

THE HERALD

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Please don't delay your Subscriptions for 1907. We need the money, we have earned it and shall esteem it a great favor if you remit now.

Evading the Truth.

When the friends of the Provincial Government are confronted with their responsibility for our enormous public debt, they invariably attempt to evade the truth and obscure the real issue. A favorite subterfuge is to lay the blame for a large proportion of the debt upon their predecessors in office. They start in to compute what \$128,000 would amount to in a certain number of years at compound interest. Nothing could be sillier than this. The Conservatives, after twelve years of office, went out of power, with a debt of \$128,000, \$51,000 of which they inherited from the Davies Government. During nine of the twelve years they collected no taxes from the people. Twelve years of office; nine years exemption from taxation and a debt, properly chargeable to them, of only \$77,000. Surely that is a good record. But our Liberal friends, then in Opposition, came into power on the cry of economy. They decimated from one end of the Province to the other, the policy of the Conservatives, and asked for power on the promise that revenue and expenditure would meet; that the era of deficits should cease and that the day of taxation was far off.

The shibboleth was catching, and the Liberals came into office over seventeen years ago. Mr. Frederick Peters, the new Liberal Premier, remembering his election cry, asked, and obtained from the Legislature, power to issue debentures to the amount of \$185,000. In bringing this question before the House the Premier emphatically stated that the money to be secured by this issue of debentures was for the purpose of paying off and funding the Provincial debt, then existing, and for some repairs to the Provincial building. After that would be done, there would be no more deficits, and revenue and expenditure would henceforth meet. Here was a deliberate and emphatic declaration made to the people in Legislature, that the promises made to the electors were about to be carried out. Our trifling Provincial debt was to be funded and, in due time, the sinking fund of the debentures would wipe it out altogether. This was the glorious era of prosperity and financial economy about to be inaugurated by the Liberal Government. According to the Liberal Premier, we had arrived at the parting of the ways; behind us we were to leave the old-fashioned system of the Conservatives and we were to move forward according to the enlightened and progressive methods of the Liberals. This is what we were told by those who had just taken over the reins of Government. We have shown above that the record of the Conservatives, for their twelve years of office, was excellent; but, for argument sake, let our reader's stop and consider the importance of the declaration of policy laid down by the new Premier; let them ponder the attractions and possibilities of the new departure.

All reasonable people will surely say that, by the new plan, the past, whether good or bad, was provided for and set aside, and no further account was to be taken of it for all time to come. A new era of financial management was inaugurated by the Liberal Government in 1891, and from that date we were to look ahead; but never to look back.

Seventeen years of this era of political regeneration and financial economy have now passed and what do we find? Instead of deficits ceasing they have gone on from year to year, ranging from \$12,000 up to \$120,000 per annum, and averaging about \$45,000. Instead of revenue and expenditure meeting, they have separated, further and further apart, until the gap has become so wide that it would take a million dollars to fill it up. The Provincial debt has reached the enormous proportions of one million dollars, and the annual interest charge has grown from less than \$3,000 in 1890 to upwards of \$35,000. This is how our Liberal friends have kept their promises; this is how their policy of progress and financial economy has worked out. When they told the people the era of deficits would end; that revenue and expenditure would meet, they should have explained that they did not mean what they said; they should have said that they were making these statements for the purpose of deceiving the electorate. As we have shown above, the Liberals made a new departure when they came into power, and starting from that they have added over \$800,000 to the Provincial debt which they found when they took hold. They have increased the debt over six fold and increased the interest over eleven fold what they found then. All this they have done in defiance of their solemn promises and reiterated pledges.

When brought face to face with this record of debt, deficits and deception; this record of violated promises and broken pledges; this record of recklessness, extravagance and mal-administration, the members of the Government and the supporters of the Government assume a most abject and humiliating attitude. In effect they confess themselves a lot of political imbeciles; they are obliged to admit that they have not only utterly and absolutely failed to carry out the promises made by their Leader when they came into power seventeen years ago; but that they have made no attempt to do so. They are obliged to stand before the public and confess that they have made no progress; that their years of office have been seventeen years of failure. They try to break their fall by allusions to events that accrued twenty-five years ago. The policy laid down and the promises made at the beginning of their term, seventeen years ago, preclude any recourse to the history of prior political events. The departure taken in 1891 burns their political boats behind them and they cannot take refuge in any such subterfuge. The Liberals came into power in 1891. They found a debt of \$128,000. On this they built until they got the debt up to a million. Do the people want such a Government any longer in power?

The four weeks of extreme heat which resulted in fourteen deaths, scores of prostrations, and great suffering to Bostonians, was effectively broken late Wednesday 15th when the high humidity and uncomfortable heat turned into a heavy rain storm, which brought the temperature down some 10 or 15 degrees, while a 24-mile-an-hour wind started up from the west. The rain-fall continued from 5.30 until after eight o'clock and continued even longer in surrounding towns and cities, ending a drought of six weeks, during which great damage had been done to crops and by forest fires.

Misleading The People.

