

# The Standard

Published by The Standard Limited, 82 Prince William Street, St. John, Canada.

TELEPHONE CALLS:  
Business Office .. Main 1722  
Editorial and News .. Main 1746

SUBSCRIPTION.  
Morning Edition, By Carrier, per year, .. \$5.00  
Morning Edition, By Mail, per year, .. 3.00  
Weekly Edition, By Mail, per year, .. 1.50  
Single Copies Two Cents.

Chicago Representative:  
Henry DeClerque, 701-702, Schiller Building,  
New York Office:  
L. Klebahn, Manager, 1 West 34th Street.

SAINT JOHN, MONDAY MORNING, MARCH 27, 1911.

## MR. ROBINSON'S INACCURACIES.

It was a weird attempt that the Leader of the Opposition made in his speech on the Budget to prove that the late Government managed the affairs of the Province well because they spent less money than the Hazen Administration has spent during its term of office. The facts are that no country under the sun was governed as badly as New Brunswick during the decade preceding 1908. Not only was its most valuable source of revenue exploited for private gain and the Province deprived of at least \$100,000 annually, which could and would have been collected by an honest administration or one having the slightest regard to common decency or commercial principles, but those ten years were truly the reign of the grafter, let loose in the land with a license to plunder at will.

By comparing the balance sheets of the Province for a period of years, Mr. Robinson sought to show that what he terms the no debt of the Province, but in reality the excess of liabilities over assets, has been increased in a greater ratio by Mr. Hazen than by his predecessors. This Mr. Robinson seems to think a strong argument in favor of the old Administration. It might be if it were true, which it is not. To help out his comparisons he allows the old Government to place the \$281,000 received from Eastern Extension Claims in current revenue and to insert the non-earning Central Railway as an asset for \$1,150,000. The Central Railway is certainly an asset, but a very undesirable one which the Province would have been much better to have let alone.

But what is the use of Mr. Robinson wasting his time discussing the balance sheet of the Province, which after all proves nothing, and is capable of manipulation to make it show almost anything? For instance, what justification was there for valuing the Central Railway at \$1,150,000 as a provincial asset? It did not cost the Province that sum of money, or had not when it was placed in the balance sheet in 1906, because the New Brunswick Coal and Railway Company had defaulted in the interest on the guaranteed debentures then amounting to \$700,000, which had to go on the liability side of the ledger. It was quite a stroke of book-keeping to include the railway among the assets, but it does not help to pay the interest on the bonds, and up to the present time has proved a liability.

The real test of the financial management of the old Government is to be found in the increase in the bonded debt of the Province and the condition of the current account at the close of each year. In 1901 the funded debt of New Brunswick was \$3,291,846.66, and in 1908 it had grown to \$5,834,535.99, an increase of \$2,542,689.33, quite a respectable gain in nine years. It may be claimed that the old Government was not in power when the financial statement for 1908 was made up. That is quite correct, but it was responsible for every dollar added to the permanent debt till the close of that year because the Province had been committed to every dollar expended on capital account down to and including 1908—that is from 1882. Of course there is included in this the enormous over-expenditure of the old Government brought to light by an audit of their accounts after the Hazen Government came to power, amounting to \$215,781.40.

Mr. Robinson is credited with the statement in his speech that in 1901 when the Eastern Extension Claims were paid over by the Federal Government the Provincial Government not only paid all the current claims of the year, but also reduced the debt by \$75,000. Mr. Robinson knows that this statement is absolutely untrue, for the same page of the Auditor General's report which shows the credit of the Eastern Extension Claims also shows that \$290,000 was realized from the sale of bonds in that year. Why Mr. Robinson reverts to such palpable misrepresentation and direct falsehood we will leave for him to explain.

There could be no greater untruth uttered than to describe the financial management of New Brunswick from 1901, the date of the receipt of the Eastern Extension Claim, as good. It could not have been worse. No one has as yet said anything about those guaranteed bonds of the New Brunswick Coal and Railway Company which now form part of the Provincial debt. Mr. Robinson had a good deal to say about the loan floated in London two years ago and a lot more in praise of the loan effected with the Bank of British North America. Mr. Tweedie's loan was made at the very crest of the financial wave—when money was cheaper than either before or since. Still it is doubtful if the bank regards the loan as quite as satisfactory as it had proved for the Province, and certainly if liquidation was forced the loan would not bring 96 at the present time.

