THE HERALD

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 1890.

ALL matter for publication in the HERALD should be in this office by noon on Tuesday. Persons wishing their advertisements changed *must* advise us Saturday forenoon.

PUBLIC LANDS.

THE report of the Commissioner of Public Lands for the year ended 31st December, 1889, shows that two thousand eight hundred and one acres of land were sold during the year for which $3,186.09 was agreed to be paid. The total number of acres sold since the organization of the Department under the operation of the Act of the 16th Vic., amounts to 699,378¼ acres. The receipts for the year amounted to $27,568.05. Referring to the receipts the Commissioner says:

"The falling away in the receipts as compared with former years was due in a great measure to the comparative failure of the oat crop; the derangement of business consequent on the discovery of the defalcations of a former assistant and the labor involved in inquiring into these transactions interfered in no small degree with the regular work of the office.

"On the death of the late Assistant Commissioner, Mr. Thomas Mackinlay, which occurred in November last, the office sustained a serious loss.

"One of the Clerks, Mr. Francis M. Longworth, made the collecting tours. On the Western tour $3,513.60 was received. On the Eastern tour the receipts only amounted to $346.24.

"Three hundred and thirty Deeds and Counterparts were executed during the year. Fifty-five accounts were opened and two hundred and eighty-one accounts closed during the year.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

A COPY of the "Eleventh Annual Report on the progress and condition of the Public Schools of Prince Edward Island," carefully prepared by the Chief Superintendent of Education, has been handed us. From it we learn that there were in the Province at the end of the year 1889 four hundred and thirty-six school districts, the number at the end of the previous year being four hundred and thirty-three. Of these school districts there were in Queen's County one hundred and seventy-four; in Prince one hundred and forty-two; and in King's one hundred and twenty.

Of the five districts without schools during the year 1889, three have been recently established by the Board of Education and have not yet erected school buildings. The remaining two are old districts without suitable school accommodation.

The number of vacant schools has been gradually dimishing since 1876, as the following statement will show:

Number of vacant Schools in 1876		...	74
" "	"	1881	23
" "	"	1886	11
" "	"	1889	5

The following statement gives the number of departments in each school under the supervision of the Board of Education:

Number of Schools with 11 dept's		.....	1
" "	" 9	"	1
" "	" 8	"	1
" "	" 6	"	1
" "	" 4	"	1
" "	" 3	"	5
" "	" 2	"	42
" "	" 1	dep't	381
Total number of schools		.....	433

The number of teachers employed in 1889 was five hundred and eighteen. Of these two hundred and sixty-one were men, and two hundred and fifty-seven women. Sixty-two were of the first class; one hundred and forty of the second class; and three hundred and sixteen of the third class. The number of teachers' licenses issued during the year was one hundred and thirty two. Of these twelve were of the first class; twenty-four of the second class; and ninety-six of the third class.

"The constant change of teachers in our public schools," says the Superintendent, "is one of the most formidable evils we have to contend against. It is even on the increase. During the past year 87 teachers changed schools, and and 165 others left the profession. Thus in nearly one half the schools of the Province there has been a change of teachers during one year. Many of the vacancies occasioned by these changes were filled by boys and girls who had spent one term at the Normal School, and barely satisfied the lowest legal requirements of the lowest class of teachers. We are losing annually some of our best and most experienced teachers, and the accessions to the profession do not fully make up our loss in any respect except in numbers. Last year our loss in this respect was unusually great."

The number of pupils enrolled in 1889 was 23,945 or 567 more than the year 1888. Twelve thousand six hundred and thirty of the pupils enrolled were boys, and ten thousand four hundred and fifteen girls. The daily average attendance of pupils was thirteen thousand one hundred and fifty-nine, an increase over 1888 of nine hundred and eleven.

The total expenditure for Schools by the Government in 1889 was $108,091.85 as against $108,845.70 in 1888, a decrease of $753.85.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

A WASHINGTON despatch says that the House Committee on railways and canals has ordered a favorable report on Representative Payne's bill, providing for the construction by the United States of a ship canal around Niagara Falls. $1,000,000 is appropriated to begin the construction. The canal is to cost $28,000,000. Its depth is to be 20½ feet. The route is about 23 miles in length. The canal is to be sufficiently large to permit the passage of vessels which can pass through St. Mary's canal when the new locks are completed.

THE Nova Scotia Steel & Forge company of New Glasgow, has been merged into the Nova Scotia Steel & Iron company, with a capital of $2,000,000 divided into 10,000 ordinary shares and 10,000 preference shares, and a debenture capital of $800,000. The company has been formed for the purpose of extending the present business, also to take over the iron areas, railway franchises, and other properties of the New Glasgow Iron Coal and Railway company, and to erect blast furnaces mine iron ore and carry on all work necessary for the operation of the furnaces and the manufacture of iron and steel in all its branches.

SPEECH OF HON. D. FERGUSON

DURING THE DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS.