In our discussions of the question of the increased subsidies from the Federal treasury, we have, more than once, pointed out that the delegates from this Province failed in their duty. On the ground of increased cost of education, public works, asylums, etc. the original members of the confederation asked that the barriers, limiting them in their per capita allowance to the census of 1861 be removed. As a result of this change Ontario, in consequence of her increase in population, received \$629,484; Quebec received \$429,865; and Nova Scotia received \$47,000. The population of Prince Edward Island had not increased; consequently no increased subsidy could come to it on that score. But the cost of education, public works, asylums etc. had grown in this Province, as well as in the others, and our position in many respects was exceptional, and therefore an effort should have been made to secure for our Province additional subsidy for special reasons. The Dominion Government, by their failure to carry out the terms of confederation regarding winter communication, contributed towards the reduction of our population, and should compensate us in some other way. The opportunity to put in our special claims was offered at the opening of the conference, and had our delegates been alive to the interests of our Island Province, half as much as Premier McBride was to the interests of British Columbia, another hundred dollars could easily have been secured for Prince Edward Island. But they sat dumb and never raised a finger or uttered a word on behalf of those who sent them. As we have frequently pointed out, they did absolutely nothing; for the scale upon the increase for government and legislation was granted had been agreed upon twenty years before at Quebec. But now, when the whole question has been opened up and explained to the people, our delegates to the Ottawa conference, as well as the Government members and supporters, try to obscure the real issue before the people and hide their humiliation and failure by placing the question in a false light. The increase subsidies for Government and legislation, the only increase in which we share, is not granted on a basis of so much per head of population; but on a fixed scale, which has indeed some relation to population. We have several times gone over this; but so as to leave no misunderstanding we will state it once more. The scale provides that Provinces with a population not exceeding 150,000 shall receive \$100,000; Provinces not exceeding 200,000 in population receive \$150,000; Provinces with 400,000 population receive \$180,000, and so on. We, being under 150,000 in population, receive the smallest amount of any member of the confederation; \$100,000; consequently the readjustment gave us \$70,000 increase, as we were already receiving \$30,000 on this head. Now then, the friends of the Government attempt to cover up their failure in the matter by saying that we receive a larger amount per head of population than any other Province. Very well, if we had only 50,000 population, we would receive the same amount; that would be a still larger amount per capita. If we had only 25,000 we would receive the same amount; that would be a still larger per capita rate. If our population goes on decreasing, the friends of the Government will be given an opportunity to show what a large amount per head we are receiving for government and legislation. Would it be a great thing for Prince Edward Island, if half her population were to leave and half her farms remained uncultivated? But that is simply the

logical sequence of the attempted argument of the Government's friends. The smaller the population the higher the per capita rate. Would that be an advantageous advertisement for Prince Edward Island?

(Continued from fourth page.) Of the new scheme. If the fast line boats go to Halifax and Quebec there will be no subsidised boats but these to those ports. There will be none at all from Montreal and St. John. Whatever freight business has been developed through Canadian ports by means of subsidies will be lost. Portland, Maine, will come to its own again, or to what it has always claimed as its own. One of the most extraordinary episodes in Canadian Parliamentary history was Sir Fred Borden's attack on the Royal Civil Service Commission. From 10 o'clock at night till nearly 1 in the morning the Minister emptied the bottles of his anger on Mr Courtney, Mr Fyfe and Mr Bazin. He made conspirators of them. He made them liars and slanderers, enemies of their country, treacherous persons working out old grudges by defaming honest administrators. He spoke of them contemptuously as "heaven born military critics." He called their report an outrageous and unjustifiable attack. He charged that the Commissioners attempted to misrepresent him, that their criticism in at least one case "was simply to satisfy a malevolent disposition." Their conduct was "grossly outrageous." It showed their "unfitness to deal with big questions"—meaning the questions with which Sir Fred Borden grapples day by day. He called them "wiseacres," accused them of insinuations three times referred to them as military experts and critics, declared that they "willfully omitted evidence," that they proceeded "up on gossips of the street corner," that their statements were "absolute and utter misrepresentations," that they were "frivolous, arrogant, notoriously, absolutely and utterly ignorant" of the matters discussed, that they made up their mind before the investigation and were "determined to create a scandal."

Now the Royal Commission was not composed of criminals on ticket of leave, it was not a partisan body selected by the enemy, it was composed of three men. The Chairman was Mr Courtney who worked as Mr Fielding's chief of staff for eleven years and was retired at his own request with the highest commendation of the Government and subsequently called by Mr Fielding to preside over this inquiry. Mr Courtney had been a Commissioner in a similar investigation under the Conservative Government and Mr Fielding had his report before him and knew of his capacity and fairness.

Mr Fyfe was Manager spokesman of two of the leading banks of Canada. He is a lifelong Liberal and is a close friend of the Minister of Finance. He had no possible object in testifying Sir Fred Borden, one of the leaders of his own party, and he still states that his report was carefully prepared and his conclusions were conscientious.

Mr Bazin is also a Liberal of lifelong standing. He has been at the head of the party organization in Quebec and might have been a member of the House of Commons had he chosen to accept nomination. He went to this task with the desire to assist the Government rather than to injure it, and if his report on Sir Fred Borden's department is severe it was evidently no pleasure to him to make it so.

