

THE HERALD

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JAMES MCISAAC,
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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1899.

Liberal-Conservative Conference.

The storm of Wednesday last and consequent bad roads did not prevent a very large attendance at the Liberal-Conservative Conference held in this city on Thursday last. The conference opened in the hall in the Masonic Temple, shortly before noon, Senator Ferguson, President of the Conference, in the chair. Almost every section of the Province was represented. The attendance was so large indeed that the hall was found altogether too small, and it was decided to adjourn to the Lyceum. In addition to Senator Ferguson, the public men present included: Hon. D. Gordon, Leader of the Provincial Opposition, Senator M. P. Alexander, A. C. McDonald, M. P., Alex. Martin, M. P., Edward Hackett, ex M. P., Messrs. A. J. McDonald, William Campbell, J. E. Birch, Cyrus Shaw, J. F. Arsenault, M. J. McKinnon, members of the Provincial Legislature, Mr. Lufbery, Mr. Paton and others. Addresses were delivered by Hon. D. Gordon, Alex. Martin and A. C. McDonald, M. P., E. Hackett, William Campbell and others. After appointing committees, the conference adjourned to meet at the Lyceum at 3 p. m. The afternoon meeting was largely attended and the greatest enthusiasm prevailed. The meeting adjourned at six o'clock and resumed in the evening and continued till ten o'clock. After a general discussion of the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

AS TO PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS.

The Conference of the Liberal Conservative party, today assembled, deplores the financial crisis impending over this Province, and views with alarm the steadily but rapidly increasing public debt. In the name of the people, we denounce, in the strongest terms, the present administration by which a continuance of power at the last election, and the unscrupulous waste and extravagance which it has since practised in every branch of the public service.

We unreservedly condemn the annually recurring deficits, and in order to arrest the alarming increase of the Provincial debt we demand the most rigid economy in expenditure and the strictest honesty in administration.

This Conference firmly pledges itself to the pursuit of a policy which shall put a stop to the present practice of piling up a public debt, and to that end we call upon all electors, irrespective of party, to join in an effort to secure for the people an honest and economical administration of public affairs.

We heartily approve and commend the able, patriotic and manly course pursued by the Hon. Daniel Gordon and his supporters in the Legislature in exposing and denouncing, in the interests of the country, the reckless and unscrupulous management of our affairs.

AS TO FEDERAL MATTERS.

1. That this Conference places on record its strong condemnation of the double dealing whereby the Laurier administration gained power at the late elections, as well as their open violation, at an early period of their administration, of the most solemn pre-election promises made by their party candidates.

2. That this conference strongly condemns the terrorizing of officials, inspired by the numerous dismissals of efficient officers for political reasons, and also the employment of espionage introduced by the appointment of so-called commissions to ferret out charges against public servants with the ill-considered purpose of obtaining places as rewards, for violent partisans of the administration.

3. That this conference expresses its high appreciation of the eminent services rendered by Sir Charles Tupper, Baronet, leader of the Liberal Conservative party during the late election, and as leader of the present Opposition in the House of Commons, as well as the beneficial effects of his labors in behalf of the people of Canada as High Commissioner and former Minister of the Crown.

4. That in the opinion of this conference the early construction of the Belfast and Murray Harbour Railway is of paramount importance to the Province, and is highly necessary for the development of that large section of country south of the Hillsborough River, and we firmly believe that the just claims of Prince Edward Island for public works should be hastened away for an increase in the Provincial subsidies in which other Provinces would participate, or for any other equivalent, but should be devoted to Railway extension in this Province as outlined in the policy announced by the late Government led by Sir Charles Tupper, whereby by the sum of \$250,000 was to be applied during the then current fiscal year towards the construction of the Belfast and Elmira branches and the construction of branch lines to West Cape, Richmond

Bay, New London, Crapaud and Rustico were to be proceeded with during the present Parliamentary term.

5. That this conference condemns the extravagant administration of public affairs and the enormous increases of debt and taxation by the Laurier Administration.

6. That this Conference condemns and denounces in the strongest terms, the corrupt use of money and liquor for the purpose of influencing a portion of the electorate, and hope that no candidate or agent of the Liberal Conservative party will follow the pernicious example of our opponents in this regard.

OFFICERS AND CONVENERS.