HON. MR. FERGUSON,—The hon. gentleman who has just resumed his seat introduced into his speech a story respecting the maiden's excuse for her error, that it was only a "little one." Well, the hon. member might have made the same apology for inflicting upon the House the effort which he has just made. I know that speech well. I have heard it often, and could have delivered it almost as well as the hon. gentleman himself. I could have gone over it almost word for word. The story was the only original part of it. A statement made by the hon. member shows how unfairly he is disposed to discuss this question. He said that the Government limited the inquiry of the Commissioners to certain matters, instead of making provision for the fullest investigation. All hon. members of this House are aware that the instructions given the Commissioners did not limit the enquiry, but made provision for its being of the widest nature, but calling for a preliminary report on the defalcations then known. The hon. gentleman further went on to say that when the report of the Commissioner of Public Lands was submitted last session it was submitted with the full knowledge that the information which it contained was not correct. Now, the hon. member knows very well, and every hon. gentleman of this House knows, for the hon. gentleman says that they all have read the evidence, that so far as the defalcations for the year 1888 were concerned, ever dollar known to have been taken had been made good by the family of the late Robert A. Strong, before the 31st December of that year. A most desperate attempt has been made by the hon. member to fasten some wrong-doing upon the Government and the Commissioner of Public Lands, because, subsequent to other defalcations had been discovered and were not referred to in the Report. The fact is that what occurred after the 1st of January, 1889, did not belong to the transactions of the previous year, and would not form part of the report of that year. Fault has been found because no reference has been made to the

LAND OFFICE MATTER

in the Speech, at the opening of the present session. Why make this case exceptional? When there were defalcations in the Land Office on a former occasion, no reference was made thereto in the Speech at the opening of the following session, in 1877, and the hon. Mr. Yeo was a leading member of the Government in these year. The House adjourned until Monday at 3 o'clock p. m.

HON. MR. FERGUSON.—When the House adjourned on Saturday, I was replying to some statements made by the hon. junior member for Fort Augustus in discussing the Address in answer to the Speech. The hon. gentleman travelled far beyond the Address for matters with which to make speech, and in discussing matters respecting the Land Office he made some very serious misstatements. Before dealing with these I will call the attention of the House to another statement made by the hon. gentleman. He asserted that various promises had been made to the people in every section of the Province by members of the Government and their supporters respecting measures not mentioned in the Speech at the opening of the session. This serves as a

REMINDER TO THE GOVERNMENT.

It reminds them that they published a card containing their platform, previous to the late general election. That card contains their promises to the people as to their future policy. Where was the hon. Leader of the Opposition and his policy? We never heard from him at all on the subject. He may have attended some public meetings, but I submit that something more than that is looked for from the leader of a political party previous to a general election. The Leader should state what his platform really is. Did the Opposition Party promulgate any definite view or state their policy before the last election? No. At every public meeting their friends and supporters propounded a different policy. The absence of any carded platform enabled the hon. junior member for Fort Augustus to take advantage of every political wind that blew and to catch votes by every breeze. It enabled the Opposition candidates to appeal to sectarian and religious prejudices and to ride the temperance horse wherever they could be of any service to them, and to cater to the liquor interest whenever it could serve their purpose. It was no doubt arranged that the Leader of the Opposition should be low, so that every one of his followers could run a race of his own, and announce a policy for himself. Though the hon. Leader of the Opposition did not announce his policy, he addressed a public meeting in the Egmont Bay District. I believe he there stated that ther was

LITTLE DIFFERENCE

between the politics of the two parties, except that the outs wanted to get in, and he ins did not want to go out. That was the only policy which the hon. gentleman announced. In fact, the Opposition has only one policy, and that was—to catch votes. But while no distinct policy was announced by the Opposition, and while every candidate ran the election on a policy of his own, there was

ONE POINT UPON WHICH THEY WERE ALL AGREED,

and that was, to abuse the Commissioner of Public Lands, to denounce him at every public meeting, and to exaggerate some unfortunate defalcations which had occurred in the Land Office, and for which they well knew he was not to blame. I, therefore, feel it to be due to the memory of the author of those defalcations, now deceased, that the Opposition in this Province should raise a monument to him for enabling them to attain so great a degree of success at the late election. A Judge of the Supreme Court once said that it was the duty of the barristers to raise a monument to the memory of a certain surveyor of lands, for the contradicting lines he had surveyed had enabled them to reap a rich harvest of fees. On the same principle, it becomes the duty of the Opposition party in this House to raise a monument to the memory of the late Robert Alder Strong, who has given them so much ground for discussion during the election contest. In the Nova Scotia Legislature, there was once a Mr. Longley, who made an unfortunate speech every time he took the floor. A friend once said to him: "You are always longly when you ought to be shortly, and shortly when you ought to be longly." The hon. junior member for Fort Augustus had to import Mr. L. H. Davies into his district to make stump speeches during the election contest. Yet the hon. gentleman rushed in and tried to make a stump speech on the floor of this House! Not long since, I heard a gentleman say that only an earthquake could give the hon. member a seat in this House, as he had tried and tried again, but had always failed. But the hon. gentleman had lately taken advantage of the defalcations of the late Mr. Strong, and by a policy of slander and misrepresentation he obtained a seat here. The hon. member, the other evening, undertook the task of leading critic on the other side of the House. He is not young; his head is beginning to become, like my own, a little gray; but he has this advantage, that up to the present time he has

