THE BUDGET DEBATE

(Continued from page 5.)

Saskatchewan was clear and distinct on the question. He said we do not need provincial autonomy. He would leave that to the sound judgment of the thirty-five representatives in the Assembly. The Member for Alberta alleged that it was a good deal better to continue as we are and that it was only a matter of dollars and cents.

Then there were the reasons advanced by the Member for West Assiniboia as to why provincial autonomy should be refused. These had been satisfactorily answered by the Attorney General. He (Bennett) had taken the attitude in times past in the House that the Government ought to co-operate as far as possible with the Members at Ottawa representing the North-West Territories to the end of procuring better terms. He believed that four Members at Ottawa supporting the Government would have a great influence to that end. He had moved a resolution to that effect. It was no doubt in pursuance of that policy that Mr. Bulyea wrote his personal letter, backed up by the Liberal Members of the Assembly. He had no fault to find with it in so far as it referred to the Territories as a whole and not to a part of it. It was a common thing to write such letters and he had done so himself in the past and would probably do so in the future. But the House had every reason to believe that their representations would be received and considered with care at Ottawa. It came to him as a surprise the reasons given by the North-West Members. He had believed that these gentlemen would stand up for the rights of the West apart from all considerations. He did not intend to go into the reasons they had advanced as it would be idle to do so after the speech of the Attorney General. The House, however, owed a large duty to itself which it must discharge. He had read yesterday an editorial in a paper published by one of the gentlemen representing the Territories in the House of Commons, he referred to the Regina Leader, in which the statement was made that the solemn demand made by this House in 1900, in 1902, in 1903 and reaffirmed the other day was, after all, what? Merely an attempt on the part of a great corporation to help to assist the movement for autonomy in order that certain rights might accrue to them and that the lands in these Territories, which we are so anxious to obtain, should be granted to the end that a Conservative administration might be empowered in the Territories. A statement like that called for refutation. It was not what he contended for; further, it was not what the House contended for. It was a statement insulting not to one man alone but it did violence to every instinct of decency coming from such a source. Coming, as it did, from a journal which had supported the Government in this House, which called upon the federal Government to grant our demands, the statement of yesterday ill accorded with former statements. It ill accorded with the editorial utterances of that paper in the past and with the speeches of that gentleman. In the interests of a sound public opinion, in the interests of the stability of our institutions, he protested that the policy of a demagogue should not be intruded on a question such as this. He did not believe that any Member in the House believed that any attempt was being made by that Legislature to have provincial institutions granted to the country immediately and the lands given to us to promote any interests of any corporation.

TAXATION OF C.P.R. LANDS.

He had made the statement that so far as taxing C.P.R. lands in school districts was concerned that was a question that was solving itself. He made that statement before and he made it again and it was absolutely correct. He would say that it was an unfortunate thing that so large an exemption was granted to that corporation and it was the duty of the House to get some compensation for it. Who could cast the horoscope of the future and see 20 years in advance? No man in the House of Commons of that day could do it. The same policy had been followed in the United States. It was unfortunate that in the early stages school taxes were not paid for school purposes by that corporation, but was it any reason because a few thousand dollars of school taxes would be lost in Assiniboia that the Territories should be deprived of the right of self-government? He adopted the reasoning of the Attorney General with regard to the contention as to taxing stations, and the other property of the corporation in so far as the rights of school districts were concerned. If the court of last resort held that the Territories had a right to tax C.P.R. lands for school purposes then could not the Parliament which granted the exemption insert a provision giving us all the rights as a province which we have as Territories?

REASONS FOR REFUSING THE ADVANCE.

