

THE HERALD

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21, 1886

The Public Accounts.

The various Departmental Reports of the Provincial Government were laid before the Legislature on Friday last. That of the Auditor upon the Public Accounts, being of the most interest to our readers, we shall devote our first attention to it. The Receipts for the year 1885 were \$248,222.44, and the Expenditure \$266,317.76, showing a deficit of \$18,095.31. When, however, we come to analyze the accounts, it becomes fully apparent how the deficiency arose. In his Budget Speech last Session, Mr. Sullivan estimated the revenue for the year to be \$290,967.31, and in making his calculations he presumed upon receipts from Public Lands the sum of \$50,000. Owing, however, to the Small Pox, and to the consequent fact that the Land Office officials were prevented reaching many of the districts in the country, the revenue from that source fell off to \$37,778, so that had the Government received what they anticipated from the Land Office, Mr. Sullivan's estimates would have been realized within a few dollars. Of course we expect the Opposition will overlook this item, but every sensible man knows how business in both town and country was paralyzed for the same reason in the months of November and December last, the very time when the Land Office receipts are the largest.

In other estimates of revenue Mr. Sullivan was exceedingly accurate. The fees from the Provincial Secretary's Office he placed at \$1,000—amounted, with other slight items of casual revenue, to \$1,013. The Prothonotary's fees, which he placed at \$1,500, swelled to \$1,928. The Registry Office fees fell only \$200 short of his calculation, and the County Court fees only \$70 short. The Hospital for the Insane returned only \$1,381 instead of \$1,900, as anticipated, but, as will be observed later, on the expenditure in that institution was decreased by \$1,000. Other small receipts there which aggregated the total we have already mentioned.

To come to the expenditure. The appropriation for the administration of Justice last year was \$18,672. The expenditure we find to have been \$19,763, some \$1,100 in excess. This was chiefly caused by the expenses of the Supreme Court, which it is hard, if not impossible, to keep well in check, the Jury fees depending entirely upon the length of the Term. The amount paid, however, is remarkably less than that expended during the Davies administration, which in 1878 was \$33,300. The fees paid to Counsel for the Crown last year were \$170, contrasting rather favorably with those of \$1,324 paid by Mr. Davies.

The expenses of the Executive Council, estimated at \$900, amounted to only \$332. The heaviest charge upon our revenue is that for Education, the expenditure in that department last year having reached the large sum of \$109,316. The amount paid for Teachers' salaries and bonuses was \$99,252, over \$5,000 more than was anticipated.

The Hospital for the Insane was managed at a cost of \$18,068, nearly \$1,000 less than provided for. Legislation, for which \$12,800 was voted, cost \$13,044, but of this amount \$288 belonged to the expenditure of former years, for printing Debates, etc., while it should be noted that the Journals and Debates of both Houses for 1885 were paid within the year.

The miscellaneous expenditures, for which \$2,600 were voted, amounted to \$3,100, and was all of an unimportant nature. The charges for management of the Public Lands Office for last year amounted to \$3,012, or \$300 less than estimated. We think our readers will agree with us that this very important branch of our Public Service could scarcely be managed at a less sum, which includes salaries, printing, stationery, surveys and collecting expenses.

In the Public Works Department we find that the annual repairs and charges for fuel, etc., to the Public Buildings, for which \$3,200 were appropriated, cost \$2,962. The maintenance of Ferries cost \$6,662, or \$100 more than estimated. For Georgetown Ferry \$2,400 were paid, and for Southport Ferry \$2,261, in addition to which must be considered the very large item of \$6,641 expended upon Ferry Wharves. Upon the Southport Ferry Wharves \$3,336 were laid out, and upon Rocky Point Ferry Wharf \$2,618. No wharves are sustained except those used as Ferry approaches. The steamers *Bliss* and *Southport* cost \$1,430 for repairs, so that altogether our Southport Ferry cuts up a considerable portion of the Public Works grant. Packet Service cost \$3,490; Bushing Bay, \$329; Stone Crusher, \$195; Southport Ferry House, \$21; repairs on *Four Seasons* \$236; Victoria Boatman, \$1,284.

The expenditure upon Bridges was very nearly \$1,000, or \$500 more than estimated. The repairs upon the various bridges were \$1,247, or \$247 more than estimated. The repairs upon the various bridges were \$1,247, or \$247 more than estimated. The repairs upon the various bridges were \$1,247, or \$247 more than estimated.

presented by teachers, and for what better purpose could the money be expended? Then it seems that Mr. Campbell expended \$3,641 more on the Ferry Wharves than the amount estimated. How did Mr. Henry Beer and Mr. Donald Farquharson meet for this transgression of the Commissioner? To think that he would dare to expend \$3,336 upon the Southport Ferry Wharves must annoy Mr. Beer, and that Mr. Campbell allowed out \$2,290 upon the Ferry Wharves in Mr. Farquharson's district, was certainly an outrage upon the Constitution.

We fancy we hear these two wretches, Messrs. Beer and Farquharson, complaining, as when, indeed, do they not, about the miserable accommodation afforded at the Southport, Rocky Point and West Ferry Ferries. Already this spring in the *Patriot* fall of it; yet when Mr. Campbell takes upon himself to go beyond the vote and expend more money upon these works than was granted, these are the thanks he gets for it. We trust the electors will take notice of the tricky course pursued by the Opposition in this matter.

It is also a source of trouble to the *Patriot* that the expenditure for Bridges was \$5,095 in excess of the grant, yet it is only a few days ago upon these estates acquired under the Land Purchase Act, 1875, holding nearly 43,000 acres, was not yet returned.

