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THE HON. J. D. STEWART

(Continued from page six)

responsible for the breakage; perhaps my hon. friend was not in a condition to drive the car. (Laughter.) But the strange part to me is that the Western part of which he complains was built by the Bell Government four years ago; and he admits that they have not done anything by way of upkeep, because he said the former Commissioner of Public Works made the excuse to him that they could not get round to it. He admits very frankly that they never did anything, but nevertheless this road, under the Bell Government, continued to improve in quality. It had been cleared of those alder bushes he talks about; it had got harder and smoother with the years, till there came a change of Government, and immediately that road began to disintegrate and the trees grew up in the middle of the road to such proportions in one year they were a hindrance to my hon. friend's car, so that he couldn't drive over it at all. (Renewed laughter.) This is a most remarkable physical condition. I may say that this condition did not obtain in any other part of the Province, and that there was any earthquake that can account for it, or if it was only a pipe dream of my hon. friend's.

As a matter of fact, it does not lie in his mouth to complain about this, even if there was any neglect because he admits that during the whole four years of the Bell regime absolutely nothing was done with respect to that road, and when the Government came into power they found some of those roads in such a condition that they had to be practically rebuilt. More than that, they undertook, the last year they were in power, the construction of a large number of those highways projects and they left them when they were in such a deplorable condition that it was very hard to know just what to do with them. And now, after one year, my hon. friend will come and criticise this Government because they have not instituted what carried out a complete system of upkeep in addition to that, we have not done the mischief done during the last year—his friends were in power!

I may say that this Government has made an attempt at upkeep in not so well acquainted with conditions in the west, but I know that in Kings County our Patrol system did do comparatively good work. A great many of the roads and highways in that County were very satisfactorily repaired, and kept in repair throughout last fall. I am not saying that it is a complete success, because we know that we have in this Province conditions which are altogether different from the conditions in other parts of Canada. We have to commence at the very foundation,

We have no precedent on which to work. We must commence at the beginning and we must experiment until we find the best and most satisfactory way of upkeep of those highways; and that will require time, a great deal of study, and experimentation. But we have made a beginning and an honest beginning. We purpose to continue that experimentation this season along different lines, and I believe in a short time we will arrive at a satisfactory method. In saying this I am not making a boast. I am admitting that we have not during the past year made any very great progress, but we have made a beginning, and we purpose to continue the work, to get the very best advice we can on the subject and to carry the matter on until we do arrive at some system which will be satisfactory.

The Government's Road Policy

We have been charged with departing from our original attitude in speaking on the question of highway building. I don't think my hon. friend can find any foundation for his statement that we condemned the system of highway improvement. What I did condemn was the expenditure of very large sums of money upon the same building up of practically level roads; and I want to tell him, that when he sees and compares the cost of the contracts which we undertook this year with theirs, he will find that we have, to a large extent at least, carried out our policy, that we have not spent the same amount of money, proportionately, on the roads built, and that we have built just as satisfactory roads, if not more so. Indeed I believe the roads during the autumn months last year, before the fall rains began, were in a better general condition than they ever were in the history of this Province. (Applause.)

We have been criticised by the Leader of the Opposition because we did not undertake the spring repair of the roads. I quite agree that that is the proper time, and I agree that we did not get as many done as we hoped to. But, as I said, we had a great deal of their arrears to finish; projects which had to be carried out if we were going to get the benefit of the Federal grant before the time expired. In addition to that, we had no frost and the moment the snow was off the ground the roads became dry, as in summer. There was not the usual interval between winter and summer, conditions in which the roads could be attended to. At any rate we are ambitious of having the roads thoroughly repaired in the spring, and I trust that if my hon. friend is, as he says, a most sympathetic man, he will be able to give us credit for having performed that work.

Experimental Fox Station

There is another matter which he has mentioned, and I am very sorry he has taken the attitude he has in connection with the proposed establishment of an Experimental Fox Station. Again he has charged us unjustly with boasting. It is not stated in the Speech, nor do I state now, that this Government is taking any credit for that. The idea did originate with the foxmen. But I have been informed that the foxmen went to our predecessors in office and received no encouragement at all. This Government gave the proposition at least a sympathetic ear. When my hon. friend, however, raises the cry of sectionalism in regard to the situation of the Fox Station, he is making a statement that no public man ought to make on the floor of this House. This is going to be established for the benefit of the Province generally and when it is established I trust that it will be established to the best advantage. Beyond that I have nothing to say. I have no axe to grind with the fox industry of any industry. We have received a most sympathetic hearing from the Federal Department of Agriculture, and wherever that station is established it will be with the approval of that Department. We had hoped to have this established before now, but for the fact that a very large special house had to be constructed for carrying on special work, and we found that the grant placed in the Estimates, even after receiving the foxes and ranch free, would not construct a Station of the size

required by the Federal Department. The result was that we had to take up negotiations further, and I am glad to say we have now arrived at a point where the Federal department has undertaken the construction of this special building and the understanding is that the work will be carried out during the coming summer. The Provincial Government and the Federal Government at Ottawa have a perfect understanding in the matter and there is no reason why it should not be carried out.