If Mr. Tweedie did effect a 3 per cent. loan at 96 he was afterwards very glad to borrow at 5 per cent. to carry on the affairs of the Province. It was not due to the financial sagacity of Mr. Tweedie that Provincial 3 per cents sold at 96. It was the favorable condition of the market, otherwise why did Mr. Tweedie some years later pay over 5 per cent. for temporary loans—a rate of interest also imposed on Mr. Robinson himself when acting for the Province? As loans have been going for several years past the Provincial Secretary, whom Mr. Robinson criticized, made an excellent arrangement for the loan made in London, better than Mr. Robinson could make today.

But to return to the Central Railway bonds. The first expenditures represent a total of \$700,000 of the bonded debt of the Province—about one-eighth of the whole. What price did they sell for? We know that they were pledged with pretty nearly every money lender in St. John for advances at a high rate of interest and finally disposed of, often at forced sale, at prices anywhere from 5 to 10 per cent. below par. This is the kind of finance the Province was subjected to for ten years, and which Mr. Robinson wants the people to return to. Without any reference to the honesty of the expenditure on the Central Railway the Province is paying interest on \$100,000, or \$4,000 a year, on money not a dollar of which was ever expended on the railway, but was used to help out financially some very needy persons in close connection with the Government which Mr. Robinson endorses so highly.

Mr. Robinson was discreetly silent on the over-ex-

penditures of the former administration, but as the most of these have been added to the public debt they are worthy of consideration. In 1901 and in the two succeeding years the old Government received \$281,821.68 in settlement of the Eastern Extension Claims. This was all used to wipe out over-expenditures of the past which were carried along in suspense accounts, the expenditures charged to public works alone for 1901 amounting to \$296,077.33. Under the old administration there was a constant over-expenditure for public works, notwithstanding every subterfuge possible, the most common of which was to charge to capital account repairs and construction of very ordinary bridges. This reached the limit in 1902 when \$250,000 was added to the bonded debt for so-called extraordinary expenditures on bridges and roads due to freshets. In 1906 the over-expenditure of this department was given in the accounts as \$197,065.97 and that for the Provincial Hospital at \$22,502.21.

Summarized, the cost of the over-expenditures of the Government, which reached the enormous total of \$967,171.36 in nine years, are as follows:—

Paid from Eastern Extension Award.....	\$281,821.68
For damage by freshets, 1902.....	150,000.00
Other bridge and road expenditures.....	100,000.00
Over-expenditures up to 1906.....	19,065.97
Provincial Hospital.....	22,502.21
Over-expenditures to Oct. 31, 1907.....	215,781.40
Total.....	\$967,171.36

Of this total \$685,349.68 has been added to the funded debt, not one dollar of which would have appeared there had the old Government collected the Crown revenues they were entitled to receive. As a result of the negligence, or worse, of the men who ruled New Brunswick in those days, the people are compelled to pay over \$25,000 annually in interest charges.

Contrast these methods with those of the Hazen Administration which, by collecting the revenue from the Public Domain, has been able not only to carry on the business of the country without recourse to borrowing to pay for current expenditures, but also to greatly increase the grants for agriculture, education, and public works, to say nothing of the increases in other directions. Mr. Robinson's arguments were as lame as his facts were faulty. The old Government dealt entirely in futures and managed to keep in power for years by giving out untrue statements of the financial condition of the Province until the people finally discovered that they were being systematically deceived and voted them out of power by an overwhelming majority—the like of which is unknown in the previous history of the Province. So far as the additions to the permanent debt made by Mr. Hazen are concerned they are all the direct result of legislation by his predecessors.