From appendices to the Public Accounts we learn that 375 Marriage Licenses were issued in 1885, which yielded a revenue of \$712.50; 19 Pedlars' Licenses were granted at \$25 each. The Prothonotary's fees from Queen's County amounted to \$1,720; from King's County, \$130, and from Prince County, \$77. The total revenue returned by the County Courts was \$1,923; the largest circuit being Charlottetown, returning \$412 and the smallest, Centreville, which yielded \$17.58.

To our credit at Ottawa we have on Debt and Land Purchase Accounts the sum of \$1,027,896, upon which we receive interest annually at the rate of 5 per cent.

When Mr. Davies was in power, in 1876 and 1877, he levied taxes to the amount of \$102,896 and collected from the Land Office \$133,066, yet he went out of office leaving debts unpaid to the tune of \$60,000. Mr. Sullivan's Administration have managed affairs for seven years, during four of which they have levied no assessment, yet the fact remains, and cannot be controverted, that the balance to the credit of the Island to-day, without any deficit, is upwards of \$100,000 more than when Mr. Davies left office.

We have already referred to the cost of Education as being the heaviest charge upon our revenue, it having increased from \$65,350 paid in 1878 by the Davies Government to \$109,316 paid last year, and this notwithstanding very material savings effected in the administration of the department. The increase has been entirely in the salaries of District Teachers, and on account of the bonus, amounting to some \$2,000 annually, which became payable to them after five years' service. In payment of these salaries \$51,000 were expended in 1878—then there were 413 teachers; last year the number had increased to 494 and their salaries amounted to \$97,255, exclusive of \$1,997 bonus. The cost of Education is increasing annually and at a very rapid rate.

We have thus reviewed at considerable length the principal of the Departmental Reports for the past year, and given our readers an insight into the expenditure of the Government and the way affairs have been managed. True there is a local deficit to be met, but while the Opposition keeps this conspicuously before the people, they carefully abstain from saying a word about the large balance to our credit, and of the other assets which the Island possesses. As to the ways and means which the Government will adopt to meet the expenditure for the current year, we can, of course, say nothing until the Budget Speech is delivered. We may, we think, rest assured, that the Government will act with their accustomed prudence, and that the burdens of the people will not be increased by any action that they may take.

The "Patriot" and the Estimates. The *Patriot's* righteous soul is vexed over what it is pleased to call Mr. Sullivan's "blunders" in his estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for 1885. It charges him with an over estimate of revenue of \$12,000 which, it says, was almost wholly in regard to the receipts at the Land Office. This is perfectly correct and we have elsewhere, in this issue, referred to the very small return made last year. The *Patriot* then goes on to charge Mr. Sullivan with other mis-calculations, all of them, with the exception of that for Education, being in the expenditure of the Public Works Department. Now, Mr. Sullivan, in his Budget Speech last session, plainly told the House that "no Government could possibly estimate, to a certainty, the exact amount required for Education." Last year it required the estimate by \$5,738. Will anyone be rash enough to say that the Government did wrong in the people will not be increased by any action that they may take.

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be anything or everything so far as they knew; they were aware that the Government owed something, yet what it was they neither knew nor cared. Yet now, at intervals, Mr. David Laird, with the advantage no doubt of the experience gained among the red men of the North-West, sets to work to compute the debt of the Island. Is the man who went blind in voting the interest on the Public Debts in 1872, the one to inform the people of the Island what it is in 1885?

The Editor of the *Patriot* is pleased to say that the Province will, in a short time, be high and dry on the shoals of bankruptcy. We do not see how this is possible, for we have a balance of over one million of dollars more than we had during Mr. Davies' regime. The idea of Mr. David Laird's talking about the Government being on the verge of bankruptcy is rich. Bankruptcy, indeed! Have the present Government ever had any difficulty with the Banks? No! Was there not a Government of which Mr. David Laird was a member that found a little difficulty in making its arrangements with the Banks? Will Mr. Laird please tell us? Will he explain why, when he was a member of the Government in 1872-3, no Island Bank would have any business with his Government? Will he explain why, after the Provincial Secretary's own private note for \$25,000, upon which he had borrowed upon Government account \$25,000, fell due, the Maritime Bank of New Brunswick, which held the Note, would not renew except at a rate of twelve per cent? What has the Honorable David Laird to say to this mismanagement of the dogs. But is the *Patriot* not aware that there is a way by which Mr. Campbell might have avoided encroaching upon the estimates? He had a noble (?) example set him by one of his predecessors, a bosom friend of the Editor of the *Patriot's* and a leading member of Mr. Louis H. Davies' Government. Had Mr. Campbell but adopted the expedient of Mr. W. D. Stewart and told his Supervisors to draw slowly—had Mr. Sullivan consented to open a Suspense Account for the convenience of Mr. Campbell, such as Mr. Davies opened for Mr. Stewart, the estimates need not have exceeded.

But our contemporary should remember that an estimate is but an estimate. Let us turn to the estimates of 1877 which that immaculate politician, Mr. L. H. Davies, was Leader of the Government, what do we find? Simply that he estimated the Expenditure for that year at \$282,792, but when the end of the year came \$331,000 did not cover it—only a trifling deficiency of \$48,840! Take again the second year of Mr. Davies' term of office—1878. We find that he estimated the Expenditure at \$330,792, but when the Public Accounts came down next session, and the actual expenditure of the year was investigated, it figured up nothing less than \$394,205 or only the insignificant sum of \$63,413 more than Mr. Davies' computation. Mr. Sullivan could not beat that record if he tried.

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