

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 1912.

# PREMIER SILENT ON ELK LAKE MESSAGE

**Mr. Rowell Challenges Sir James to Say There Was No Forgery.**

## BUDGET DEBATE ENDS IN LEGISLATURE

**Sir James Whitney Still Says There Are No Bilingual Schools in Ontario.**

A superheated atmosphere and a wide range of discussion marked the closing of the Budget debate in the Legislature yesterday. The stage had been reserved for the leaders on both sides, and the speeches of Mr. Rowell and the Prime Minister occupied nearly the entire time of the sitting. The Budget was accepted without amendment, and the House went into supply, passed one item and adjourned.

Mr. Rowell's speech was an able and comprehensive review of the Provincial situation. He delved deeply into the policy of administering the Provincial finances, and criticized the Government for its failure to point out the needs and resources of the Province. He threw back upon the Government the responsibility for dealing with the bilingual situation, and challenged the Prime Minister to say whether now there were any English-French schools in the Province.

### Challenge to Prime Minister.

The Elk Lake telegram figured prominently in the debate. Mr. Rowell charged as a result of a sworn declaration produced that a "telegram was sent, purporting to be signed by the Prime Minister, promising the construction of this Elk Lake branch under circumstances which could only have had a marked effect on the election in that northern constituency." (Applause.)

"The other day in this House, in answer to a suggestion by the hon. member for North Grey (Hon. A. G. MacKay), the Prime Minister himself suggested that the telegram was a forgery, and it was forged by some one 'not very far from here.' The Prime Minister knows whether he sent that telegram or not; he knows whether it is a forgery or not, and any man who is bold enough to be honest or honest enough to be bold will tell the people of this Province whether he sent it." (Loud applause.)

### The Outlook.

Mr. Rowell's first criticism of the financial policy of the Government was that there had been no pretence whatever to review the financial situation of the Province, to point out its financial needs and to consider the sources from which the revenue was to be derived. At the present time the Province was confronted with an alarming situation in connection with educational affairs, and if the schools were to reach a higher standard of efficiency the grants to education must be largely augmented. Large sums were also wanted for public health. In the Department of Agriculture there were increasing demands upon the resources of the Province. Large expenditures of the public money were needed for good roads. Something was being done, but more was needed.

The member for Centre Grey (Hon.

## Premier Silent on Telegram and Schools

James Whitney was silent again yesterday, when the leader of the Opposition introduced the Elk Lake telegram into the debate. Mr. Rowell asked the Prime Minister whether or not he sent the telegram. Mr. Rowell also pressed Sir James to make some statement on the policy of the Government on the question of bilingual schools, but nothing definite was forthcoming. The Liberal leader placed upon the Government the responsibility for dealing with the school situation.

J. B. Lucas), in making the Budget speech, apparently thought it necessary to point out the necessary expenditure along certain lines. He did not attempt to analyze these expenditures and apply the test of efficiency to find out whether the Province was getting the best results. He did not go into the public service in any department with the view of seeing what results had been obtained.

### At Sea About Subsidy.

Mr. Rowell made an exhaustive analysis of the revenue of the Province from the Dominion Government. He reiterated the contention of Opposition members that Ontario was entitled to a substantial increase in the Federal subsidy. "I venture to think that the Government does not yet understand this situation.

Sir James Whitney—Hear, hear.

"I am glad to have that frank confession from the Prime Minister," replied Mr. Rowell. "I appeal to the members of the Government to go and ascertain these facts for themselves by looking at the law." He hoped for the co-operation and support of the members on the other side to press the Government to do its duty. The Opposition leader reviewed the legislation of the Dominion Parliament affecting money received from the Dominion, and pointed out that these payments were made under three heads: (1) Subsidy in respect of legislation and good roads; (2) subsidy in respect of population; (3) subsidy for debt allowances, \$142,414.48. The bill in connection with the boundary settlement contained a specific reference to the increase in area of the Province and a compensation in lieu of land, while there was also an additional amount for debt allowance. He declared that the Government should at once take action to have the amount of \$142,414 increased by about half a million dollars.

### Reforestation Policy.

Another item in the receipts that Mr. Rowell criticized was the returns from the Department of Lands, Forests and Mines. He contended that the Government policy was depleting the timber of the Province, and soon there would be little left. Assuming, however, that there was lots of timber, he thought the time had come when some consideration should be given to the interests of the future. He was not objecting to the revenue, but to forest depletion, and the Government should adopt a scientific forestry policy for the purpose of conserving the timber. He hoped Hon. Mr. Hearst would adopt some policy before the Liberals were called upon to take the responsibility of government.

"You are giving us lots of latitude," interrupted Mr. A. E. Donovan (Brockville).

"Well, it requires a great deal of latitude to get anything out of the present Government," countered Mr. Rowell.

In regard to the supplementary revenue, which was a tax on corporations, he thought that the railways