

# Reviews Governmental Sins Of Omission And Commission

## Finances, Agriculture, Public Works, And Other Departments Aably Discussed In Budget Debate By Mr. W. Chester S. McLure.

Continued from Saturday's Guardian Blaming the Press.

Last night, when the Minister of Agriculture was speaking on this subject, he criticized The Guardian newspaper in the severest terms. He insinuated that they were responsible for the loss of \$15,000 or more of collections through the campaign committee. Public opinion was divided with reference to this matter, he said; and the whole blame was attached to The Guardian. Now, Mr. Speaker, let us look at the facts. When the campaign for the present Sanatorium was being inaugurated, The Guardian newspaper published an editorial reviewing the circumstances with the closing of the Dalton Sanatorium and insisting that it was the duty of the Provincial Government, before asking the people of this Province to contribute towards a second Sanatorium to assure them that it would do its utmost to press our claims upon the Federal Government for compensation for the Dalton institution. The Government refused to give that assurance to the campaign committee. Later, in an interview that was published in The Guardian, the Premier stated that when he went to Ottawa to present our claims he would present this claim in connection with the Dalton Sanatorium. The Premier went to Ottawa in January of this year and filed a brief which contained no reference to this claim. On the same day on which he filed his brief at Ottawa, a tabulated statement of our subsidy claims, issued under authority of the Hon. W. M. Lea as "Acting Premier," appeared in the Patriot (Jan. 21), and in this statement \$100,000 cash payment was included for the Dalton Sanatorium.

### The Guardian's Attitude.

When the assurance was received from Premier Saunders and published in The Guardian on Oct. 25th that he would include this claim in his presentation, The Guardian on Oct. 26th carried the following editorial: "Premier Saunders deserves credit for his decision to present and press the claim of this Province upon the Federal Government on account of the Dalton Sanatorium. Now that the Premier's decision has been announced it is up to the public generally to strengthen his hands in every way. With the full weight of public opinion behind him, and with his arguments thoroughly marshalled, there is no reason why this outstanding claim should not be settled once and for all, and the Province fully indemnified for the loss and inconvenience caused by the taking over of the Sanatorium and the failure of the Federal Government to implement the terms of the contract agreement with respect thereto."

Here we have evidence, Mr. Speaker, that The Guardian accepted Premier Saunders' word in this matter in good faith, and took the first opportunity of giving him credit for his decision. But what happened? He failed to implement that assurance when he went to Ottawa, although the fact that it is a valid claim was admitted by his colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, in the brief published under his authority on the very same day on which the Premier filed his claim.

### RESPONSIBILITY BROUGHT HOME

On whom, then, does the charge of insincerity lie? If the Minister of Agriculture had sufficient faith in the claim as to include it in his brief, why could he not give assurance to the Sanatorium Campaign Committee, when it approached the Government on this very point, that the claim would be presented and pressed? And if, as he now states, the Campaign Committee did not realize what it might have done had the Government's duty in this respect not been insisted upon in the brief? (Applause.)

Just a few more words regarding this charge of insincerity and political propaganda which the Minister of Agriculture sets up as a defense against the criticism that has been made in connection with his share in the transaction. A few days ago, in this House, we were told that there

port of one case of rabies in this Province, our export business to all European countries will be practically shut out for one year.

### Protection Against Theft.

There is another matter with regard to fur farming, and one that is of vital interest to breeders in the fall of the year; that is stealing from the different ranches. There is a protective organization or association among a certain number of fox ranchers which employs or retains several lawyers, also detectives from the very best agencies procurable in Canada. They also have bloodhounds, with special keepers employed to look after them; and with this protection to some of the ranchers the liability with regard to theft is greatly diminished. However, many of the ranches have not that protection. I might draw to the attention of this House the fact that two years ago there was a great deal of stealing of foxes in certain sections of the Island, and when the Attorney General was notified he went to work and employed a detective from this city, Mr. Hedley Weeks. I must say that Mr. Weeks was very successful, and the parties involved were brought to justice. Last year again the stealing of foxes took place in another locality, and what was the result? The Attorney General or whoever had charge of the matter sent to Montreal for a detective who knew nothing about the fox business and who, to use the words of the leader of the House, was pretty much of a drunkard. This man was unable to follow up the clues that were given to him, so far as the theft of the foxes was concerned, and he could show no results. It would have been far better had the Government expended part of that \$1400 that they paid to this detective in engaging some local policeman or detective, for I believe, had he done so, he would have been more successful.