Officers of the Conference and Conveners of the Party were then elected as follows:
HONORARY PRESIDENT—Hon. D. Gordon.
PRESIDENT—Hon. Senator Ferguson.

VICE PRESIDENT—Alex. Martin.
SECRETARY—C. R. Smallwood.
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE—Edward Hackett, Richard Hunt, A. A. Lufbery, John McLean, A. A. McDonald, John T. Mellish, Alex. Horne, Charles Lyons, John R. Larkins, H. A. McDonald, Jas. E. Birch, George R. Montgomery, T. A. Nicholas, D. Simons, James J. Beaton, East Prince, A. P. Prowse, P. Blake, Wm. Campbell, Gilbert DesRoches, Cyrus Shaw, W. D. McKay, S. W. Crabbe, James R. Nicholson, J. F. Arsenault, Thomas P. Doyle, Lot 7, John A. McDonald, A. B. McNeill, J. C. Underhay, D. Simons, James J. Beaton, East Prince, D. B. McLeod, P. T. Tanton, James Paton, Dr. Murphy, Tignish, Arthur Simpson, Cavendish; Roderick McLellan, Grand River East; John B. Gaudes, St. Louis; Patrick Burke, Mark Wright, George Stanley, D. O'Neil, Reddin, Chas. Hermans, John Gill, Little York; James P. Duffy, Fort Augustus; John Diamond, Winslow; Allan J. McDonald, Blooming Point; Thomas Doyle, North Rustico; John J. Bradley, South Melville; Captain R. McKenzie, Flat River; Frederick McRae, Pownal; Michael Ready, Bay View; Joseph Fairchild, George town; Daniel Beaton, Commercial Cross; James H. Dingwell, Morrell; Alex. McDonald, Mount Hope; Thos. Lannan, Sommersville; Patrick Berrigan, Dunedin; Richard E. Bagnall, New Glasgow; Joseph E. Richard, Tignish; Anthony Collett, Westmoreland; James W. Shea, Waterford; Samuel Simpson, Belmont; Captain R. McMillan, Charlottetown; Frederick Turner, Marshfield, James McIsaac, Peter McCourt, Charlottetown; W. A. O. Morson, W. S. Stewart, C. G. Gardiner, A. A. McLean, Louis Jenkins, J. Harrison Carvell, Henry Wood, Pownal.

REPRESENTATIVE ON DOMINION EXECUTIVE.

The President, ex-officio and Alexander Martin and A. C. McDonald, Esquires, M. P.'s.

CONVENERS.

King's—Hon. D. Gordon.
East Queen's—James Clow, West Queen's—B. W. Crabbe, West Prince—A. Brannon, East Prince—Neil McQuarrie.

PRINCE.

1st—J. Albert Brennan.
2nd, District—Hugh A. McDonald.
3rd, District—J. F. Arsenault.
4th, District—Dr. Sutherland.
5th, District—H. J. Massey.

QUEEN'S.

Charlottetown—W. D. McKay.
1st, District Queen's—Donald B. McLeod.
2nd, District Queen's—Louis Jenkins.
3rd, District Queen's—Frederick Horne.
4th, District Queen's—A. A. McLean.

KING'S.

1st, District—John McLean.
2nd, District—Lawrence Doyle.
3rd, District—Cyrus Shaw.
4th, District—A. P. Prowse.
5th, District—Archibald J. McDonald.

The Supreme Court.

The Queen vs. Edward Hughes, indictment for manslaughter. The case for the crown closed Tuesday evening, Wednesday forenoon the case for the prisoner being the witness called including Peter L. Callaghan, John Hughes, Patrick Marcy, T. A. McLean and the prisoner. The case was given to the jury late Wednesday afternoon, and at ten o'clock this night the jury reported they were unable to agree upon a verdict; a standstill for acquittal and three for conviction. On Thursday the case of Walter Lowe vs. Patriot Pub. Co., action for libel was tried before Judge Fitzgerald's jury. The jury returned a verdict for the plaintiff, Messrs. Q. C., P. A. McKinnon and J. F. Wheat for defendant. In this case the jury also disagreed. Edward Hughes and John Trahan were discharged Thursday morning on their own recognizance until the next Trinity term. On Saturday the case of Frederick Peters, and another vs. Solomon C. Clark was tried. The jury brought in a verdict at 10 p. m. for the plaintiffs for \$2814. W. S. Stewart, Q. C., for plaintiffs; A. A. McLean, Q. C., for defendant. On Monday the case of Andrew O'Brien vs. Francis McKenna—action of equipment was before the Chief Justice and a jury. A. Peiper, Q. C., W. S. Stewart, Q. C., for plaintiff; D. A. McKinnon and J. T. Mellish for defendant.

