

GOVERNMENT REPENTS AND ALLOWS QUESTION

Mr. Bowman Permitted to Probe T. & N. O. Finances

Evidently the Government forces on the Public Accounts Committee repented of the action taken on Wednesday last in shutting out the evidence of Mr. William Douglas, Chief Clerk of the Treasury Department, with regard to the item of \$544,491 in the financial statement, as interest received from the T. & N. O. Railway. When the committee met again yesterday morning Mr. C. M. Bowman started the proceedings by declaring that the action of Chairman Lennox on the former occasion was unwarranted and unprecedented, and he supported this by showing that Assistant Treasurer Sproule was called last year and gave similar evidence regarding details of the public expenditure and no objection was made by the Chairman.

"My hon. friend will admit that the Chair made a ruling and that ruling was sustained. He surely does not want us to go back on it now," said Hon. G. Howard Ferguson.

"I suppose it must be understood, then, that the action of this committee is like the laws of the Medes and Persians," replied Mr. Bowman.

"Not at all," said Mr. Lennox, who said it was open for Mr. Bowman to appeal to the House.

Witness Was Recalled.

It was finally allowed that Mr. Douglas should be recalled and Mr. Bowman's questions taken up in detail.

Referring again to the bookkeeping entry of \$544,491, Mr. Douglas explained that this amount was charged against consolidated revenue account, the fund into which the T. & N. O. subsidy had been all paid, and this adjustment of interest was deducted from the balance of that subsidy. He refused to be drawn into an admission of Mr. Bowman's point that as no cash had actually been received in respect of the amount the deficit of \$697,000 was considerably more.

"In your total cash receipts does the inclusion of that item of \$544,491 make any difference in the volume of cash received?" asked Mr. Bowman.

"It makes no difference in the balance at the beginning of this year," replied the accountant.

"It makes no difference in the total receipts included in ordinary receipts?"

"No."

Was it Just Bookkeeping?

Mr. McGarry then took a hand in the examination in an effort to make it clear that the matter was only one of bookkeeping. It was an adjustment of interest to make up the balance due from the T. & N. O., he claimed. "As a matter of fact you suggested that as the proper entry as a bookkeeper?"

"Yes."

"It makes no difference in the total cash received or expended?"

"No."

Printed Hanna's Speeches.

Mr. H. Lovelock, Acting King's Printer, was called with reference to the printing of two speeches delivered last session by Hon. W. J. Hanna, marked "Printed by order of the Legislative Assembly," and distributed as campaign documents. No requisitions had been received by Mr. Lovelock for the printing of the speeches, and he did not know how they were paid.