When it was announced that Sir Fred had an important statement to make everyone out of the secret thought that he would declare his policy on military questions and lay down in a general way the programme for the future. It was therefore a surprise when he made no statement concerning the future, no announcement as to whether in view of reduced revenues and increased expenditure some retrenchment in militia outlays would take place. The whole speech occupying over 40 columns of Hansard was an attack on the Royal Commission and its report. At first much interest was felt in the onslaught. But it grew monotonous as the hours passed and the audience grew scarce. Any time in the last hour the House could have been counted out as having less than twenty members present, though at 10 o'clock 156 had voted in the fast line division. The minister in closing expressed gratitude for the patience of the House which had been well served by the representatives patiently wandering home to bed. One was reminded of the statement which Tacitus attributes to the ancient Briton concerning the Roman conqueror: "Where they make a solitude they call it peace."

There are some who think that this address is Sir Fred Borden's valedictory. Only the other day a government organ announced that he was about to retire and that Mr McDonald of Pictou would take his place. The member for Pictou did not remain to listen to the oration though if the statement be true he owed that much to his predecessor. One may venture to hope that the Minister of Militia will make at least one more speech

before he disappears from public life so that this one will be effaced from the memory of those who conspired to be r of it.

In the House of Commons.

(From Hansard.) In the House of Commons on the 16th inst., the resolution for railway subsidies being under consideration, the following is recorded: Mr Alexander Martin, (Queen's, P. E. I.)—I raise my voice, Mr Speaker, against the railway resolutions, especially against the bonuses. Considering the heavy obligations to which the right hon. the First Minister has committed this country—the Transcontinental which is to cost between \$200,000,000 and \$250,000,000; the Georgian Bay Canal, \$100,000,000; the Hudson Bay Railway, \$30,000,000 to \$50,000,000; the Welland Canal, something like \$30,000,000—considering all these I think it is high time he should cry halt. The late Sir John Macdonald gave this country the Canadian Pacific Railway, and his memory is green and will remain green in the minds of the people for what he has done. What he did then was very costly, but the Canadian Pacific Railway has come to be one of the greatest and most successful undertakings that Canada ever ventured into. But the First Minister is coming now to the last straw which is going to break the camel's back. With the credit of this country in the markets of the old world diminished, he goes on favoring certain parts of Canada for political purposes. It is all very well to say we are building up a great country, but are we building up too fast? Here are estimates amounting to something like \$180,000,000, yet ten years ago, when our estimates only amounted to \$42,000,000, the right hon. gentleman considered them entirely too much. In 1896 he condemned railway subsidies in toto. The time had come, he said, when they should cease. Is he going to do for Canada what the late Mr Macleod did for Quebec? I am afraid he is. When we consider the rigidity with which he treats some provinces—my own for instance—and the lavish expenditure he proposes to make in others, I am at a loss to understand how the hon. gentleman expects this country to bear the burden. He is incurring expenditures which are staggering the country, which he cannot justify, and now he comes down at this hour of the session and asks us to swallow a host of railway subsidies without giving them at all any consideration.

Mr A. Martin—For two or three sessions there has been dangled before the people of Prince Edward Island the estimates a vote for an experimental station. What progress has been made?

Mr A. Martin (Queen's)—It speaks well for my province that land is so expensive there that the Government cannot establish an experimental station. Every acre of land in my province is valuable. However that is a poor excuse and I would like to know what investigation has been made and what effort has been made to acquire a site? They have experimental stations in almost every province except Prince Edward Island. It is a good advertisement for my province to say that land is very valuable there and I would like to have that advertisement all over Canada. But if the minister tries he can get good land at a reasonable price.

Mr A. Martin (Queen's)—I see an item of \$4,000 additional for steam communication between Prince Edward Island, Cape Breton and Newfoundland. What ports will these boats touch?

Mr Fielding—The wording of the item would admit the service being made to any port in Prince Edward Island. I am not aware of any special arrangements.

Mr A. Martin (Queen's)—I would like to know whether New London and Rustico are included in this service. I wish to impress on the minister the fact that both these sections, being on the north side and without railway communication, are the most neglected parts of Prince Edward Island as regards communication.

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The following letters speak for themselves: THE MARITIME MANUFACTURING COMPANY, LIMITED. PEOWASH, N. S., October 4th, 1907. W. I. FENTON, Esq., Managing Director, Atlantic Mutual Fire Insurance Association, St. John, N. B.

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S. J. PARSONS, Esq., Agent Atlantic Mutual Fire Insurance Co., Woodstock, N. B. Dear Sir,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of the Company's cheque on Bank B. N. A. for the full amount of my claim for damages by the fire of January 5th, 1907. I placed the claim in your hands on the 22nd, and have the Company's cheque on the 25th, so have to thank your company for this prompt response and for their courteous treatment. I shall place other insurance with you as soon as it can be arranged. I feel both safe and satisfied in dealing with the Atlantic Mutual. Yours very truly, (Sgd.) A. W. BROWN. LONDONDEERY, N. S., December 15th, 1906.

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