### THAT \$3,500,000 EGG

Just a few words about that delegation that went to Ottawa. It was composed of the present Minister of Agriculture and the late Hon. Benjamin Gallant, representing the Government, and two other gentlemen representing the trustees of the Dalton Sanatorium. These were supplemented at Ottawa by Senator MacLean. We were told last night that there was some discussion with regard to compensation; and we have always believed that a settlement could have been arrived at, either at that time or immediately after. That was the time that our claim should have been presented and pressed. When they were discussing the payment of \$50,000, \$75,000 or \$100,000, these must have been some idea in somebody's mind that we had a claim. However, we have always been under the impression, whether rightly or wrongly, that the question was dropped and no further action was taken in regard to the matter. When it was mentioned in the "Acting Premier's" pamphlet, published on Jan. 21 last, and put down as a claim for \$100,000 cash settlement, it must still be in the Minister's mind. Or did he merely add it as an extra yoke to that big egg of \$3,500,000 that he has been cackling about and trying to hatch? (Applause.)

So far as the Dalton Sanatorium is concerned I have only this to say. It is no use arguing about the past; but here we are situated today with tenders being called for a hospital costing over \$100,000. I understand the Government is going to contribute another \$10,000 or \$20,000; the proper thing to do; but at the same time I believe there is a moral claim against the Federal Government and that if a proper committee was sent from this Province, consisting of some of the trustees of the Sanatorium Commission, some members of the Government and other citizens, we could present our claim for that \$100,000. Now would be the time to take it up, and I think it is a real opportunity for the hon. Minister of Agriculture to make good on this matter that somebody fell down on during the regime of the Bell Government.

### FUR FARMING

There is another subject on which I always like to say a few words, and that is on Fur Farming. If the breeding of Holstein cattle is a pet hobby of the Minister of Agriculture, the breeding of silver foxes may be termed a pet hobby of my own. I regret very much that so little space was given to fur farming in the Agricultural Report this year. Instead of devoting a page or so we should have had at least a dozen pages featuring this great industry. It has been mentioned in the report, and that is about all.

There are a few matters in connection with fur farming that I wish to bring before this House. I mentioned one of them in Committee the other day, when we were discussing a bill concerning the mink breeding industry; that was with reference to an embargo on all dogs coming into this Province. I was glad to have the assurance from the leader of the Government that this embargo will again be put into effect. The fox breeders are asking for this legislation because at the present time there is a very bad outbreak of rabies in some of the other Provinces, and if we happen to have a re-

have a few words to say about, and it is with reference to Old Age Pensions. You will remember, Mr. Speaker, that in 1927, when the present Government, then in Opposition, issued its manifesto they placed this plank before the people:

"Appreciating the action of the Liberal Government at Ottawa in passing the Old Age Pensions Act, we anticipate establishing it in this Province in a manner consistent with our revenue."

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Old Age Pensions Act is being put into force and effect in almost every Province in Canada; and I think, in view of this Government's promise to the electors, that the Act should be looked into very carefully to see what the conditions actually are in this Province and the prospect, if any, of implementing this legislation. Personally, I have always considered that the Federal Government did not act quite fairly with the Maritime Provinces in this matter. I believe that the Federal Government should pay the entire cost of the pensions scheme out of the federal treasury. At the present time we are paying our share of the old age pensions that are being distributed to the people in the Western and Central Provinces and our Provincial Government should at least go into the matter fully and give us some information as to what it would cost, so that our aged people would know what to expect from this source. (Applause.)