The larger question had been raised as to whether or not they should spend the $250,000 held up before them by the Dominion Parliament. For one he said they should not. It would be unsound business to touch it. There were several reasons against accepting it. First, until our just demands had been satisfactorily met by the federal Government. Second, because it meant a direct lessening of the federal expenditure in this country. The Dominion Government was paying for the two bridges in the west which had been referred to but what happened the other day when a deputation went to Ottawa and asked for the construction of a large traffic bridge at Saskatoon? Sir Wilfrid Laurier simply said "Go to Regina and they will build it for you out of the capital advance." That meant that instead of building the bridge and charging the cost against Canada as a whole it would be charged against the capital account of the Territories. Here in the West we had no canals or harbors to be constructed as public works by the Dominion and in this country he contended that these large bridges should be considered public works for the benefit of Canada and the whole of Canada should pay their share towards them in the same way as the people in the West were paying their share for digging canals, erecting lighthouses, dredging harbors, etc., in the old provinces. A third reason was that it was fastening a loan on the people of the Territories on terms about which they had nothing to say. With provincial autonomy they could borrow money at least as low as four per cent. While they would get the sum offered without interest now it would ultimately cost them $12,500 per annum for ever. In the early days in the Western States the States and Territories enjoyed the power of borrowing money and pledging the public credit and so confident were they of the future that they paid as high as ten per cent per annum and the investment had proved a good one. Fourth, it would mean putting off the granting of provincial institutions. The Dominion would take the position of the federal Members that it was merely a question of money and not of principle. Fifth, the very fact of being styled Territories instead of having the dignity of a province was an injury and a man going abroad to do business would soon realise the great advantage of coming from a province rather than a territory. The business men today were writing at the head of their letter paper "Regina, Canada," instead of "Regina, N.W.T." or "Assiniboia." It was difficult to divest oneself entirely of party bias in dealing with this question but he had endeavoured to do so. In conclusion he appealed to his Liberal friends not to allow party exigencies to outweigh the country's interests. The constituencies which had returned them before to press for autonomy would return them again. (Applause.)

MR. G. W. BROWN

followed. He congratulated the Government on the result of its efforts on behalf of the North-West, not only on the result of its appeals to Ottawa, but also on its legislation and the administration of the affairs of the Territortes. He congratulated also the members of the Opposition upon the fact that they too had found themselves in complete unison with the Government policy on those questions which during past sessions they had complained of so strongly and that that legislation which they had been pleased to term as an invasion of the people's rights had been so modified that they had found themselves without a place as adverse critics and that henceforth we might expect to see them good and valiant supporters of the Government.

So far as asking for provincial autonomy was concerned, or the demands made upon the Ottawa Government for increased financial assistance, as well as the extension of our Legislative powers, he said the House had taken no step at variance with his opinion. The question as to whether there should be one province or two, was, in his opinion, a minor matter as compared with the question of keeping the Territories as a whole separate from conditions other than conditions which they themselves had created. The great question was that the Territories should be either erected into one large province, or, if it were argued that on account of their immense area they should have a preponderating influence in the affairs of the Dominion, then it might be considered advisable to divide the Territories as now constituted into two or more provinces, but he did not think that any one in this country would disagree with him when he said that it would be unfair to any portion of these Territories to be united to any of the other provinces against their will and to be subjected to the conditions and burdens, the creation of which they are not responsible for. It might be argued that on their being thrust into another province, matters could be arranged so as to give them justice, but he submitted that even if such were done, the chances of the minority retaining in the end what they were morally entitled to would not be very promising. The interests of all parts of the Territories are similar, the conditions which obtain throughout the country are uniform. In the business world of today companies were amalgamating and consolidating in order that business might be conducted more cheaply, and he believed the same business principles which govern private business could be applied with equal force to public affairs and he firmly believed in the one province idea.

Regarding the financial position, Mr. Brown said, that while they all agreed that the amounts received from the Dominion Government in the past were not sufficient, nor what we were justly entitled to, still it was a matter for congratulation to the Government of the Territories that they had secured such a very substantial increase to their current revenue.

RESULTS OF EDUCATION.