NO POLITICAL RECORD,

and has not identified himself with any public movement. He has made his boast that he has no interest in even the Exhibitions, and does not intend to have any. He has no political record, and has identified himself with no public enterprise. The only record which he ever made was in connection with a movement for the purpose of developing the mineral interests of the country in connection with the Cape Wolf gold mines. (Laughter). He was, I believe, at the back of that movement. (Laughter). I hope it will be long before any expert pronounces upon me the same verdict as was pronounced upon that famous mining expert of the hon. member for Fort Augustus. When, some months ago, it was announced that Robert A. Strong was short in his cash, and that defalcations had occurred in the Land Office, the organ of the Opposition Party came out with editorial articles on the matter, which were remarkable only for their uncharitableness, malignity and misrepresentations. The Opposition thought their time had come to rule me. But the people have given their decision on the course pursued by the Government respecting the Land Office defalcations, and have returned them again to power. The hon. member said that there was no necessity for a commission to inquire into the matter of the defalcations, as the Commissioner of Crown Lands knew the amount of shortage. What did the Patriot, the organ of the Opposition, say a day or two after the defalcations were made public? Its statement was as follows:—

"There are hundreds in this community who will be slow to accept the Examiner's statement that he (the late Mr. R. A. Strong) was the guilty man until they have some positive proof of the fact offered them."

And again:—

"His (the Commissioner's) duty was to have reported the facts to the Government, and then steps could have been taken to have sifted the matter by means of a royal commission, which would have ensured to all interested and incriminated parties fair play."

That is what the Patriot newspaper said on that matter, although the Government had already arranged that a royal commission should issue, and that the matter should be sifted to the bottom. But we now have the hon. junior member for Fort Augustus declaring that it was wrong to have that commission appointed, and that it was altogether unnecessary. It appears that they did not think the Government could have taken that step, and when it has been taken they say it has involved unnecessary expense. Let the Opposition party, who tried to injure both

THE LIVING AND THE DEAD,

bear the blame. Some hon. members on the other side of the House criticised the appointment of the gentlemen who composed the commission. They said it was wrong to appoint Mr. Lewis Carvell, as he was a strong political partizan. That such was not the case was evidenced by the fact that his name was spoit at a former and the last election. He stands second to no man in the maritime provinces as an accountant. They said Mr. Arnaud was a supporter of the Opposition party, but that he had an interest the other way; that the Merchants Bank of Halifax had received Government patronage in the shape of deposits, and that it would lose that patronage if he brought in a report unfavorable to the Government. The Opposition at the same time announced that the Government were going to be defeated. It did not require much ingenuity to see that these two statements were a direct contradiction of each other. As the American humorist says: "It is an egregious ass who worships the setting instead of the rising sun." Instead of making a report which would commend itself to the Government, Mr. Arnaud would be much more likely to bring in one which would favor the Opposition party. However, I believe the people are perfectly satisfied with the personnel of that Commission. The Commissioners were known to be competent men, and though their report did not come out in sufficient time to contract all the false statements which had been so industriously circulated, it came out before the election, and the people say that it is an independent one, and that the blame for the defalcations was laid at the door where it ought to be laid. The Opposition, notwithstanding all the falsehood of the Opposition, thought sufficiently on the matter to consign the hon. Leader of the Opposition and his party to the cool shades of opposition for the next four years. The hon. junior member for Fort Augustus said that the Commissioners had condemned the Commissioner of Crown Lands in their report, and claimed to read an extract therefrom to corroborate his statement. I will read that extract:—

"The Commissioners have, during the present inquiry, observed the operation of the system of single entry book-keeping, which has been in use in the Land Office from its organization, and they have reached the conclusion that it is entirely inadequate for the purpose of showing the state of the affairs of the Land Office, or of checking in any way the action of persons disposed to manipulate the accounts.

"Under the system of book-keeping hitherto in force in the Land Office a dishonest official might, with impunity, and small chances of detection, as the evidence at this inquiry proves, collect money due the Government, place the amount directly to the credit in the Township Ledger of the account of the person paying it, and pocket the money. He could do this even while the Provincial Auditor was in the act of comparing the cash entries with the counterfoils of the official receipts."