### Squandering Money.

So far as the payment of \$100 to this famous detective was concerned, I know that the fox breeders' protective association retains detectives through a detective agency in Montreal, and we have this specific agreement, that they will supply us with satisfactory men. If we have any just complaint to make against that he did not do his work properly, we are under no obligation to pay for the detective's services. That is of course the business-like way of doing things. But when this Government wanted a detective they just hired the first one that came along, apparently without any stipulation at all. And I think he was finally arrested as a vagrant or a tramp, and placed in jail. I contend, Mr. Speaker, that the Government were lax in their duty. They had no right to pay out of the funds of this Province \$1400 to a man who, as they admit themselves, was a drunkard and was no good, and whose evidence and information could not be relied upon, even with regard to liquor prosecutions. If they had made a proper contract they could go back now to the detective agency from whom this famous sleuth was hired and they would get compensation. If they cannot do that, then it is just a matter of showing their own weakness and negligence in making the contract. (Applause.)

Last year was perhaps one of the greatest years in the fur farming industry. The fox breeders, as I have already said, appreciated the support given to them by the Provincial Government in inaugurating their first exhibition. However, the all-important part of the industry is of course the hides or pelts. Last winter the fur auctions had the largest offerings in their history. Some 75,000 skins were offered, and 80 per cent. of these were practically sold and went into trade disbursements. The prices were somewhat lower than that of previous years, due to the collapse of the stock market which affected so many commodities. However, furs did not suffer any more than they did in the stock collapse of 1920 and 1921. They would have reached a much lower level had it not been for proper organization in selling. The main thing in fur marketing today is to have the commodity in such shape and condition that it will attract the attention of buyers from all over the world; and in this connection it is hoped that Prince Edward Island furs will retain the prestige and reputation they have established of being the finest offered at any auction sale throughout the world.

### OLD AGE PENSIONS

There is another matter that I

power. It was again voted on as a plebiscite in 1929, and Prohibition carried. Prohibition, being the law of the land, ordains that no spirituous liquors are to be used except for medicinal purposes. The question is: How is that law being carried out in this Province today?

We got a partial report of the Liquor Commission a few days ago that should have been tabled in this House when the Public Accounts were tabled. The business of the vendors' stores is part of the business of this Province, and we should have received the report along with the other financial statements. However, we did get some information—not the full report that should be issued half yearly, but sufficient to show us that some \$128,500 of liquor was sold by the Saunders Government liquor stores last year. Now, Mr. Speaker, is it reasonable to suppose that all this liquor was consumed in accordance with the requirements of the Prohibition Act? Was it really prescribed by the doctors for the relief of the sick, the suffering and the distressed throughout the Province? If so, its medicinal effects must be wonderful, and it must be very essential to the medical profession. If it is not a medicine, then it must be used as a beverage. It comes down practically to this, that we have very many people in the Province who are either medically sick or medically "wet," when so much as \$128,500 worth of liquor has to be prescribed in one year.

### LIQUOR REVENUES

I suppose I must be very careful with regard to what I say on the Prohibition question, because I happened, last year, to make some statement on this subject that raised quite a furore in the Legislature. I am pleased to note, however, that those remarks had some effect; because in 1928 there was \$130,000 of liquor sold, and in the year 1929, as I already said, the amount was about \$128,500; so perhaps my remarks were responsible for a curtailment of the Government's business in this respect by some \$1,500. We should have had this year a full report of the Prohibition Commission's transactions, and I claim, Mr. Speaker, that the Government should have furnished that report themselves. They should know what the Commission is doing. Every member of this House is entitled to the information. According to the Prohibition Act, half yearly statements should be filed with the Provincial Treasurer. Whether or not this regulation has been complied with we have not been able to ascertain; but from questions placed on the Order Paper we find that last year the sum of \$30,000 was spent in salaries and commissions out of liquor profits. Besides that amount, when you add up the yearly business, after selling \$128,500 worth of rum, we find that they have a loss, or deficit, of almost \$13,000; and that loss the Government of this Province has to make good. I see some hon. members shaking their heads. Do they mean to say that the Government is not responsible for that loss? They are not only responsible, Mr. Speaker, but they are liable under the Act, because the liquor stores are run by the Government, and the Government is directly liable for every cent of deficit incurred.