Successful Sale of Bonds

With regard to the sale of bonds I think some criticism was made that a full explanation was not in the Speech, but I have elaborated this paragraph to the extent necessary to give my hon. friend the information it appears he needs, we would have made a book of it. However, I will give it to him now, if he chooses. The \$500,000 issue of bonds was made up just as he supposed; \$350,000 to pay the Bank over draft and \$150,000 for highways. These bonds were twenty year bonds, bearing four and a half per cent, and sold at 96.35. I may say that we received afterwards, congratulations from a great many of the bond houses who had tendered but whose tenders were lower than this, and we received a great many favorable comments through the press generally. We are not taking any credit for this; it was an ordinary business transaction, but I will say this, that we did not follow the course taken in previous years of making elaborate advertisement and elaborate preparations for the sale of those bonds. We did notice in the autumn that there was a very strong demand for these bonds and that the Dominion Government had made an issue which did not nearly satisfy the commitments made by the bond houses, and the bond houses were looking for something of a similar nature to fill up their commitments. As soon as we found that condition on the market we immediately invited by wire offers from all the principal bond houses of Canada. Consequently we found those houses all tendering, some of them pretty close. We got through the sale quickly with a good figure and I think with less expense than would otherwise have been incurred.

Prohibition Enforcement

I am not going to take up any time in a discussion of the Prohibition Act, but I think the hon. Leader of the Opposition entirely misunderstood my hon. friend from the First District of Prince (Mr. Tanton) when he quoted him as saying that it was the intention to introduce another Act. I did not hear him make any such statement. He made it clear that he was expressing his own individual opinion on this matter, and that he had a perfect right to do. A great deal was said a year ago with respect to the appointment of the present Prohibition Commission by this Government a great many things that time has disapproved; that this Commission was appointed for political purposes—statements which were absolutely without foundation. I want to say that during the past year the present Commission has carried out the law just as fully, and more effectively perhaps, than before. We have had a greater enforcement of the Act, as the report of the Commission will prove. We have, however, entirely too much of what is called moonshine, and of bootlegging. The member for First Prince denounced this as an unmitigated curse to the Province, and with that I quite agree.

But a large share of the blame is to be laid at the door of the Federal Government. They can prevent the manufacture and it is their duty and province to do it. I am sorry to say that so far as I can see, the efforts they are making to do it are not as successful as they should or as they might be. But so far as the enforcement of the Prohibition Law is concerned, this Government is prepared to stand behind that. The Prohibition Commission have had absolute freedom in the matter and, by their reports, they have administered that law thoroughly and efficiently throughout the whole year.

With regard to the doctors granting too many prescriptions, does my hon. friend suggest that the physicians should be curtailed in the number of prescriptions they give. The whole foundation of the Prohibition Act is based on the recognition of the fact that alcohol is necessary for medicinal purposes and it provides that physicians may dispense alcohol. Look at it in the same way as any other drug. Would my hon. friend suggest that we limit the doctor in the amount of chloroform or morphia he is to give? Why pick out alcohol, which the law says is to be used for medical purposes, and say that the doctor must use only a prescribed amount of that in a definite period? If you are going to tie the doctor's

hands in this matter, you might as well tie up the whole law, because you are running into a glaring inconsistency. I do not know of anything further that it is necessary for me to deal with at this juncture. A year ago we got through with the business of this House, I think, with commendable dispatch and for that we all thank the Opposition as much, perhaps, as ourselves. I will say this, that last year they assisted very materially and we see no reason why we should not go on the same way this year. We have not as much legislation as last year, naturally and with the same observance of business-like methods there is no reason why we should not get through with the session in at least as short a time, or perhaps shorter.

The Gasoline Tax

There is a matter I intended to mention, and that is the gasoline tax which my hon. friend has attacked. In the first place when he states that the gasoline tax was intended to replace the poll tax, he is under a very serious misapprehension. I do not know if he really is under that misapprehension, because he knows very well that the poll tax went into general revenue. On the contrary, the proceeds of the collection of this tax are earmarked and are used only for the upkeep of the roads. To my mind it is the most equitable tax that could be conceived, because those who are using the roads and consequently wearing them down with

automobile traffic are paying in the very proportion to which they destroy the roads. He is under another serious misapprehension actually copied this act and has in regard to the numbers claiming the rebate on this tax. After he sees the stack of rebates we have the first time in any Province, to deal with he will change his opinion. I think the fishermen and all those entitled to the rebate have not been very slow in claiming it, and I do not know of any simpler or more expeditious method of giving that rebate than the method which we adopted. The hardship is all imaginary. The forms of the affidavit are given to the tax collector. The applicant gets the form of affidavit, fills it out, swears to it, and leaves

Prohibition Enforcement

it there; it does not occupy more than five minutes of his time. The great Province of Ontario has actually copied this act and has adopted our system of rebate, which we have put into effect for the first time in any Province." (Applause.) I quite agree with my hon. friend that the people of this Province and the people of Canada are getting away from party politics, that they are looking to the quality of work accomplished down from our forefathers, and that we are prepared to get above and beyond all that, we as citizens good citizens are here as representatives of this Province to legislate for the interests of the whole Province and to manage the governmental affairs as trustees of the citizens who have placed us here. I believe, irrespective of all party politics, that we all appreciate the seriousness and importance of our position in that respect, and when it comes to a final analysis I believe we all have thoroughly at heart the interests of this Province; that we look upon it as a great heritage that has been handed down from our forefathers, and that we are prepared to get above and beyond all that, we as citizens good citizens are here as representatives of this Province to legislate for the interests of the whole Province and to manage the governmental affairs as trustees of the citizens who have placed us here. I believe, irrespective of all party politics, that we all appreciate the seriousness and importance of our position in that respect, and when it comes to a final analysis I believe we all have thoroughly at heart the interests of this Province; that we look upon it as a great heritage that has been handed down from our forefathers, and that we are prepared to get above and beyond all that, we as citizens good citizens are here as representatives of this Province to legislate for the interests of the whole Province and to manage the governmental affairs as trustees of the citizens who have placed us here. (Loud applause.)

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