

Bills Discussed In Legislature

House In Committee On Amendments To Elections Act, Stipendiary Magistrates Act And Other Measures.

Provincial Legislature, March 8. The House met at 11 a. m. Hon. Mr. Stewart intimated that answers to questions would be tabled after the debate on the Draft Address.

An Act respecting Compensation to Workmen was read a first time. An Act to incorporate Mt. Carmel Fisheries Limited was reported favorably by the private bills committee.

The debate on the Draft Address was continued by Mr. W. M. Lea, Hon. Mr. Stewart, Mr. Thane A. Campbell and Mr. J. P. McIntyre.

After recess Debate continued by Mr. McIntyre. The speaker put the motion on the Draft Address, which was carried without further discussion at 4:30 p. m.

Falconwood Trustees On motion of Hon. Mr. Stewart the House went into committee with Mr. Leslie Hunter in the chair on second reading of an Act to amend an Act relative to lunatics and to the custody of lunatics.

The amendment provides that the financial and general management of the Falconwood Hospital shall be vested in six trustees of whom four shall be the members of the Treasury Board and the other two shall be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Stewart the House went into committee with Mr. Heath Strong, K. C., in the chair, on second reading of an Act to Amend the Election Act, 1922. Section (1) of the bill provides that "Subject to being sooner dissolved by the Lieutenant Governor, every Assembly, from and after the dissolution of the present Assembly, shall continue for five years from the day of the return of the writs for a general election, and no longer."

The Amendment, Hon. Mr. Stewart explained, does not take effect until after the next general election. It was adopted in order to bring the Provincial Statutes in line with the legislation in other Provinces.

Provision is also made for doing away with the necessity of running a by-election for portfolio positions. Mr. McIntyre: "Does this also apply only after the next election?"

Hon. Mr. Stewart: "It applies any time after the amendment is passed." Mr. McIntyre and Mr. Lea objected on the ground that there was now a vacant portfolio and to pass the clause would be tantamount to "legislating a man into office."

Hon. Mr. Stewart said the change was essentially a common-sense one. He reminded the Opposition that he had always supported this idea and was taking the first opportunity of passing it into law. Mr. L. R. Allen thought the amendment should not apply until after the next general election.

Mr. T. A. Campbell expressed the same opinion and moved as an amendment that the clause (b) should not come into effect "until after the dissolution of the present General Assembly." The question was further discussed by Mr. J. A. MacDonald, Mr. Lea, Mr. Dennis, Mr. McIntyre, Mr. Campbell, Hon. Mr. Stewart.

and may enter Universities thoroughly prepared. Mr. Lea did not profess to be an authority on education but he felt we have been unjustly criticised in the matter of our educational system. He cited instances of Island students going to other Provinces and doing exceptionally well.

Anything the Government can do to improve education will have the hearty support of the Opposition, Mr. Lea declared. Grave consideration should be given, however, before any drastic changes are made which would entail heavier burdens on the taxpayers of the Province.

It was gratifying, he said, to know that the Government would rebuild Prince of Wales College with the least possible delay. The Opposition leader went rapidly over the remaining clauses in the Speech. Other occasions would offer to discuss these matters and as other speakers were to follow he did not think it desirable to take up further time in the debate.

Hon. Mr. Stewart explained that the bill is identical with an Act passed in 1924 by the late Hon. Mr. Peters when Attorney General, and which had proven satisfactory. Mr. T. A. Campbell asked if the Magistrates appointed under the act are to be substitutes for the Chief Magistrates of the County and also if the Magistrates recently appointed for the Province? Unless the previous Acts are consolidated with this measure there will be hopeless confusion.

Hon. Mr. Stewart explained the other Act's will be repealed and there will then be one Stipendiary Magistrate for each county. Mr. McIntyre thought this was not being economical. Hon. Mr. Stewart explained that the cost would not be any greater. Mr. Thane A. Campbell approved of the principle of the bill. He suggested slight amendments in phraseology which were adopted.