### PROHIBITION

Every speaker has had a few words to say on Prohibition. I kept tab for a few days on the speeches made during the Draft Address, and I think that about 80 per cent. of the time taken up by the speakers was devoted to the question of Prohibition. There was more talk about it than about any other question before the House, and I think with less result. I was rather surprised at the attitude of some members of the Government on this matter. Some of them seemed to be still strongly in favor of Prohibition, while others seemed to have their doubts. I have never argued the question of Government Control versus Prohibition, or Prohibition versus Government Control. I have seen almost every system of control or prohibition in different countries throughout the world, and I believe that what the people of this Province should do, more than anything else, is look upon this matter as a temperance problem, and not have a political football made of it as has been the case for some time. It is all very well to condemn one side or the other with regard to Prohibition, but I think the first thing is to find some common ground for agreement. Every one believes in temperance and sobriety. We would all rather live in a community that is temperate. That may not mean Government Control; that may not mean Prohibition; but it does mean Temperance. I, for one, being associated with several industries where we employ a considerable number of men, would certainly insist on having men who are temperate. We do not ask whether they are tee-totalers; we do not consider it our business to ask such a question; but we are always on the look-out for men of temperance and sobriety; men who will do their work properly. Governments try to make men temperate under Prohibition or some system of Government Control, and it is a difficult task unless proper education is given to the people so that they will see for themselves that temperance is the best thing for an individual or for a community.

### Enforcing the Law.

So far as the legislation that we have on the statute books is concerned, I have only this to say. Prohibition is the law of the land. It has been twice voted on within a period of two and one-half years. In 1927 it was the main issue; and Prohibition landed the hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House into

Province were greatly under paid. He almost wept over this in his Budget speech. Yet we know that he has, under his own hand, the right to increase the salaries or wages to those deserving officials, if he sees fit to do so. It was repeatedly said during the last election campaign that we had useless officials in this building, who were drawing too much salary for the work they were doing. The Minister of Agriculture introduced the subject last night from a somewhat different angle when he said that he would not be guilty of discharging anybody from the offices they held in this building for political reasons; and he censured us on this side of the House, in very strong language, for some dismissals that had been made. Now there are always two sides to these questions, and I would just like to call my hon. friend's attention to the fact that this Government made some dismissals, whether he was responsible for them or not. I know of one man, a faithful servant in one of the departments over which the Minister of Agriculture presides, who was dismissed just as winter was approaching. This man had a wife and family to support, and it was very difficult for him to find other employment at that time. Some very influential Liberals even went to the Government and probably interviewed the Minister of Agriculture on this man's behalf. But no, nothing could be done. "Out you go; you are a rank Conservative!" That was the answer. This man was only getting a salary of \$700 and they placed in his position a young man at an increased salary. I could mention several other cases of a similar nature. So I would advise my hon. friends, when speaking on subjects of this kind, to endeavor to be consistent, and while living in glass houses to refrain from pelting rocks at us. (Applause.)

### LABORERS' COMPENSATION ACT

During the present session some legislation was to have been introduced with respect to Laborers' Compensation which would have been of material assistance to the members of the Laborers' Protective Union and other labor organizations throughout the Province. I regret very much that the Premier had to inform this House the other day that the Government did not have sufficient time, or the Laborers' Union had not put this Act into his hands in sufficient time, to give it proper consideration. It was too late, he said, to get it drafted or re-drafted to come before the Legislature at this session. Now Mr. Speaker, the Laborers' Union have never asked for very much from this Legislature, and I sincerely hope that during the recess the Attorney General and his Government will be able to give this Compensation Act, or whatever it may be termed, the attention that it deserves, and in this way give some relief to our laborers in the conditions under which they have to work in this city. We know that at the present time, if a laborer happens to meet with an accident, he has no claim for compensation of any kind. We know, too, that the wages of laborers at no time are very large. If they were able to work 325 days in the year they could make very good remuneration for themselves; but the trouble is that in this city laborers are only able to get about 180 or 200 days' work in the year, and if they happen to meet with an accident at the beginning of the spring work, and they are laid off for two or three months, they have no source of revenue whatever to support them throughout the winter. If we had a Laborers' Compensation Act, they would have at least some chance of securing a weekly revenue in case of accident; and this would be a great boon to their families. I sincerely hope that the Attorney General will be able, during recess, to give this bill proper consideration for next year. (Applause.)