That was what the Commissioners said. They did not censure the management of the office during the last ten years, nor the last three years, but the system of book-keeping in use since its organization, over thirty years ago. Yet the hon. junior member for Fort Augustus asserts that the remarks of the Commissioners had no reference to the management of the Land Office during the last ten years, only. I will read what a former Commission said on that subject. I am sorry that a good double entry system of book-keeping is far better than a single one. The remarks of Messrs. Cundall, Shanks and DesBrisay, were as follows:

"The system of accounts adopted is a simple one; and although not by any means perfect, yet, if faithfully carried out in its integrity, would be quite sufficient to show the pecuniary relation, both of the Commissioners and of the purchasers of land, towards the Government."

That is to say: If the Book-keeper and Accountant were thoroughly honest, the system was quite sufficient, but if a man was disposed to be a rogue and tried to cover up his transactions, he had a far better chance under a single than under double entry system of book-keeping. Mr. Hyndman, when giving his testimony before the present Commission said:

"I never went through the Ledgers to see if audit marks were made, or omissions or insertions of other amounts after the audit. It would be too much work—once would be enough. If a man wants to be dishonest, he can deceive any auditor.

Further on, he said,

"If a man paid money which did not appear in the cash book, it might not go to the treasury, and under my system of auditing it might not be discovered."

That was what Mr. Hyndman said. And I submit that any person, on making a full examination of the books, will find that no system of book-keeping would prevent those transactions in connection with the defalcations; for after the work of the auditor had been gone into, figures were changed and alterations were made which no Commissioner or auditor could discover, unless he repeatedly went back over the accounts and checked them again and again. By continually going over the books he would find, in the end, that there was something wrong. Under the best system of keeping accounts, banks have had to deal with defaulters, and we scarcely take up a newspaper without reading reports of defalcations of accountants who have cheated the best financiers in the world. There is another way in which the hon. junior member for Fort Augustus tries to strike at the Commissioner of Public Lands. He quotes from the Report of the Commissioners as follows:

"The length of time which has elapsed between the receipt of money in the Land Office and its transfer to the treasury, and the loose way in which the blank official receipts (both obsolete and others) were treated, have encouraged dishonest operations."

In reply to the hon. member, I will quote from the evidence of F. W. Hyndman before the Commissioners. The gentleman read this evidence over, and tells us he was well acquainted with the facts. In the face of Mr. Hyndman's evidence, the hon. member tells us that this extract had reference only to the management of the office during the last ten years. In giving his evidence, Mr. Hyndman says:

"My duties ceased when I saw the money into the treasury. I examined the bank pass book, as far as I remember."

"Examined by Mr. Ferguson—I was under the impression that an order was made on daily deposits."

"(Cash book, page 51, put in witness' hand, showing 199 deposits made Dec. 21st, 1887, for $2,909.31 and $5,047.06). Total,—$7,956.37."

"The previous deposit seems to have been made Dec. 12."

This shows that as far back as Dec. 21st, 1887, the large sum of about $8,000 had accumulated in the Land Office, and was deposited in the bank at that date, the previous deposit having been made on Dec. 11th, or nine days before that date. Yet the hon. junior member for Fort Augustus now tries to create the impression that the Report of the Commissioners showed a want of confidence in myself as Commissioner of Public Lands. This system existed in 1877, and most necessarily exist while the system of country collections is carried on. When an official from the Land Office travels westward for the purpose of making collections, there is no place in which to deposit moneys until he reaches Summerside. Beyond that town there is no place where moneys can be deposited. It is, therefore, a necessity under the system of country collections, that a considerable sum of money must remain in the hands of the official sent on country tours, from day to day. And I must say that this practice is in full accordance with the law. The Statute 16th Vic., cap. 18, page 39, says:—

"The Commissioner of Public Lands shall *monthly* account for and pay over all moneys in his hands, received or arising under this Act, to the Treasurer on the first Monday in each month, to be applied to the purposes of this Act, as herein set forth, and to the use of the Government of this Island, as provided for or directed by this Act, or by any Act of the General Assembly of this Island hereafter to be passed."

Monthly deposits were authorized by the Statute, and the Commissioner strictly complies with the law in making such deposits. Then with regard to the obsolete receipts, this is what Mr Hyndman said in his evidence:

"I remember there were some old receipts in the office when I got my system of receipts came in. I do not know what I did about them."

The fact is, these obsolete receipts which should have been destroyed in 1876, were allowed to remain within the reach of Mr. Strong, and the encouragement to dishonesty was rather due to the loose mess at that date than to any thing that occurred at a later date.