## THE MEDUCTIC MEETING.

The condition of hysteria which the Liberal party has reached over the election in York is not to be wondered at. Defeat of their candidate by an overwhelming majority is certain. It is known that an election in York was not looked upon with favor by the leading Liberals of that county, but was forced upon the party by a few who had axes of their own to grind. This accounts for the hysterical appeals and untruthful statements of the Fredericton Mail and for the frantic efforts of the Telegraph and Times to make it appear that the Hazen Government is opposing the construction of the Valley Railway. It also accounts for the presence of Mr. Carvell in York County as the exponent of his own and Mr. Pugsley's policy regarding this project. When the excitement is all over Mr. Carvell will be a sadder and a wiser man and will return to Ottawa with a full knowledge that he cannot fool the people of New Brunswick into the belief that he has any but a purely political interest in the Valley Railway.

He got his first lesson at Meductic at the hands of Provincial Secretary Flemming, on Saturday night, immediately on arriving in York County, the bumptious member for Carleton began to scatter broadcast challenges to meet and discuss the Valley Railway with any member of the Provincial Government. He had a large sized chip on his shoulder which he wished some one to knock off. This howling desire for a full discussion of the Valley Railway disappeared when Mr. Flemming said he would meet him in Fredericton on the following Monday evening. He had too many engagements to accept this offer, but after a lot of telephoning he expressed a willingness to meet Mr. Flemming at Meductic. By this time, no doubt, Mr. Carvell regrets that he had not taken the first train to Ottawa instead of going to Meductic, which was the burying place of the Indians long before the coming of the white man to this land.

Mr. Carvell had nothing to add to what he has already said regarding the Valley Railway. His statements that the views of the Provincial Secretary were influenced by a ride in President Van Horne's private car in 1909 met with a prompt denial from Mr. Flemming who stated that the question was not discussed between them at that or any other time. His attempt to justify the production of the Malcolm letter to Premier Hazen and his statement that the letter was not marked "private" were proved to be untrue by the production of the letter by Mr. Flemming. Altogether Mr. Carvell made a very poor showing. He was forced to admit that the Quebec and New Brunswick Railway was non-existent when Mr. Malcolm's letter was written, and in whose behalf the offer to construct the railway was made.

Mr. Flemming needed only to recite the facts as they actually occurred to convince the Meductic audience that the delay had all been caused by Mr. Pugsley and Mr. Carvell, and that even today there was the legislation at Ottawa in no shape to admit of a contract being entered into for the construction under part two of the act of last year.

There was a marked difference between the plain straightforward statements of Mr. Flemming and the constant dodging of Mr. Carvell who was unable to explain why he had not thought of the Valley Railway project when in the local Legislature. From the general tenor of the meeting it was apparent that the majority thought that Mr. Carvell would have been much better employed in forwarding the legislation to secure the construction of the Valley Railway than by campaigning in York in the interests of the local Opposition.

## Current Comment

(Buffalo Express.)

A new use has been found for telephone receivers. A woman out in California took hers off the instrument every Friday and used it to darn stockings on. With a little thought doubtless other domestic duties could be developed.

(Toronto Mail and Empire.)

After consideration of the Knox-Fielding pact and the manner of its negotiation, one of the London members of the British House of Commons inquires of the Government if Canada is not still a part of the British Empire. He will be assured on that point when he sees what Canada does to its Washington envoys.

## SHEFFIELD CHOR SCORES A BRILLIANT SUCCESS

Famous Organization, Led by Dr. Coward, Given Ovation at Opera House Concert, Saturday Night—Reception by Canadian Clubs in Keith's Assembly Rooms, Largely Attended.

Overcoming by superabundant energy the handicaps of a discouragingly shortened visit, the Sheffield Choir of England paused in St. John on Saturday and went, leaving in its wake a host of enthusiastic admirers, limited in numbers only by the capacity of the Opera House. The Imperial Festival of Music which has been in preparation for something more than eight years, was inaugurated with a measure of success that must have brought the fullest satisfaction to those who have labored so long and so hard for its accomplishment. And the harmonies which echoed and re-echoed in the St. John theatre on the opening night of the tour will doubtless countess thousands throughout all parts of the Empire before the singers return to their homes in the Mother land.