### Dr. Grant's Expectations.

I must compliment the hon. member of the Government from Montague (Hon. Dr. Grant) on the very plausible speech he delivered yesterday. He is a plausible gentleman on every occasion; and he seems now to be more suave and plausible than ever. He started in with the leader of the Opposition. He heaped all kinds of eulogy upon him, and threw bouquets in such quantities that it was almost embarrassing. And I must say that he also handed out some compliments to myself, for which I certainly thank him, because I think it is the first occasion that he ever proffered one to me. He also told some very good stories. He tells them in a very nice way. On this occasion he told us that he was leaving; I don't know whether he meant that he was actually leaving the Liberal party, or just leaving the Government for the time being. At any rate, he was leaving, and he expressed a wish on his behalf—and a left-handed one on my behalf—that we would shortly be going up to Ot-

### Government Officials.

I have not yet dealt with the department of the Minister of Public Works. My remarks have taken up a longer time than I anticipated, and I shall have to pass over this department, leaving it to the speaker who will follow me to deal with. There is one little item, however, that I cannot omit. A few years ago, when my hon. friends were in Opposition, we were favored with a great deal of weeping and wailing about the returned soldiers. We do not hear anything on that subject now; it seems to have been forgotten. But there is a new source of lamentation. The Premier referred to it the other night and also in his speech on the Draft Address, when he expressed deep concern over the fact that the civil servants in this building and indeed throughout the

tawa together; but that I would be paying my way while my hon. friend from Montague would be travelling in a de luxe fashion at the expense of the tax-payers of the Province. (Laughter.) Now that is a wonderful hope for him to have. It is a wonderful aspiration. I can only hope that he will not be unduly disappointed when the occasion comes around. For my own part, I have travelled a good deal but I have never had the opportunity of travelling free. I think I had, at one time, a railway pass issued by the Government. I do not know whether all members of the Legislature receive passes or not, but this one was good for the lines within the Province, and I believe I used it on three different occasions when I happened to be doing some work on behalf of the Government that was in power. At the present time, whether passes are available or not, I have not got one. One hasn't been issued to me, although I am aware that some of my hon. friends on the other side of the House have not only passes for the Province but for the whole of Canada. However, I do not object to what the member from Montague said when he expressed the hope that he would be travelling to Ottawa de luxe on a free ticket while I would be paying my fare. We all know, Mr. Speaker, that there are certain classes of individuals that always travel free. And we know that there are certain classes of freight and freight cars—known as dead-headers—that always travel free. I don't want to be in either of those classes if I can help it. (Laughter and applause.)

### Mr. Lea's Tariff Theories.

The hon. member from Montague went into some questions that were probably more of a federal nature, and at this late hour I shall not attempt to take them up. There is one Federal matter that I would like to refer to, however, and it is the one that the Minister of Agriculture had so much to say about last night. That is the Australian Treaty. I just want to call attention to one of the Minister's statements. I understood him to say that the tariff question was a serious one, and that tariff walls in any country had the effect of producing individual wealth to the detriment of the State. I never heard a statement of that kind before, and I would like to analyze it. If I have misquoted the hon. Minister I hope he will correct me; but I believe that was his statement. Now, Mr. Speaker, I will ask the Minister this question: Is it possible to increase the wealth of individuals without increasing the wealth of the State?

### Holding Up Traffic.

I was surprised the other day at the objection that was raised by the hon. member from Rustico to a question I had placed on the order paper with respect to the Rustico-Village Bridge. If the work was done in a careful manner, I think this House should know; and the people have a right to ask questions through any member of this Legislature with regard to the cost and construction of those bridges. I at first understood that the bridge was built by contract, but it turns out that only part of it was done in this way; and the Minister of Public Works explained the other part that it was built by days' work, the wages differing according to the different classes of men that were employed. That bridge, according to the answer we received, was started in April and finished on Sept. 26th. Now that is too long to hold up traffic, and I think an endeavor should have been made to complete the bridge in at least a month or six weeks, instead of taking three or four months.

### HON. MR. LEA: When you increase the wealth of the classes at the expense of the masses.

MR. MCLURE: You are changing it now.

HON. MR. LEA: That is the way it is always put. It's the same idea conveyed in another way.

MR. MCLURE: Very well; even if you take it that way; if wealth is created by a tariff wall, that wealth must eventually be distributed throughout the country. (Applause.)