Now, I have dealt with all these points which the hon. junior member for Fort Augustus attempted to make so much of in the course of his remarks during the present debate, when he endeavored to show conduct unfavorable to the Commissioner of Public Lands. I will leave hon. members to judge whether his remarks were fair and just, or in accordance with truth and right. The hon. gentleman tried to show a dereliction of duty on the part of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, and that he is responsible for the honesty of every man employed by the Government under him in the Land Office. Was ever such a principle recognized in any country under the sun? Is the Prime Minister of England ever held accountable for the defalcations and embezzlements of public officials employed under him? Even the hon. member for Strathalbyn cannot help laughing derisively at the very idea. I dare say that with all the eloquence displayed by Hon. members of the Opposition respecting this subject, not one of them has turned up the law bearing upon the question, and found where the responsibility for these defalcations really rests. These hon. gentlemen may well shake their heads, for there has not been much in them on this subject up to the present time. Let us take up the Act 16th Vic., Cap 18, Secs. 33, 34 and 35, and see what it says respecting the responsibility of the Commissioner of Crown Lands and of the Deputy and clerks employed by him in the Land Office previous to the year 1876. Those sections are as follows:

XXXIII. Any person appointed under this Act to be "The Commissioner of Public Lands," shall and may, and he is hereby authorized, from time to time, to nominate and appoint any fit and proper person to act as his clerk or deputy, who shall be, and he is hereby authorized in the absence of the Commissioner of Public Lands," to perform the duties of "the Commissioner of Public Lands" as prescribed in and by this Act or any Act of the General Assembly of this Island, hereafter to be passed, or which otherwise by law is required, or authorized to do as such Commissioner of Public Lands as aforesaid.

XXXIV. Such deputy so to be appointed as aforesaid, shall be appointed by a commission under the hand and seal of "the Commissioner of Public Lands" for the time being, which shall be duly registered in the office of the Registrar of Deeds of this Island; and the said deputy shall be sworn by a Justice of the Peace, faithfully to preform all the duties of his said office, before he shall act therein; and every such "The Commissioner of Public Lands" and his sureties shall be, and they are hereby declared to be responsible and liable for all and every neglect of duty, defalcation, or improper conduct on the part of any such clerk or deputy appointed by him in discharge of his duty as aforesaid.

XXXV. Every person to be appointed Commissioner of Public Lands under this Act, shall, previous to entering upon the duties of his office, give good and approved security, payable to Her Majesty, her heirs and successors, in such

Amount as the Lieutenant Governor in Council shall, from time to time, deem sufficient for the faithful performance of the trust reposed in him and his clerk or deputy, if any be appointed by him, will duly and properly pay over and account for, according to law, all moneys by him received as such "Commissioner of Public Lands" as aforesaid, or received by or entrusted to his clerk or deputy."

These are the provisions of the Act 16th Victoria regarding the appointment of the Commissioner of Public Lands and his deputy and clerks previous to the year 1876. But that part of the Act was repealed by the Act respecting Public Offices in 1876, wherein it provides in Sections 14, 15 and 18 as follows:

Sec. 14—*There shall be an officer* styled the Assistant Commissioner of Public Lands, together with such clerks as shall be required for the efficient working of that Department.

Sec. 15—The said Assistant Commissioner of Public Lands shall be, and he is hereby authorized, in the absence of the Commissioner of Public Lands to exercise and preform all the powers and duties of the said Commissioner of Public Lands, as prescribed by the several Acts of the General Assembly of this Province, or which otherwise by law the said Commissioner of Public Lands is required or authorized to do, and such Assistant, in the performance of his respective duties shall be subject to the supervison and direction of his principal.

Sec. 18—The several officers provided in this Act shall give such security for the due performance of the duties of their respective offices as the Lieutenant Govenor in Council shall determine and require.

Thus, you will see, Mr. Speaker, that according to the old Land Purchase Act, which was in force prior to 1876, the Commissioner of Public Lands had power to appoint his own deputy and clerks, and was held responsible for their defalcations, and had also to give security for the faithful performance of their duties; but the Act of 1876 repealed those provisions and made provision for an Assistant Commissioner, gave him all the powers the Commissioner himself possessed, and required him to give security to the Government for the faithful performance of all the duties of his office. Under the old Act, the Commissioner had the appointment and control of the deputy; under the Act of 1876 that power was taken away, and the assistant received his appointment and instructions direct from the Government. Another provision was made in the Act of 1879, uniting the officer of Provincial Secretary and Treasurer and Commissioner of Crown and Public Lands. That clause reads as follows:

"Sec. 1. The offices of Provincial Secretary and Treasurer, and Commissioner of Crown and Public Lands, shall be united in one person, who shall be styled the Provincial Secretary-Treasurer and Commissioner of Public Lands, and he shall be a member of the Provincial Administration for the time being, and shall hold office during pleasure."

