

... were controverted.
... not burk discussion.

HOWLAND TAKES PART.

O. A. Howland made his maiden speech. Speaking as one of the new members, he said he had not experience of the proceedings of the House as to the merits or demerits of the report which they were to adopt upon such short notice. When he was elected he had supposed he had been elected for serious business. The most serious business he supposed to be the consideration of the public accounts of the Province. They had had a discussion with regard to whether the House should meet every year or every other year, and the chief argument advanced by the Government against biennial sessions had been that it was best that the public accounts should be examined every year. He did not think the present proposition to curtail the opportunity of discussion was consistent with that position. He likened the budget debate to an audit, and asked where the financial or monetary institution could be found which, having an annual expenditure of millions of dollars, would require an audit of it to be made in two days, or in even a week. It was impossible that a House of 94 members should be able to make itself acquainted with the public accounts in two days, and he hoped the Government would reconsider its decision and allow them more time.

Hon. Mr. Gibson closed the debate with a few remarks. From what Mr. Howland had said, it seemed that he thought that the budget debate would be the final settling of the public accounts, whereas the contrary was the case. The comparison to an institution whose accounts were being audited was not proper, for the budget speech was nothing in the nature of an audit. A large part of the time of the session was taken up by the Public Accounts Committee, which if anything was the public audit, for it was an exhaustive inquiry, and the estimates were considered in detail in Committee of the Whole from day to day. The budget debate, on the other hand, seldom dealt with particular items, but with general principles. Moreover, he had a distinct recollection that it had not been unusual for the public accounts to be brought down the day before the delivery of the speech, and it had not been thought to be a matter of complaint. The public accounts, in any case, did not vary much from year to

year, except in matters of minute detail.

This terminated the discussion and the House adjourned.

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