When he first came into the Legislature, nine years ago, he supported the North-West Government in their demands at Ottawa, both for increased financial assistance and extended legislative powers. He believed that our present Premier, Mr. Haultain, at that time was just as sincere and just as reasonable in making his demands then as he was during his last mission to Ottawa and he believed that it was the intention of the then Government at Ottawa to treat the Territories fairly, and he also believed that the present Government desire to treat the Territories fairly. Nine years ago only 59 per cent. of our financial demands were granted, while over 20 per cent. more than that has been granted this year not taking into account this capital advance. "I do not desire," said Mr. Brown, "to show that the then Government at Ottawa was any more unfair to us than the present Government, but the point is that the action of this House has had an educating influence on Parliament. This is not only true regarding our financial demands, but it is true in other matters as well. From year to year we have been entrusted with increased legislative powers, which have greatly facilitated the legislation of this House and has enabled us to deal with questions of purely local import in such a manner as to avoid the continual clashing of federal and local legislation. I still believe that the demands made upon the Federal Government for increased financial assistance and legislative powers are just and that in receiving anything short of our demands we are receiving less than the Territories are entitled to. I believe that if our case were as thoroughly understood at Ottawa as it is here that we to-day would have provincial autonomy with all the powers and revenues which we are entitled to, but we must remember that as North-West men dealing particularly with North-West questions, being in close touch with everything which affects our country, it should be expected of us to be first of all fully conversant with the necessities of this country, and he considered it the duty of everyone, not only in the Legislative Assembly, but throughout the length and breadth of the country, to use every reasonable endeavor to educate the people of Eastern Canada and the Government at Ottawa as to requirements of the Territories. In order that we may receive justice, a great educational influence must be brought to bear on the East. For the future as well as for the past, it is still true that a wise agitation is the best educating influence in the world." (Hear, hear.) He believed that we were entitled to the $898,000 that we asked for this year but he also believed that we should not have got as much as we did if we had not asked for, agitated and pressed for it. He believed the Government is to be congratulated on the increased amount granted.

C.P.R. LAND TAX EXEMPTION.

He wished to differ from the statement made by the member for West Calgary in connection with the question of the exemption of the Canadian Pacific Railway lands from school taxation. The member for West Calgary had stated that this was a matter of no importance; that when schools were needed in any particular district it was not until practically all the railway lands had been sold and that the settlers had to pay the taxes. While he did not believe that this statement even was correct, because there were very many school districts situated in parts of the country where practically all the land paying taxes were even sections, still, supposing that the statement of the member for West Calgary was correct, he differed very widely from him. Some years ago the principle of taxing all the land in this country for the purposes of local improvements was established. It was argued that if the settlers by coming into this country, building roads and bridges, establishing schools and good government were giving to the vacant lands a value, they were doing a work which ought to be supplemented by a taxation of all lands throughout the Territories, however remote, which were being enhanced in value by the expenditure of the moneys belonging to the people then in the country. The principle that all lands which receive benefit from taxation should pay taxes was thus established, and what was true, he argued, in connection with local improvement taxation, was to a greater extent true in connection with schools. If this country was proud to be able to invite men to make their homes in it on the ground that in every fairly settled district they would have schools at their doors, which in efficiency would be equal to those where they were leaving, he thought it was a still greater matter of congratulation to the people of this country to say that if settlers should come to it who should find it necessary to locate themselves in comparatively sparsely settled districts that they there would also have the same advantages belonging to the old established settlements in this country. In order to sustain schools under these circumstances without imposing a burden too heavy to be borne by the enterprising pioneer, it is necessary that every acre of land so benefited, whether directly or indirectly, should pay a tax, which while not heavy enough to be a burden to anyone would be of substantial assistance in assisting those settlers who are struggling to establish the institutions so much prized in the land they came from. He thought it was far more important that the districts sparsely settled where very little railway land had been sold should be assisted in their initial stages than that even assistance should be given to the old and established settlements, who, having overcome the early difficulties and having become comparatively well off, would feel no difficulty in maintaining efficient schools.

