the amount of the bonus. In regard to Public Works, Mr. Haultain hoped that in future years the Estimates would assume a different form, and that there would be a nice amount of work just in gathering the threads and details. The appointment of an agricultural deputy would be bound to command itself to the House. He would not need to dilate on the importance of that department. Agriculture was the main industry of the Territories, and the policy of the Government should be directed to the promotion of the interests of and the development of that industry. They were initiating a policy. The House was not asked to devote a large amount of money towards it, but they were making a departure, a commencement. The Agricultural department, although its scope and interest were large and most important, was not itself large as yet. There were just the deputy and one clerk at present, and no doubt, with possibly an assistant or two, this staff would be able to carry on the work for some time to come. Though the expense was small the department was not the less important and they could all sincerely hope that it would fast grow in usefulness.

THE BRANDS CHANGE.

In the present year the aggregate expenses of the offices had been extraordinarily large. The extra work had been occasioned not only in the manner he had been describing, a more or less legitimate increase; but a more extraordinary, and it was to be hoped temporary, increase was caused by the change in the Branda registration system adopted by the House last year. It was always easy after the event to see what might have been done better. He was willing to admit that if they had allowed a longer time within which to effect a change a great deal of the rush of work would have been avoided as well as a great deal of the trouble and unnecessary friction. He said this simply by way of retrospective. The was no use in dwelling on what might have been done better. He was willing to admit that if they had allowed a longer time within which to effect a change a great deal of the rush of work would have been avoided as well as a great deal of the trouble and unnecessary friction. 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