The Burns Anniversary concert at the Opera House on Friday evening last, drew a crowded house. The programme published in the Herald last week, with two exceptions, was rendered. In consequence of a death in the family Mr. McLean's daughter, did not deliver the oration on Burns, and in consequence of a severe cold, Fred. Carter was prevented from singing. All the other numbers were excellently rendered and drew forth enthusiastic applause. The immense audience seemed to perfectly enjoy the musical and literary treat prepared for them and all went away fully satisfied. Nothing drew so much attention as the highly individual attention like the Burns Concert.

Senator Ferguson's Address.

In the beginning of another year we are met as representative Liberal Conservatives to review the events of the past year and to discuss plans for future action in the best interests of Prince Edward Island and of the Dominion of Canada. Although peculiar combination of circumstances, and the still more peculiar tactics of our opponents, placed the Liberal Conservative party, in a minority in the House of Commons in 1898, yet it is a matter of sincere pride to every member of the grand old party gathered and led by Sir John McDonald to find that, in opposition as well as in power, the principles for which the party has always contended remain inscribed on our banners. In addition to this there has been vouchsafed to our leaders in these days of our party's reverse an overwhelming vindication of the wisdom and patriotism which inspired the Councils of Canada during the great formative period in our history between 1878 and 1886. Instead of trying to effect any of the numerous fads which they advocated when in opposition our opponents when brought face to face with the responsibility of administration, have merely attempted feeble, clumsy and erratic imitations of the policy on fiscal questions which they denounced with the greatest bitterness when out of power. The wilful free-trader has become a full paced protectionist, the blindest economist has developed into a political spendthrift, and the advocate of unbridled speculation with the United States has endeavored to raise the barrier of an ill-considered British preference. (Applause.) So far from giving rise to a feeling of discouragement, the events of the last two or three years are calculated to inspire the Liberal Conservative Party with greater hope and confidence. Should doubt have entered the minds of any of our friends as to the soundness of the National Policy, the necessity of encouraging useful public improvements, or regarding our duty to the British Empire, they are forever dispelled. We have now the Liberal party led by Sir Wilfrid Laurier forced to come into court and give evidence that, in all these things, the Liberal Conservatives have always been right and the Liberals wrong.

At the next appeal to the people the issue will be greatly narrowed, and the Conservative stand to gain from that fact. The cry that millions of dollars were wrung from the taxpayers to pamper bloated monopolists and legal robbers will no more be heard in the land. The solemn asseveration that every acre and every hoof is being mortgaged to foster great booting enterprises will be dropped for very shame sake, and even an echo of the despairing wail which was once a familiar sound, that nothing can save Canada from bankruptcy and depopulation except unrestricted reciprocity with the United States, will be as unpleasant to a grit candidate as an apparition of his grandmother's ghost. (Laughter.)

Although, however, the issue between the parties is narrowed by the complete capitulation of the Liberals on the main point heretofore contended over, there still remains much more for the people to consider than the simple question of the best men, and these considerations will be a great help in enabling the ordinary elector to decide which party has the more honest and able leaders.

LIBERAL PROMISE BREAKING.

In the private business of life, we trust men according to our experience with them and the reputation they have for getting honestly and telling the truth. We never think of trusting important affairs of a private nature to a man who has deceived or cheated us. The same rule must obtain in weighing the worth of public men. It is a sad thing to find that for Canada if the voters were to cease judging their public servants by the degree of faithfulness with which they keep their solemn promises, Judged by this standard there can be no verdict but one of unqualified condemnation of the Laurier Administration. Brass appears to have been melted, and the unscrupulous exercise of Government patronage has become a little while diverted attention from promise breaking, but in the end the voice of the independent elector will be heard at the polls.

We are at no loss for data with which to compare the promises and performances of the Liberal party. They did much speculating when wandering in the wilderness of opposition; and their words are on record. But, as if to put the matter beyond all doubt, they made a solemn promise in 1898, in convention, and in a platform, by that platform and subsequent parliamentary and platform elaboration they are bound, and there is no loophole of escape.