He did not take any stock at all in the argument that we should congratulate ourselves that the people here have the privilege of paying all the taxes that are necessary to make this country an attractive one to the immigrant and that the people who are particularly interested in the coming here of the immigrants in order that they may sell their lands at good prices should be allowed to go free. This line was hardly in keeping with one who had so loudly proclaimed himself a champion of the rights of the North-West settlers.

CAPITAL ADVANCE NOT REQUIRED.

With regard to the capital advance he was glad to be able to congratulate the Government on that matter too, seeing they considered that the affairs of the Territories were in such a position that, though with some inconvenience, they were able to minister to the wants of the people without expenditure on capital account. Personally he had no objection to accepting the capital advance. If the advance were used he would not take it as evidence that we were getting all that we ought to have as current revenue. He did not believe we would have long to wait for provincial autonomy. The signs of the times all pointed that way. If, however, we were not to get provincial establishment for some time, he believed it would be a bad principle to lay down that we will not accept any advance on capital account unless we are made a province. He congratulated the Government on the fact that they had not refused definitely to accept such an advance but that if at a later day it was considered advisable to do so we would be in a position to accept such.

The honorable member for West Calgary had referred favorably to the fact that certain States to the south had borrowed money and paid ten per cent. and that the investment had proved a most profitable one. He condemned the idea of our taking the money without interest, because it might later be charged against an account on which the Territories would receive five per cent. interest. He (Brown) thought the proposition before the Territories was a far better one. (Cheers). He could not see that any principle was being endangered by the acceptance of a capital grant, or that it could affect a final settlement of our admission to the the provincial status. "There is no reason," continued Mr. Brown, "to say that we cannot borrow that money at a low rate of interest on our admission to confederation and pay it back. There is no precedent to say that we cannot."

Mr. Bennett. "There is a precedent in the case of Nova Scotia."

Mr. Brown. "That is no precedent. Nova Scotia was a Province. No Territory ever made application to do it. (Cheers). The money was made available by a special Act of Parliament, and the question of whether we pay the money back or allow it to be assumed as a debt by the Dominion Government is one which for the first time must be settled at the time of our entering Confederation. The hon. Member from West Calgary has found a great deal of fault with a certain editorial in the Regina Leader. He has even gone so far as to term it "demagogism," but I hardly think it savors more of demagogism than the argument of a certain gentleman who advanced the argument two or three weeks ago at Lumsden that the reason why provincial autonomy was being delayed by the Federal Parliament was that the lands of these Territories might be exploited and the revenues therefrom handed over to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Co."

Mr. Bennett. "I forgot that matter. I will refer to it on the third reading of this Bill."

Mr. Brown. "So the hon. gentleman not content with having rambled all over the list of questions before the country and having treated us to the most learned disquisitions of the rights and privileges of the citizens of this country, is going to treat us to another of his poetical effusions. Surely he knows that he is talking to a body of representative men who are as intelligent as the honorable gentleman and who can express their views without taking an interminable length of time or in using an uninterrupted stream of adjectives." (Loud laughter).

THE SASKATOON BRIDGE.