There was further discussion by Mr. Campbell and Mr. Strong. Section 5 read: "Notwithstanding any of the statutes in this Province now in force with regard to the independence of the members of the Legislative Assembly, it shall be lawful for the Lieutenant Governor, in Council to appoint to the office of Stipendiary Magistrate for any County a person who may be a member of the said Legislative Assembly, and such appointment shall in no way affect the right of such person to sit or vote in the Legislative Assembly, and he shall not be liable for any penalty on account of so doing."

Mr. Campbell opposed this clause and moved that it be struck out. Hon. Mr. Stewart said the Act was framed by a man for whom, although a Liberal, Mr. Stewart always had the highest regard—the late H. M. Peters. Mr. Thane A. Campbell opposed the principle of the clause and moved that it be struck out.

After discussion by Hon. Mr. Stewart and Mr. Lea it was decided to report progress on the bill. At 6 p. m. the House adjourned, to meet at 3 p. m. today (Wednesday).

Mr. Stewart expressed his interest and appreciation of the Opposition leader's discussion of the agricultural situation. If there was any fault to find with Mr. Lea's remarks in this connection it was that he was too much of a specialist.

Mr. Lea had offered only one criticism of the Minister of Agriculture, namely, that he should have got freight rates reduced. Every Province has been striving for concessions in this respect and this may have had something to do with the financial difficulties with which the railways are now confronted. Mr. Stewart had not learned that there are home markets available for our potatoes, even if lower freight rates were secured.

Mr. Lea suggested an opportunity in Nova Scotia. Mr. Stewart said he was not aware that there was any market worth while in Nova Scotia; and if such market existed New Brunswick was nearer than we were to take advantage of it.

The high achievements both in scholarship and in service to the community of Hon. Dr. MacMillan were referred to by the Premier, who expressed keenest appreciation of Dr. MacMillan's efforts in advancing the interests of public health. The late Liberal Government, the Premier suggested, had little to boast of in public health work as the initiative came from other sources.

The regrettable destruction of Prince of Wales College has again brought the educational problem before the people. Many suggestions have been offered as to establishing high school training in the Province. The fact remains that the children of the Province, if they are hardworking and ambitious, may obtain a thorough grounding

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Continuing, Mr. Stewart declared his conviction that the most important thing in connection with



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education at present is teachers' training. Mr. Lea: "Here, here." Teachers are sent out not matured, not thoroughly trained, Mr. Stewart said. The result is the crop of failures in our schools of which there is so much complaint. Nowadays, also there are so many attractions and distractions which interfere with the students' work. We will never achieve satisfactory results in education, he said, until the teachers are paid on a basis of the work which they actually perform.

The speaker recalled the time when grammar schools were scattered throughout the Province, with competent male teachers in charge, and when the students' work was done much more satisfactorily. He did not believe we should remove the test of examinations but the work should be thoroughly done before the students are asked to take these exams.

Government's Aim The present Government's ambition is to establish normal training on a sound and satisfactory basis. The Government would proceed at once with the rebuilding of Prince of Wales College. The intention was to construct a fire proof building modern in every way. "But it will be built for education," the Premier added. "I need say no more than that."

Unemployment Grant The unemployment money was distributed as fairly as it could be distributed, the Premier stated in reply to the Opposition leader's criticism on this subject. It was easy to criticise but it was very difficult to administer a grant of this kind. Instructions were sent out on every occasion to insure that those who needed the money received employment. In Charlottetown a committee composed of a representative from each political party was appointed, which was the fairest method the Government could devise.

The Opposition leader had complained of certain omissions in the Speech with regard to subsidy claims, old age pensions, etc. "Well," Mr. Stewart replied, "the late Government had these claims in the Speech from the Throne, and what did we ever get? The present Government has been in office only six months; the late Government was in office 48 months. I hope, before our four years are out, that we will carry out our election promises and that it will not be as it was a few months ago—a mere death-bed gesture." (Conservative applause.)

Liberal Record Bare It did not lie in the mouth of Opposition speakers to raise the question of subsidy claims, Mr. Stewart continued. The present situation is the worst financially that Canada and the world has experienced. That did not apply when the Liberals were in power—at that time they had every opportunity of pressing our subsidy claims at Ottawa. Does the Opposition leader suggest that anyone could expect to get subsidy settlements from Canada under present conditions?

