

THE LEADER.

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REGINA, N.W.T., THURSDAY MORNING, JUNE 20, 1901.

PRICE FIVE CENTS.

THE BUDGET DEBATE.

Financial Position of the Territories and Provincial Autonomy.

GOVERNMENT SYSTEM OF HAIL INSURANCE

Connell's Bill on Hire Receipts Killed at the Winning Post Reform of Educational System—

Foreign Languages May be Taught in Schools Religious Teaching—
Beet Sugar Factories-Doukhobor Schools.

The following is a continuation of the debate on the Budget. It will be remembered that the last issue contained Mr. A. L. Sifton's speech in introducing the estimates and the reply of Mr. D. H. McDonald, leader of the Opposition.

Dr. Elliott was the next speaker. He said that he had much pleasure in congratulating the Territorial treasurer on the excellent impression his speech had made upon the House and would do no doubt make upon the country. The whole matter had been merely touched with the point of view by the leader of the Opposition. The critics had been of the two-penny-half-penny sort that did not commend themselves even to the narrowest-minded people. If the Opposition wished to gain the confidence and respect of the people of the Territories, they must have to indulge in a different class of criticism. Mr. McDonald advocated a decrease of salaries, yet he made no attempt to show incompetency on the part of officials, or that others elsewhere were getting less. The Opposition then charged that a great deal of money was wasted on inspection and then attempted to prove



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JOHN DOBBIN.

were continually losing bridges. He believed that last year he had built but some were washed away. As to works for which tenders had been asked, in almost all cases the tenders had to be refused and in a few cases there were no tenders. Work had been done much better by day labor than by contract and that was generally the case. The speeches about work done in frozen ground would not make good immigration literature. The complaints had really nothing in them. In some cases the ground was in fine condition when the instructions were sent, but was frozen afterwards. Last night certain education resolutions were proposed and the resolutions introduced a new system of distributing grants, a system of equalising burdens which endeavored to give poorer and weaker districts a little better assistance than the stronger. He supported the system, though it would probably strike his own district as severely as any in the Territories. The leader of the Opposition said that some of the wealthier classes, people who own large herds of cattle, are escaping taxation through the single tax system, but he did not tell the committee that he himself would probably save \$60 a year. The system of direct taxation of lands would not be the best system in every district of the country, but it must be considered, not from an individual point of view, but from that of the interests of the whole country. Though it might be detrimental to a few districts, the vast majority it would be of great benefit. The opposition said there was no occasion to have a commissioner of agriculture, but he maintained that there was ample work for the commissioner of agriculture and for the other commissioners also. He congratulated the treasurer on the clear and careful manner in which he had dealt with the subject of the constitutional changes, not making a bombastic statement but laying down some of the grounds on which our claims should be based. The commissioner had not expressed satisfaction with the terms given to Manitoba, as the leader of the Opposition seemed to think, but had said that even if that were the best bargain we could get it would be a great deal better than what we have to-day. The hon. gentleman had said the Government should have taken the people into their confidence and told them everything they were thinking about the question. If he might judge from the lamentable want of knowledge displayed by the leader of the Opposition it would indeed have been well that the Government should have educated him at least.

It being 5:30 o'clock the Speaker left the chair and resuming on Friday morning.

Dr. Elliott came to deal with the question of

PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY.

He referred to the railway grants given to specific railways and supported Mr. A. L. Sifton's contention that the Territories should receive compensation from such lands, given away largely, not for the special benefit of, but to the detriment of the North-West Territories; and for the benefit of the Dominion at large. Dr. Elliott concluded by ridiculing the idea that the system of taxation in the two classes of local improvement districts were drastic systems. They were such as commended themselves to the majority of the people. The large and the small local improvement districts were an excellent system. He also defended the management of the official Gazette, and the policy of the department of agriculture in securing the return of 90 per cent. of estray animals to their owners, as reflecting credit in the department.