The Liberal party in the Ottawa Convention in 1898 denounced the then existing tariff as founded on the unprincipled principle of Protection, and announced a vast number of evils which had arisen under its operation, ending with this declaration: "We denounce the principle of protection as radically un sound and unjust to the masses of the people, and we declare our conviction that any tariff changes based on that principle must fail to afford any substantial relief from the burdens under which the country labor."

In expressing this platform of his party, Sir Louis Davies said, in Middlebrook, Nova Scotia, in the autumn of 1898: "There come times when little party issues disappear and the great historical principles of the country divide open some vital issue which affects not only the present but the future interests of the people. Today the people of Canada stand face to face with such an issue, and the great conflict is to be one between Free Trade and Protection. The policy of the Liberal party is the reform of the tariff by a principle of free trade of every vestige of protection."

In the teeth of these solemn promises we have today in force in Canada the existing tariff, which, as far as protection is concerned, does not differ from its immediate predecessor—the Foster tariff of 1894. It is in fact a duty on mercantile cloth, which was reduced from 7-16 to 6 cents per gallon in 1894, was further reduced by order of Sir J. Fielding; and that a few other minor changes have been made; but the principle of protection remains the whole system. Indeed the Liberal party capitulated to the manufacturers before the election, although they did not tell the electors so, and one of their first acts was to send Messrs. Fielding and Patterson around the country to consult with the manufacturers as to the changes to be made. As far as the tariff is concerned, in consequence of not affording a parallel of such a wholesale abandonment of principle as the present tariff, the charge against the Liberal party of Canada.

Then let us look to the question of economy. Here are the resolutions of the Ottawa conference: "We cannot but view with alarm the large increase of the public debt and of the controllable charges on estimates and the Dominion and the consequent undue taxation of the people under the

Governments that have been continuously in power since 1878, and we demand the strictest economy in the administration of the Government of the country. Surely that is an explicit promise. Then we have Sir Wilfrid's speeches at Toronto and Stratford in 1894. At Toronto he said: "If we come into power we will follow the example of McKenna, and I think that although we may not be able to bring the expenditures back to what they were we can reduce the amount to, say, three million dollars a year." At Stratford he said: "Do you imagine there is any justification for this increase of expenditure? The Conservatives tell us there is a justification. The population has increased, they say. Oh, yes, it has increased 5 per cent,

but the expenditure has increased 100 per cent. There can be no justification for such an expenditure." "Moreover they tell us that if we were in power we could not retrench and economize. But I do not believe it will be a very difficult task. (Hear, hear.) It would not be a difficult task to the extent of one, two, three, and Mr. Mills told his constituents a few days ago that it was possible to retrench to the extent of four millions." Then, Sir Louis Davies said in Parliament in 1896: "We are ready to go to the country with that statement on which we pledge ourselves that very large and important reductions can be made in the expenditures of the country without impairing the efficient administration of its affairs." So much for promises. We now come

to performance. The ordinary expenditures for the last year of Conservative administration was \$38,940,142, and the average for 10 years was \$38,787,772. All we have now two completed years of Liberal administration. The ordinary expenditures has been as follows: 1896-97..... \$38,346,700 1897-98..... 39,832,530 an average of \$38,591,142 per year, or nearly two millions per annum greater than the expenditure of the last Conservative year or the average expenditure of the last ten years of Conservative administration. But the Ottawa Platform said that the increase of the debt was matter for serious alarm, and Sir Wilfrid Laurier promised that there should be an end of rolling up the debt. Well, this is how that matter stands. The net debt of Canada on the 30th of June, 1898, was \$255,497,433; on the 30th of June, 1899, it amounted to \$283,956,398, making an increase of \$28,458,965 in the net debt for the short period of two years of Liberal Administration.

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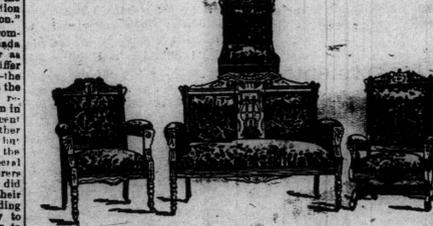
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