It was not contemplated that the Commissioner of Public Lands should be personally responsible for the honesty of the Assistant Commissioner. He was responsible for the general management of the office; but if he were to be held responsible for the defalcations and wrong-doing of the men employed by the Government under him, no man would accept the position of Commissioner of Public Lands, at the same time being required to run elections, attend to parliamentary duties, supervise the Provincial Secretary's office, and give a portion of his time to general Government business such as delegations, the Stock Farm, Poor House and Lunatic Asylum, while managing the Land Office. The Act did not contemplate this, as it made provision that the Assistant Commissioner was to have all the power that the Commissioner himself had, and to have full charge of the office in the absence of the Commissioner, and to give ample security. I dare say, however, that the Opposition will go on and repeat all the charges which they have already made against me. I maintain the principle of ministerial responsibility, but in no country has that principle been pushed so far as in this province, respecting this matter. With regard to the man who has been the subject of so many comments, and who has passed away from our midst, I have only to say that he occupied the same position under the former Government as under the present one, and that, notwithstanding his fault, he was an exceedingly clever and industrious official, possessing versatile talents and being in every way a very capable man. I never heard the breath of slander imputed to him. He was ready and willing to do anything that the call of duty required at his hands. He stood high in every relation of life. I had the fullest confidence in him. That confidence, taken in connection with his ability and the powers given him under the Act, which were equal with those which I myself possessed, caused me to repose in him the fullest trust. It was impossible that I could watch continually over his shoulders. It was, therefore, only natural that much confidence would be placed in him. But that confidence was, I am sorry to say, misplaced. To listen to the remarks of hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House, one would imagine that never before had such a thing occurred in any country or in this Island and that defalcations. Not long ago there were very serious defalcations in the Education Department, when the hon. member for Strathalbyn was the Leader of the Government in this House. But not one member of the Legislature accused him of not looking after the interests of that office, but an unfortunate man took money from the public that did not belong to him under the very nose of the hon. gentleman. Later on there were defalcations in the Land Office. I remember I ran an election with an hon. gentleman who was at that time head of the Land Office; but I never heard a single accusation made against him, or any attempt made to ruin him on that account. I remember also when this House was robbed, when a large sum of money was stolen from the table of the Clerk of this House. Why was not the then Speaker, the Hon. John Yeo, charged with dereliction of duty in not looking after that money. Hon. members of the Opposition laugh at the idea. Why was not that matter inquired into?

The hon. junior member for Fort Augustus said that there was an easy way of settling the question in reference to the defalcations which lately took place that instead of appointing a costly Commission the Government might have taken the easy way of sueing the securities of the late Mr. Strong. Why, sir, the flimsy nature of that argument is apparent on the face of it. Before commencing a suit of that kind you must know the exact amount for which you sue. But if no investigation had been made as to the extent of the defalcation, and as to who was the guilty party, the whole probably have turned on the validity of the bond, respecting the legality of the proceedings, and a verdict rendered accordingly. Who is it that now asserts that the Government should have sued the securities! The hon. junior member for Fort Augustus! Would you believe it, sir, that hon. gentleman announced at the elections that the Government could not collect a single dollar from the securities. This is the gentleman who aspires to be the Attorney General of this province. The hon. member announced that the Government had no case, and could not collect any portion of the money from the securities. A pretty Attorney General, indeed, he would make, who made such a statement as that in advance not knowing whether he would have to sue the securities or not. The hon gentleman forgot his utterance on that matter, or thought the Government had forgotten them. The hon. gentleman during his speech on Saturday quoted from my report for the year 1880, respecting the management of the Land Office under my predecessor, the Hon. Joseph Pope. I say that the office was well managed by my predecessor, and I maintain its administration under myself was equally efficient. I freely and fairly claim that when this investigation has sifted to the bottom every transaction it will be found that the management of the Land Office which I pronounced a good one in 1880, is just as well carried on at the present time. Let the Commissioners go into every detail of that office, let them go to the bottom of every transaction, and they will find not a single case where the Commissioner or any other member of the Government has trafficed in a single acre of land through the Land Office for the last 10 years. But if the inquiry goes beyond the period alluded to the Commissioners, I will show conduct on the former Governments in which gentlemen occupying seats in the Opposition used their official position for the purpose of obtaining public lands that should not have been sold to them. We have the evidence respecting this matter at hand, and will produce it at the proper time before the people of this country. The hon. member is winding at my statement; of that I am quite sure. He says he knows everything contained in the speech, even about agricultural matters. Well, I believe the hon. gentleman knows very little about Agriculture, and the less he says the better for himself and his credit as a wise man. My hon. friend, the Leader of the Government, says that it is not usual to announce all the Government measures in detail in the speech at the opening of the session. "Oh," says the hon. member "I have you there. Your speech accuses you. Why did you put that clause in about the contract with the Exhibition Company." Well, in reference to that contract with the company, the Government had merely carried out the legislation of last session with respect to it. A bill was passed, containing the necessary provisions, and the Government have simply given an account to the House of their stewardship respecting it. It is not the custom to enter into details with reference to the intentions of the Government respecting public questions during the discussion on the Draft Address in reply to the Governor's speech. The hon. gentleman will have another opportunity of discussing these questions, when we will take him back step by step over a number of years, and show him how our agricultural improvements have been advancing onward and upward, until they have culminated in the erection of those grand exhibition buildings, and in an exhibition which, I hope and trust, will be second to none this side of Toronto, in this Dominion. The hon. gentleman also referred to the proposed bridge across the Hillsborough River, and admitted that the people on the south side of that river want to keep that matter entirely out of party politics. I would appeal to Hon members of this House and ask them how the hon. gentleman can justify his conduct to his constituents when he made a fierce attack upon the Government respecting that matter. Before they had announced their policy respecting it, he rushes into this House and makes the question in reference to the Hillsborough Bridge, a subject for fierce political attack. This course is only in keeping with his conduct during the late election contest regarding that matter. During the election we heard that the Grits at Southport had called a meeting at that place for the purpose of considering the ferry question. That meeting was no doubt called at the hon. gentleman's bidding, or that of his agents. He was all along depending on the defalcations in the Land Office for political capital to enable him to get a seat in this House, but he thought the bridge question might assist him in his efforts. We met him at the meeting and discussed the ferry question. He had his master with him. We discussed the matter there as the people wished, aside from all party politics. I may mention to the House that before that meeting was held the Hon. Commissioner of Public Works had taken steps, and had consulted an Engineer abroad for the purpose of obtaining information respecting the proposed bridge to ascertain whether or not its cost was within the means of this Province, or whether Federal Government might be asked to take any hand or assist in the work.