The reception to the singers given by the Canadian clubs after the performance was a brilliant event, marked by great cordiality. After the first welcome extended by Geo. A. Henderson on behalf of the Canadian clubs, Lieut-Governor Tweedie, on behalf of the Province, and Mayor Frink on behalf of the City, and a happy response by Dr. Coward the members of the two clubs busied themselves in making the guests feel at home, and in attending to their needs in the way of refreshments. The choir left for Montreal by special train about two a. m.

The Concert. There was deep disappointment when news was received that the choir, delayed in Halifax, would be unable to give an afternoon concert here. Many, generally unacquainted with the full facts, were inclined to censure whoever their fancy dictated, but in view of all the circumstances it may be said that the fault for the non-appearance of the choir in the afternoon was due to the extremely narrow margin allowed for incidental delays in travel.

The Victorian docket shortly after 7 o'clock and about half past nine the curtain rose in the Opera House for the opening number. The immense audience had displayed commendable patience and in this case virtue brought its own reward.

The visiting singers were received with an enthusiasm that must have inspired and they in turn expressed their pleasure in meeting their first Canadian audience by giving of their very best and giving so generously to the cause of the evening programme many numbers which would have been beyond the power of the hour that a halt had to be called. The choir added to the evening programme many numbers which would have been beyond the power of the hour that a halt had to be called. The choir added to the evening programme many numbers which would have been beyond the power of the hour that a halt had to be called.

The Secret of Success. It is unfortunate that the superlative degree through frequent use, has to some extent lost its effect, for certainly the adjective of present day newspaper English fail to fittingly describe the wondrous beauties of this. Perhaps the secret of success is found in the fact that the Sheffield choir has learned the lesson of implicit obedience. Musicians though the method all they recognize the outstanding ability of their leader and there has developed between the singers and Dr. Henry Coward, the conductor, an absolute sympathy which perhaps more than anything else has placed this organization in the unsalable position it now occupies.

As one of the finest numbers in the choir's repertoire, were a revelation to the musically inclined. The unravelling of the fugues by this great body of voices which plunged into intricate tangles of the score and came out triumphantly with a halloo-ah was an astonishing musical achievement which brought the programme to a close.

The Reception. At the close of the concert the members of the choir attended a reception at Keith's Assembly rooms, given in their honor by the Canadian club and the Women's Canadian club. Over 500 persons were present at this function, which was one of the most notable social affairs ever held in this city.

Continued on page 8.

Madrigal—You Stole My Love ..  
The Sheffield Choir ..  
The Demons' Chorus, Dream of Gerontius .. Elgar ..  
The Sheffield Choir ..  
Part songs—(a) On Himalay, Bantock ..  
(b) The Cruise of the Bann ..  
The Sheffield Choir ..  
Waltz Song .. German ..  
Song—For a Dream's Sake ..  
Miss Jennie Taggart ..  
Ladies' Part Song—Come Away ..  
Death ..  
Part Song—The Long Day Closes ..  
Sullivan ..  
Male Voice Part Song—A Frankly ..  
One's Dog ..  
The Sheffield Choir ..  
Recit and Air—Love Sounds the Alarm .. Handel ..  
Acis and Galatea ..  
I Hear You Calling ..  
Mr. Henry Turpin ..  
Motet for Double Chorus—Sing Ye to the Lord .. Bach ..  
(Last two movements.) ..  
God Save the King ..

It is unnecessary to refer in detail to the wonderful interpretation which the Sheffield Choir gave to this programme. No such choral singing has ever been heard in St. John before. If a selection had to be made to weave an account of the concert it might very well be the Demons' Chorus. Embodying as it does the defiance, derision and despair of the demons as they mock the soul of Gerontius, and including several passages of the most beautiful choral effect it was a severe test. The famous choir sang it as no other choir could, and gave a wonderfully dramatic interpretation of this magnificent example of Elgar's music. The two final movements from "Sing Ye to the Lord," the difficult motet by Bach, and regarded by Dr. Coward as one of the finest numbers in the choir's repertoire, were a revelation to the musically inclined. The unravelling of the fugues by this great body of voices which plunged into intricate tangles of the score and came out triumphantly with a halloo-ah was an astonishing musical achievement which brought the programme to a close.

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Continued on page 8.

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