Despite unfavorable conditions, however, an attempt had been made by Premier Stewart to call a Maritime Conference on the subsidy claims questions. Owing to the situation in New Brunswick the Premier of that Province could not attend, but Mr. Stewart hoped to make further progress in this matter. "I may say to my hon. friend," he added, "that we are following this matter up. We shall not lie down on the job as my hon. colleagues did during the four years they were in power."

He had no desire, the Premier said, to spend further time in discussing the Draft Address. It is now the practice at Ottawa and in other Provinces to curtail the debate on this address as much as possible. He did not wish to deprive other members of the privilege of speaking, but suggested that time might profitably be saved in this connection.

MR. T. A. CAMPBELL Further compliments upon his elevation to the Speaker's chair were received by Hon. Dr. MacMillan from the next speaker, Mr. Thane A. Campbell, (First Prince). Mr. Campbell also complimented the mover and seconder of the Reply (Messrs. Strong and W. A. Stewart).

The Opposition leader had commented on the "barrenness" of the Speech from the Throne. He, Mr. Campbell, was not surprised at this. During the past two years he had been through two election campaigns in which he had arrayed against him all the heavy artillery of the present Government. In analyzing the statements of Conservative speakers in those campaigns Mr. Campbell found they had confined themselves to destructive criticism, and this barrenness of any constructive policy was evident now in the Speech from the Throne.

The Liberal Government had been criticised for not obtaining additional subsidies at Ottawa; yet in the Speech there is no constructive outline of what the present Government proposes to do in this matter. "Even when they come into power they still have to confine themselves to criticisms of their predecessors," he argued. The same might be said of old age pensions and teachers superannuation allowance, of which the Speech contains no mention, Mr. Campbell continued.

The proper way to approach the authorities of Great Britain, he thought, was to give them some assurance that mutual tariff arrangements could be made.

Mr. Campbell complimented the Minister of Agriculture on the stand which he took in connection with the attempt of the Perth, N. B., growers to "boycott" British goods. He was also glad to see that The Guardian newspaper had commended Mr. Sharp's attitude. This, however, was a great departure from the Bennett Government's policy of "blasting" a way into the markets of the world.

Alleged discrimination in the administration of the unemployment grant was charged by Mr. Campbell, who proceeded to discuss the matter from a federal standpoint. There was nothing, he said, in the Speech to indicate that unemployment relief would be continued, nor did he, Mr. Campbell, believe it would be continued, as it had not proved a success.

Suggests Economy The reconstruction of Prince of Wales College will involve the more important question of reconstructing the educational system of the Province. Mr. Campbell commended Mr. Lea's suggestion that the Government should refrain from any drastic changes which might involve heavy financial burdens. He gathered that it was his intention to grapple with the problem in a statesmanlike manner.

Mr. Campbell regretted being unable to congratulate the senior member for Charlottetown on the manner of his appointment as Minister of Health and Education. The Conservatives had promised to end "legislative and administrative bungling." They posed as "constitutional experts." Yet the Ministry of this department was created by Order in Council, without the necessary proclamation in the Royal Gazette. The Government later discovered they had appointed "a minister who did not exist to a department which did not exist" and it was not until Sept. 26, 1931, that the proclamation was made.

Dr. MacMillan: "If we had done as you people did we would never have issued it." "We are not dealing with that now," Mr. Campbell countered. It was because there had been bungling that he could not offer his congratulations to the hon. Minister on his appointment.

Hon. Dr. MacMillan: "I can get along without them." "A little later on," Mr. Campbell hinted, it would be necessary "to withdraw our congratulations in another regard." He did not intimate what this matter would be, but said the Opposition was waiting for answers to certain questions.

Potato Embargo One thing had surprised him in the Speech and in the address of the mover of the Reply. He recalled occasions when supporters of the late Liberal Government had been severely criticised for introducing federal politics into discussions in this House. Not only has federal politics been introduced into the Speech from the Throne, but the Government embarked upon the sphere of federal action by sending a representative to England to negotiate for a removal of the British potato embargo. He was not criticising the Government for endeavoring to lift the embargo.