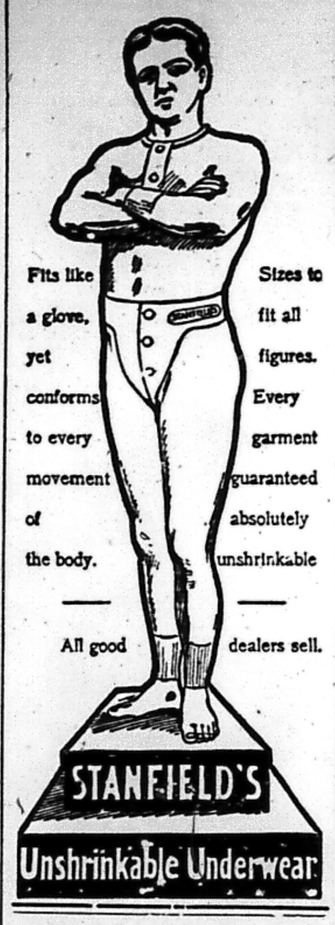
Mr. Brown then took up Mr. Bennett's argument which that gentleman based on the Saskatoon bridge. The hon. gentleman from West Calgary has instanced the construction by the Dominion Government of the numberless small harbors and wharves in the Maritime Provinces built by the Dominion Government solely for the purpose of pandering to a certain vote. He did not consider the case at all analogous. There is no doubt that if the capital advance had been accepted the Saskatoon bridge would have been built and charged to the capital account. If the capital advance had not been voted the Saskatoon bridge might have been built by the Dominion Government and it might not have been. For fifteen years this bridge has been a great necessity but up to the present no Government at Ottawa has seen fit to make the expenditure from the consolidated revenues of the Dominion. In the case of the province of Manitoba, many such bridges have been built and most, if not all of them, have been paid by the province and the cost of them have become part of the debt of the Province of Manitoba, and the probability is that the Dominion Government would expect this and similar bridges to be built in the same way. The hon. member from West Calgary instanced the bridge across the St. Lawrence. Surely he did not mean to say that a bridge across the Saskatchewan river at Saskatoon would be a work of the same nature as a bridge across the St. Lawrence river near Quebec. Again, I say, that while I do not deny that if the Dominion Government had not placed at our disposal the sum of $250,000, to be used on capital account that they might have built this bridge, I do say that there was no great probability of this work being taken up as a Dominion work and that if we had accepted the capital expenditure the bridge would have been a certainty, as well as other works which are urgently needed by the Territories and through whose noncompletion we are suffering serious inconvenience and hindrance to the business of several districts in the Territories. He was acquainted with the condition of matters at Saskatoon and of the great necessity for the bridge and the great difficulties under which the people labor without it, and thought the Dominion Government should build the bridge, but if they would not build it the North-West Government had no business to keep the people as they are without it. (Cheers.)

In conclusion Mr. Brown said he believed in pressing as strongly as possible for provincial establishment. When we secured the provincial status the work of educating the east as to our needs and wants would very largely have ceased. The country had attained a position where we could manage our own financial affairs as well as others and we should have full provincial powers just as soon as possible. It was the duty of every Member to press for it with every argument and every reason there was in favor of it and the time was not far away when we would get it. (Cheers.) Until that time arrived it was the duty of every Member of the House to provide for the business of the country and to advance as far as possible those things which had for their object the furtherance of the growth and development of the great and glorious province which we expect to have inaugurated in a very short time. (Loud cheers.)

THE ESTIMATES.

The following table shows the amounts voted for the various departments of the Government service for the coming year as compared with the vote for 1903:—

	1903	1904
Civil Government	$ 72,230	$ 83,250
Legislation	42,750	21,375
Administration of Justice	13,400	19,400
Public Works	372,250	500,000
Education	241,300	265,750
Agriculture and Statistics	27,716	27,050
Hospitals, Charities & Public Health	20,331	19,000
Miscellaneous	52,607	23,325
Totals	$842,584	$959,150



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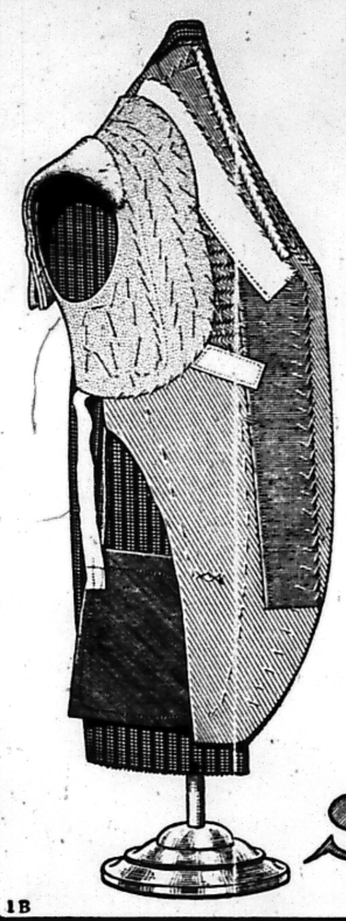

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Sketch of Manager of New Massey-Harris Central Division.