MR. THOMAS MCKAY

said the speech of the Territorial Treasurer was a business-like statement, and so far he could congratulate him; but after all he was only making the best he could of a very bad cause. Any differences of opinion in that House were as to the way the money was expended. They had not yet anything to do with the revenue. Very serious mistakes had been made. The Government had not familiarised themselves as they should have done with the wants of the country, particularly in regard to public works. Although apparently in a bankrupt state the members of the Government were not prepared to make any sacrifices, but voted themselves \$2,000 for "extraordinary services." The \$13,000 increase

for civil service would have given a good number of grants and built a good many culverts and bridges. He condemned the increase in the number of ministers and complained that returns asked for had not been brought down. He did not approve of the voting of a bulk sum for the construction of roads as a system liable to abuse. He thought the item should have been voted in detail. The late commissioner of public works had discussed the question of a province and had shown the position the House should take; he said there were still 85,000,000 acres of land of which the Territories should have 50,000,000 acres. That speech had been true and he (Mr. McKay) had been very much surprised at the speech of the commissioner yesterday. He believed the system had been carried too far. The lands were not alienated from the Government, but only set aside. The police might be changed, as also that of free homesteading. This country would never be prosperous until the Government owned the lands, and compensation should not be accepted. He thought the Government could refuse to accept the terms, but there was a disposition to compromise. If the Government should not be satisfied with the terms offered, what was to prevent them resigning. (Cheers). But leaders of both parties said lands of this country had been bought by the Dominion; people here were increasing the value of the lands for the federal authorities. We could not be held, he said, control of immigration until we had control of the lands. Three hundred and forty-five thousand dollars was given to govern the country, while the Dominion Government was spending a larger amount, \$400,000 for immigration to bring in people, leaving us to look after them. The people should have an opportunity of pronouncing on the policy of going into a full provincial establishment before anything further was done in the matter.

MR. G. W. BROWN

in a speech that was frequently applauded with signs of approval, joined his congratulations with those of preceding speakers, to the new Territorial treasurer for his able and lucid speech. He complimented him on the straightforward, manly way and businesslike manner in which he had placed the financial condition before the House. The Territories had reason to congratulate themselves on their prosperity, progress and growth of their institutions, political and otherwise. It had been said that the financial statement made was without precedent in anticipating revenue; but the very same thing had been done in 1894-5. There were public improvements which we demanded, and this House owned a duty to the people; if they did not anticipate a revenue, if it was impossible to recoup yet the people would at any rate have the improvements a year sooner. He defended the course of the Government in sinking test wells after the Dominion Government and private enterprise had failed. He replied to Mr. McDonald's criticism of the system of taxation, especially in reference to school districts, which exempted personal property. He argued that if any men should go free it was those who were giving employment to others and building up the country by making the land held by others valuable. When we have the power to tax the lands we will have a big control. It did not matter much who owned the lands if the Government had the power to tax them. (Hear, hear.) In regard to the demand for immediate provincial autonomy, the people of the Territories were already fully alive to the question and no appeal to them was necessary. Referring to the provincial question he accused Mr. McKay of stealing his powder from the speeches of Government members in the past. Mr. Haultain had explained in the House in times past what arrangements ought to be made with the federal government regarding this country. He also stated that though the Premier had shown the full and complete constitutional rights of this Government and though the late Minister of Public Works had discussed the question at the last session, the Opposition had sat dumb as lobsters. He said that the bargain the Government expected to make was the one they were entitled to. One member of the opposition criticised the government for delaying the matter until it was too late to act this year, and another contended that the people should have an opportunity of expressing themselves. Good as the governments east and west might be the people were unanimously in favor of preserving the Territories for the Territories, and remaining the most cheaply and best governed part of the Dominion. Mr. Brown proceeded to discuss the increased necessities of the country and the greater expenditure required; and claimed that economy had been shown that could not be criticized and would bear the light of day. Speaking of the increased necessities of the government the executive, he said no matter how poor the country is it does not want any individual to work for it for less than he is worth. Surely this country is as important as any wholesale house, yet wholesale houses pay larger salaries to their managers than were paid to the executive. This House has all the duties of an ordinary legislature and all the work of the municipalities in other provinces. These combined took all the time and services of the members of the executive, and he was quite sure the work could not be efficiently performed with less than three members.

THE INDEPENDENT MEMBER.