Hon. Dr. MacMillan: "What are you talking about, then?" Mr. Campbell: "I am simply expressing my surprise; my hon. friends were so opposed to discussing federal politics." Hon. Dr. MacMillan: "You don't disagree with the idea?" Mr. Campbell: "I don't disagree with the idea but I disagree with the method. This is a matter which belongs solely to the sphere of federal politics. The representative on that delegation could appear at most in an advisory or co-operative capacity, and it seems to me that a proposal to Great Britain that the embargo on our potatoes should be removed might have been made in a more diplomatic and effective manner."

Continuing, Mr. Campbell said it should not take much persuasion to convince the British authorities that the Colorado beetle is not spread by shipments of potatoes overseas. The real purpose of the embargo, he contended, was to protect the British market for their own producers, and it seemed "an impertinent thing" for Canada to ask for a removal of embargoes which were in effect protective while at the same time every gesture the Canadian Government has made towards Great Britain has been in the way of almost prohibitory tariffs against British goods.

Charges Discrimination The greater portion of the unemployment relief money, Mr. McIntyre charged, had gone to people with large bank accounts and needy people with large families were in many cases discriminated against. Under his, Mr. McIntyre's, administration of the grant, no political or religious discrimination was made and special attention was given to returned soldiers and married men. Under the present

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Government, he alleged, there were projects carried through on which no Liberals were employed. He read a letter charging political discrimination on work carried out last summer on Lower Montague ferry wharf.

Hon. Mr. Stewart asked whether the speaker was reading from a letter or from a newspaper clipping. Mr. McIntyre said it was a letter from a citizen of Lower Montague.

Hon. Mr. Stewart replied that he had read the newspaper clipping but would be interested in knowing the writer's identity. Mr. McIntyre did not name the writer. Con. members: "Whose letter is it?"

Mr. McIntyre: "It is signed 'Justice', if you would like to know." (Laughter.) The matter, Mr. MacIntyre contended, should have been looked into, it did not matter who the writer was.

Had the federal regulations governing the expenditure of the unemployment grant been carried out in this Province? Mr. McIntyre denied that such was the case. The trouble was that the Conservative candidates had made so many campaign promises that they had to satisfy their friends in some way and they used the unemployment money for this purpose.

He sympathized, Mr. McIntyre said, with the Government's difficulty in the loss of Falconwood Hospital and Prince of Wales College. He understood that some insurance policies amounting to \$8,000 or \$10,000 on Falconwood had been allowed to lapse and that insurance money had not been paid.

A possible cause of the burning of Prince of Wales College, he suggested, was the fact that a new janitor had been engaged who may not have understood the management of the furnace. "Drunks in Prince County Jail" came in for some sarcastic comments from Mr. MacIntyre, who reviewed criticisms against the Liberal Government in this connection and declared that since the present Government came in "the chickens were coming home to roost." He charged there had been disgraceful episodes both in Prince and Queen's County Jails under the present administration. The Government had conducted investigations but why had the evidence not been made public? A prisoner, he charged, had had his money stolen from him and another inmate, a Falconwood patient, had lost his life "through neglect." The Jailor, he declared, is responsible for twenty-four hours of the day.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: "Of course he is." Why, then, Mr. McIntyre asked was the assistant jailor dismissed over some trouble in the Jail, while the jailor's services were retained? Continuing, Mr. McIntyre said the present Government had probably found the Ticket of Leave Act a useful measure.

The Liberal Government had been criticised severely for having a staff of Provincial Police. Mr. McIntyre quoted a summarized report of a speech made by the present Premier in this connection. Hon. Mr. Stewart denied that the report quoted was an accurate interpretation of his remarks.

Mr. McIntyre Challenged Under the present administration Mr. McIntyre alleged, two Provincial Police officers were employed at Souris at \$90 each. Voices: Who are they? Hon. Dr. MacMillan: May I ask the hon. gentleman to name the two Provincial Police officers who are stationed in Souris at the one time? Mr. McIntyre: "Well, is it true?" Hon. Mr. Stewart: "Answer the question."

(Continued on Page 6)