The departure from Winnipeg of Mr. George Forsyth, who has gone to make his home in Regina marks an important epoch in the development of the western business of the Massey-Harris Company. A new division of Massey-Harris agencies in the west has been made, to be known as the central division, and it is to preside over this as general manager that Mr. Forsyth has moved to Regina. The territory assigned to him is as large as an empire, and contains vast areas of land which, in the not distant future, will be brought under cultivation with the assistance of Massey-Harris machinery. The boundaries of this division are Medicine Hat on the west, Whitewood on the east, the Monroe Doctrine on the south and the Aurora Borealis on the north. This territory contains some of the richest land in the North-West, and is rapidly filling up with settlers, which is a guarantee that the central division will be kept busy with orders for some time to come. The creation of this division gives the company an organisation in the West which is complete in every respect. The Winnipeg office has now been set free to spend all its energy in exploiting Manitoba and Eastern Assiniboia as far as Whitewood, within which bounds the agency here will confine itself; the Calgary agency, under Mr. Housser, has been given absolute control in Alberta, and as far east as Medicine Hat, while, as has already been said, Mr. Forsyth will preside over a great central division which has just been created.

The appointment of Mr. Forsyth to the management of this division furnishes an opportunity for giving a brief sketch of the career of this pioneer of the implement trade in the West. It is now over 22 years since he first engaged in this line of business in Winnipeg, taking service with the old A. Harris, Son & Co., Winnipeg branch. Since then he has been continuously in the business at Winnipeg with the exception of one-and-a-half years spent in England, and the time consumed in an extensive trip to the Argentine Republic. Mr. Forsyth is still a young man, yet he has seen a great deal of the world and is exceedingly well informed on all subjects appertaining to Western Canada. He has travelled extensively in the West and has the distinction of having taken in the first consignment of agricultural machinery to Prince Albert, one of the important points in the territory over which he is now to preside. In those days the goods had to be taken down the Red River to Lake Winnipeg, across the lake to Grand Rapids, and from there up the Saskatchewan to Prince Albert. Mr. Forsyth was also one of the first to enter the Edmonton country with farm machinery. No such primitive methods of travel as were then in use will have to be put up with now, but, on the contrary, there are excellent railroad facilities in all the settled parts of his territory with the exception of Battleford, and this too will soon have its railroad service. Of late years Mr. Forsyth has occupied the important office of assistant to the manager at Winnipeg. He carries with him to his new field the good wishes of a very large circle of business acquaintances in Winnipeg.—The Commercial.

COTTONWOOD.

Winter is on at last, but we are very thankful for the fine weather through the threshing season. Wheat is being marketed, and the grade is not as low as many expected who had their wheat frozen.—Hallowe'en was spent in quite an old time manner by some of our residents. A merry party assembled at Mr. Neville's and spent the evening pleasantly, having supper in a room lighted with jack-o'-lanterns ingeniously contrived out of turnips.

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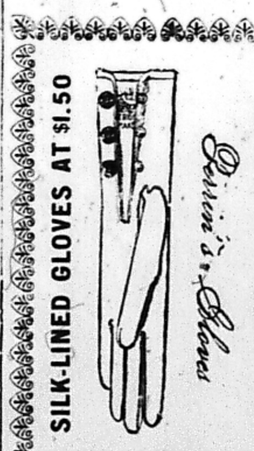

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