### Mr. LePage and Protection.

The hon. member from Rustico (Hon. Mr. LePage) made a strong plea on behalf of home buying, of patronizing home merchants and of purchasing home products. It was indeed glad to know that he and I, being on opposite sides of the House, on one occasion at least could clasp hands and say: "Here, at any rate, is one time that our hearts and minds move in the same direction." But I must say that I was surprised at such statements coming from a strong Liberal supporter; because he enunciated the very policy that the Conservatives have been trying for years to get the people to recognize. It is a great thing, Mr. Speaker to see and hear hon. gentlemen on the other side, as time wears on and they come to a sensible viewpoint on life, advocating the adoption of a policy that is absolutely in the best interests of the community. (Applause.)

### HON. MR. LEA: Don't try to beat the record of the senior member from Charlottetown.

HON. MR. STEWART: This night is no longer than last night; and my hon. friend had it all to himself.

HON. MR. LEA: It seems longer.

HON. MR. MCLURE: It would—to you!

MR. MCLURE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I am going to stop when I am ready. (Applause.) I noticed throughout the debate that the Department of Public Works received a little criticism, and it received a great deal of praise. The Minister of Public Works, in his speech the other night, gave a detailed report of all the operations in his department. He told us about the manner in which the different rep-

representatives had worked for their districts, how they called on him on different occasions, and what good fellows they were. I might say that I call on him myself occasionally, because he is a very agreeable gentleman to talk to in his office. But while I always got a pleasant smile, I cannot say that I got too much of anything else that I have asked for. (Laughter.) I made application on several occasions to have repair work done to a certain road of which I am going to make the boast that, for its length, there are more taxes paid on it than on any other road in the Province. I had to make several calls and received several pleasant smiles before I could persuade him to get busy. I must say, however, that finally he did do a little repair work on that road, for which, as one member representing the Charlottetown and Royalty District, I was thankful.

### ROAD WORK

With regard to travelling, one would imagine, to hear some hon. members talk, that this was an altogether new thing in the road making system of this Province. Yet we know, Mr. Speaker, that under the Stewart Government road gravelling had its birth or initiation in this Province. I believe the first roads gravelled were the Malpeque Road and the St. Peter's Road.

### We have been told repeatedly that the road machines purchased by this Government are a great asset to the Province. We all admit that these machines are capable of doing good work in widening the roads, etc., but we must not forget that it is costing a great deal of money. The repair bill alone for these machines last year was something like \$25,000. We should certainly have some results from this expenditure.

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MR. MCLURE: Very well; even if you take it that way; if wealth is created by a tariff wall, that wealth must eventually be distributed throughout the country. (Applause.)

### Mr. LePage and Protection.

The hon. member from Rustico (Hon. Mr. LePage) made a strong plea on behalf of home buying, of patronizing home merchants and of purchasing home products. It was indeed glad to know that he and I, being on opposite sides of the House, on one occasion at least could clasp hands and say: "Here, at any rate, is one time that our hearts and minds move in the same direction." But I must say that I was surprised at such statements coming from a strong Liberal supporter; because he enunciated the very policy that the Conservatives have been trying for years to get the people to recognize. It is a great thing, Mr. Speaker to see and hear hon. gentlemen on the other side, as time wears on and they come to a sensible viewpoint on life, advocating the adoption of a policy that is absolutely in the best interests of the community. (Applause.)

### HON. MR. LEA: Don't try to beat the record of the senior member from Charlottetown.

HON. MR. STEWART: This night is no longer than last night; and my hon. friend had it all to himself.

HON. MR. LEA: It seems longer.

HON. MR. MCLURE: It would—to you!

MR. MCLURE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I am going to stop when I am ready. (Applause.) I noticed throughout the debate that the Department of Public Works received a little criticism, and it received a great deal of praise. The Minister of Public Works, in his speech the other night, gave a detailed report of all the operations in his department. He told us about the manner in which the different rep-

### Hospitals and Orphanages.

I have taken more time than I intended at the start, though I have not dealt with all the subjects I have noted down. Doubtless, however, these will be taken up by the speakers who will follow me. There is just one other matter that I wish to mention. When some hon. members were speaking yesterday they censured the Stewart Government and members on this side of the House for not giving proper support

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