

of our Governments, as far as related to their personal dealings with the Government, with which they were connected. Unfortunately for Nova Scotia, this state of affairs only lasted until 1867. In that year, the men whose names we have mentioned were intrusted, as we have indicated, with our affairs, and the results were, as we will show, a heavy pecuniary loss to the Province, and an indelible disgrace on our Provincial history. Their advent to power was unpromising in the extreme. It was known that Mr. Annand, while previously in the Government, from 1859 to 1863, had become connected with a notorious swindling concern—"the Nova Scotia Land and Gold Crushing and Amalgamating Company"—the dishonest transactions and collapse of which had completely ruined, in England the credit of Nova Scotia mining stock. Mr. Vail's well-known avarice and inability to distinguish between right and wrong, gave him also a doubtful character. But no person suspected, and very few have even yet, an adequate conception of, the extent to which these men were prepared to cheat and defraud, and did in fact cheat and defraud, the Treasury of this Province. By a sort of tripartite agreement, by which each of these worthies agreed to wink at and conceal the dishonesty of the others, Mr. Annand, Mr. Vail, and Mr. Blackadar, commenced, and for many years prosecuted, a series of transactions, and a system of dealing—in the matter of Public Printing—with the Government (of which two of them were members, and the other Queen's Printer) that, considering the positions of the parties, their long continued operations, and the magnitude of the sums which they abstracted from the Treasury, surpasses in criminal dishonesty any "scandal" that was ever unearthed in this or any other country enjoying constitutional Government. It was different from the "Beauport Scandal" in Quebec, our own "Crown Lands Scandal," or the "Steel Rails," "Goderich Harbor," "Neebing Hotel," and other multitudinous scandals which disgrace the Dominion Government; inasmuch as they only reveal dishonest dealings of the governments with supporters, while in the matter of Public Printing the members of our Government dealt dishonestly with themselves as a Government for the benefit of themselves as

printers—swindling themselves, as a Government, of tens of thousands of dollars, which they placed in *their own pockets*, as printers, regardless of their oaths of office, the interests of the Province, or the honor of the country.

How long this state of things would have been allowed to exist if the Opposition had not interfered, we are not prepared to say. Certain it is that it was in operation when Mr. Hill joined the Government in 1874, and continued in full blast—notwithstanding its exposure in 1875—until the middle of 1876! On the 17th March, 1875, Mr. Longley moved for, and (notwithstanding the opposition of members of the Government) succeeded in procuring a special committee on Public Printing (*Debates* 1875, p. 18). The committee was composed of gentlemen of both political parties, embracing, among others, Hon. A. Gayton, the present Commissioner of Mines and Works, and Mr. I. N. Mack, the present Speaker of the House. After nearly three weeks' investigation, the committee UNANIMOUSLY reported (*vide Journals of House*, 1875, App'x No. 21, p. 7) as follows:

Your Committee to whom was referred the investigation of the method and cost of public printing having, as far as seemed practicable, completed their labors, beg leave to report as follows:

We find, from the testimony adduced, that the Government have given, since the year eighteen hundred and sixty-seven, to whom they pleased, without tender or contract, the printing for the several Departments and Legislature.

That said printing has been enjoyed almost wholly by the proprietors of the following papers, viz.:

The "Acadian Recorder."
The "Morning Chronicle."
The "Citizen."

THAT NO ACCOUNT OR MEMORANDA WHATEVER HAS BEEN KEPT BY THE SEVERAL DEPARTMENTS WITH ANY OF SAID PROPRIETORS OF SAID NEWSPAPERS OF WORK GIVEN OUT TO THEM.

We find that the Printing for the Provincial Secretary's and Treasurer's Departments has been paid for by special warrants for that purpose, without any account being rendered by the printers until the end of the year, while in all other Departments the system has been to DRAW LUMP SUMS from the Treasury and pay it out for miscellaneous purposes, including public printing, as the Departments pleased.

Your committee feel they have been unable, OWING TO THE PERNICIOUS SYSTEM BY WHICH THE PUBLIC