Mr. G. M. Annable said that he was very much pleased with part of the speech of the minister of public works. He did not object to the increase of salaries of the minister; but his party were strong enough, perhaps, to have more strength for further increase. His highest salaries would be so high that the ministers would be able to stay at home and attend to business, and not have to take little jobs from the Dominion Government to live on. The majority of the House evidently thought they were worth the money. He would not say whether it was wise or unwise to spend a couple of hundred thousand dollars more than the House has got; but it was characteristic of the country to be in debt. The Dominion is dumping thousands of people into the country and wants to educate them and send them to lunatic asylums for which many of them were fit subjects before they came here. That was not fair. In regard to provincial autonomy he hoped we should get a better deal than Manitoba got; and perhaps we should if the Territories were represented in the Dominion House by ten or twelve members. He

could not agree with the Opposition in everything they had done, nor did he think they were all bad. Neither did they agree in everything with the Government or approve of all their legislation. If we could not get what we wanted when we were making a provincial deal then it would be the duty of the Government to resign and let the Dominion Government run the affairs. He believed that the Opposition had a good effect in causing the Government to bring down some good legislation. However, he thought that some of the legislation was not good. Regarding the public works department he believed that a lot of work was done. Some was done in his district but he noticed in the past that it was done chiefly every four years. Of course he would not say that it was not good. The lands were not alienated from the Government or the assessment of the town site trustees in regard to the assessment of their lots.

MR. F. VILLENEUVE

joined in the unanimous concourse of congratulations to the hon. treasurer, congratulating him also on his recent seat as a commissioner of public works. He thought it would be good thing for the west and the north (laughed) for he had great knowledge of those parts of the country and their needs. He disagreed, however, with him as to his manner of making estimates, voting \$180,000 which they had not got and perhaps never would get unless the Government had greater success than in the past. He protested again against the voting of money in bulk for public works. Details ought to have been given. Replying to Mr. Brown, who had said the Opposition were silent as lobsters, he said a characteristic of the lobster was to go backwards; he asked who had gone backwards except the government. They were silent on their policy all the time. Another kind of lobsters were those who only opened their mouths to cry. "Agreed, agreed." The House ought to have an explanation of what was meant by provincial autonomy,—but the Government submitted no policy. He feared that Northern Alberta would not be properly represented by the Government at the conference. (Oh, ho.) That district was against centralisation and wanted two provinces, at least. Everything now had to be done by correspondence and on information and advice of men residing sometimes hundreds of miles from the work to be done. He could assure the executive that the Opposition would give all the advice and assistance they could to have the best bargain possible made. The members of the Government should be accompanied by the members who represent the North-West Territories at Ottawa. The Government should appoint to go with them a member of the Catholic faith, and one whose language is French. The members for Wolseley and North Regina had reason to be satisfied with the Government because their districts were perfect; but Northern Alberta and St. Albert districts were badly in need of roads and other improvements.

MR. A. S. SMITH

in an effective little speech confined his remarks chiefly to provincial autonomy. He was pleased to hear the treasurer's discussion of the subject and his comparisons with Manitoba. It was for the Government not to lead the House to expect too much. The Territories should benefit by the mistakes of Manitoba. Conditions were now altogether different; the land was now more valuable, and the bargain made by Manitoba would not be acceptable to the Territories at present. At the conference in 1865, it was recognised that these Territories would cut a great figure in the development of Canada. The financial question here was the great one. The C.P.R. was a Dominion undertaking part of the bargain by which British Columbia was brought into the Dominion. We paid a fair share of the interest of the debt of Canada that built the railways. It was to be regretted that this country would not have a greater say than it has when the question of provincial autonomy comes before the Dominion parliament. He was a little disappointed with the procedure of the Opposition on the provincial autonomy question. The members for West Calgary had cited Manitoba and some of the States; and he thought this Territory as well able to manage its affairs as any of the provinces. The railway question was not likely to be the chief question, especially in the eastern district. He approved of the policy of voting for public works the money which was absolutely needed, nothing more. A motion for the debt of Canada that built the railways. It was to be regretted that this country would not have a greater say than it has when the question of provincial autonomy comes before the Dominion parliament. He was a little disappointed with the procedure of the Opposition on the provincial autonomy question. 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