The Opposition have hitherto been toiling like the fishermen on the Sea of Galilee, and yet have caught nothing. They are to-day in the same helpless position as in the year 1879, when they were routed horse, foot and artillery at the general election of that year. The people have repeated that operation no less than four times. On four different occasions when appeals were made to the people and when public questions were discussed in almost every school house in the Province, our policy of economy and retrenchment has had the approval of the electors of this Province. Hon gentlemen on the other side of the House sometimes get a little nearer the goal of their ambition than at other times, as in 1882, but by some unexplainable means they were very soon thrown back a further distance from the promised land. The fact is they are a party without a policy. The hon. Leader of the Opposition would not have alluded himself at Port Hill during the fiery conflict when his gushing Lieutenants were carrying the party on to defeat if he had a policy to announce to the people. But he knew that the affairs of the country were quite as well managed by the present Government as they could have been by himself, had he been in power. They, therefore, merely carried on a kind of guerilla warfare against the Government in different sections of the province. The hon. junior member for Fort Augustus has alluded to other subjects not mentioned in the speech at all. I have found it unnecessary at present to go into all those subjects; but if he is anxious to discuss them at further length, after he gets his shoes fairly brushed on the carpets of this chamber, he can have his wishes met. As hon. gentlemen opposite are very impatient for debate, we are inclined to gratify them. Later in the session we will have a chance to go more fully into the question (Loud applause)

SESSIONAL NOTES.

When the bill regarding the representation of the people in the Legislature was under the consideration of the Committee of the Whole House, a few evenings ago, the spirit of economy, all at once, took possession of the members of the Opposition. Mr. Farquharson thought Georgetown should be deprived of its representation, on the score of economy.

Hon. Mr. McLeod said that when it so happened that the representatives from Georgetown were in accord with the views of the party to which he (Mr. F.) belonged, that gentleman expressed no desire to deprive that town of its representatives; in fact, he very likely wished it would send three representatives intstead of two.

Hon. Mr. Gordon said Georgetown could well afford to stand the sneers of Mr. Farquharson. Georgetown, as well as King's County, had sent representative, to the Legislature, who were an honor to the Province, before West River, (Mr. F's district) was heard of.

Hon. Mr. Ferguson called attention to the fact that the member for West River was now making a very poor mouth about the poverty of the country; but about the 30th of January last, that gentleman had lots of money, when visiting the different parts of his district.

Mr. Farquharson said he would like to know, from the Attorney-General, the definition of "bribery and corruption." Hon. Mr. McLeod replied that when the petition, for bribery and corruption, filed against Mr. Farquharson, came up for consideration, he (Mr. McL.) would then probably define what constituted bribery and corruption.

SOURIS DRIVING PARK ASSOCIATION.

The citizens of Souris and vicinity met at the Souris Reading room, on the evening of April 1st, inst, Mr. J. H. Hooper in the chair, for the purpose of considering the reports of a committee appointed on the previous evening, at the same place, relative to the selection of a site suitable for a Driving Park. After some discussion as to the relative merits of five places examined, two were favorably reported upon for the consideration of a practical engineer, whose estimate of the cost of grading would materially assist in the final selection. The two places above referred to are the Flannigan Farm, Souris River, and Knight's Point, both of which are commendable, commanding fine views, and admirably adapted for a driving park. After considering all phases of the subject, on motion of Mr. J. J. Hughes, a company was formed, to be known as the Souris Driving Park Association, with a capital of $1250 in 125 shares of $10 each.

On motion of Dr. McLellan, the following committee was appointed to solicit stock, namely, M. J. Foley, F. Morrow and J. J. Hughes.

On motion of F. Morrow, R. F. Macdonald was asked to invite, by telephone Mr. R. R. Cox, civil engineer, of Charlottetown, to come to Souris as soon as possible, to give a statement of the probable cost, from survey, &c., and the same motion providing for the appointment of the following committee, Allen Boisner, James McQuaid and James McCormack, to wait upon Mr. Cox, on his arrival in Souris, should he come, and place under him all the assistance required during the survey.

A stock list was then opened, and fifty five shares taken up before the close of the meeting.

The meeting then adjourned, to come together after Mr. Cox's survey would be made, and if possible to meet that gentleman before his departure from Souris

R. F. MACDONALD Sec'y *pro tem.*

NEWTON CROSS NOTES.

The farmers in this vicinity are making all preparations for the spring's work, which will soon be to hand.

As there are several fine horses in this part for sale, it would be well for any horses buyers on the island to call at Newton Cross, and see the stock there.

As the ice in the harbor has almost cleared away, it is expected that the Heather Belle will soon make the trips to Orwell Brush Wharf.

WANDERER.

THE steamer Southport began running between this city and Southport, on Friday last.

MR. JAMES MORGAN, of the firm of Morson & Morgan, Cardigan Bridge, has removed from that place to Southport, where he is about to commence business. On Monday night, the 7th inst., a number of his friends assembled at Campbell's hotel, Cardigan Bridge, to bid him farewell. About ten o'clock those present sat down to a sumptuous dinner provided in honor of the occasion. Mr. Morgan, the guest of the evening, occupied the seat of honor. W. P. Lewis, Esq., presided. After the viands had been disposed of, Mr. Lewis, on behalf of those present, presented Mr. Morgan with an address testifying to the high appreciation in which he was held by the people of Cardigan, and expressing regret that he was about to leave the village. Mr. Morgan, who was deeply moved, made a suitable reply, thanking those present and the people of Cardigan generally for the kindness and courtesy extended to him during his residence among them of nearly twelve years

LEGISLATIVE PROCEEDINGS.

TUESDAY, April 8.

The Private Bill Committee reported the "Full Electric Company Act," and it was ordered that the bill be read a second time to-morrow.

Hon. Mr. McLeod submitted the Report of the Superintendent of Education, and the Report of the Provincial Auditor.

Hon. Mr. McLeod introduced a bill entitled "An act respecting the representation of the people in the Legislature,"—one of the revised statutes. The bill was read a first time and committed to a committee of the whole House—Mr. A. McLeod in the chair. Progress was reported, and the House adjourned.

WEDNESDAY, April 9.

House went into committee on the second reading of the bill respecting the Full Electric Company, Mr. H. C. Macdonald in the chair. After some time was spent in committee progress was reported.

Mr. John McLean introduced a bill to incorporate the Benevolent Irish Society of Souris. The bill was read a first time.

Mr. John McLean presented a bill entitled "An act respecting the profession of medicine and surgery."

The House then went into committee on the bill to incorporate "The Full Electric Company," and reported it agreed to without amendment.

The House then went into committee to take into further consideration the act respecting the representation of the people in the Legislature, Mr. A. McLeod in the chair. Progress was reported.

Hon. Mr. Ferguson submitted the Report of the Public Lands Department for 1889.

Hon. Mr. Bentley submitted the Report of the Public Works Department for 1889.

House adjourned.

THURSDAY, April 10.

The bill entitled "An Act respecting Medicine and Surgery," was read a second time; and the House went into committee upon it, Mr. Underhay in the chair. Progress was reported.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Mr. Peters presented a bill to incorporate Mark Wright & Company (Limited)

The House then went into committee (Mr. McLellan in the chair) for the purpose of further considering the Bill to amend the Domestic Animals Act. After some time the bill was reported agreed to without amendment.

The House then went into Committee of the Whole, Mr. Underhay in the chair, to further consider the Medical Bill. After some time progress was reported,—

Mr. J. R. McLean asked the Commissioner of Public Works to bring down all correspondence in connection with the opening of a new road at Nanfrage, also when it was the intention of the Government to complete said road.

Hon. Mr. Bentley said the correspondence asked for would be brought down. He could not say exactly when the road would be opened, but the work would be pushed forward with all possible despatch. Whatever delay there was in the opening was occasioned by the people of the neighborhood amongst whom there was a difference of opinion as to the location of the road.

House adjourned.

FRIDAY, April 11.

The Domestic Animals Act and the Full Electric Light bill passed a third reading and were sent up to the Legislative Council.

House in committee then resumed the consideration of the Medical Bill. The bill was reported agreed to with amendments.

During the evening session a bill for the incorporation of the Souris Driving Association was referred to the Private Bills Committee. The House then went into committee to further consider the bill respecting the representation of the people in the Legislature, Mr. A. McLeod in the chair. Progress was reported, and the House adjourned.

SATURDAY April 12.

Mr. H. C. McDonald asked the Commissioner of Public Works if it is the intention of the Government to place, this coming summer, in substantial repair the wharf at or near McAuley's Pinette, in fulfilment of the promise of the leader of the Government and Commissioner of Public Works, made in 1888; also if it is the intention of the Government to call for tenders this season for the purpose of repairing the wharf at Belle Creek, L