

THE HERALD

WEDNESDAY, MAY 24, 1899.

In our desire to furnish our readers with a report of the proceedings in the Legislature during the last week of the session, we have so crowded our columns that little room is left for other matter. We feel sure, however, that our readers are not more desirous just now of reading anything else than an account of the manner in which the Government here dealt with the people's business. In consequence of the very limited amount of space at our disposal, we are precluded from making as lengthy comments on the legislative enactments of the session as we would wish. However, these will keep for another week. We wish just to call the attention of our readers to two or three points. The Premier, in his budget speech, boasted that he would make revenue and expenditure meet. He sets about to do this by immediately adding \$43,000 to the debt of the Province; viz by passing two debenture bills, one for \$26,000, and another for \$17,000. In addition he passed a bill which he hoped to get \$14,500 additional from land tax. But it would be contrary to the traditions of the Grit party in this Province to come out without a deficit, and in all likelihood we shall have a shortage of about \$20,000. We shall therefore probably have, as a result of one year of Mr. Farquharson's economical administration, an addition to our Provincial debt of about \$65,000. That is to say: \$43,000 of a debenture debt; \$20,000 of a deficit, and anywhere between \$2,000 or \$3,000 of additional interest on the Provincial debt. Altogether an amount apart from the Hillsborough bridge, which means \$400,000 additional debt. Bridge and all brings the debt up to about \$1,000,000 in round numbers. In July 1891, in answer to a question of the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Peters, then Premier, brought down a statement to the effect that the whole indebtedness of the Province was \$54,000 in round numbers. The debt is now exclusive of the bridge, in the vicinity of \$600,000. Our readers will therefore have no difficulty in grasping the colossal proportions of our Provincial debt as assumed during eight years of Grit rule. The facility with which a Grit politician can swallow his ostensible principles was evidenced in Premier Farquharson's statement on the liquor question. Probably he more than any one else, prevented Peters and Warburton from passing a bill to tax the liquor dealers. He was wont to say that money obtained from licensing the sale of intoxicating liquor was "blood money," but the "blood" seems to have disappeared so soon as he saw a chance to raise a few thousand dollars from this source. The most ridiculous feature of the proceedings of the session was the introduction of the Senate resolution asking that the constitution of the Senate be changed. In other words, the Senate has thrown out bills that never should have been initiated in any British Legislature; but the Grits want all barriers to their hoodlum propensities thrown down. What monumental cheek.

SIR WILFRID LAURIER introduced the redistribution bill on Friday last. The bill proposes to be a most notorious gerrymander. It sets at naught the principles of representation by population, as it creates constituencies varying in population from 50,000 down to 12,000. The measure does not touch Nova Scotia. In New Brunswick it rearranges St. John giving one member for the city and one for the county outside of city. In P. E. Island the county lines are restored, Prince and Queen's each retaining two members running together, and King's returning one. In Quebec certain parishes are removed from one constituency for the alleged purpose of restoring municipal boundaries. West of Toronto it is that the bill gets in its work. Toronto, which contains one district electing two members, and two others which return one member each, will receive portions of the municipality now included in East York and West York, adding 30,000 to the population. Sir Charles Tupper protested against the adjustment of the constituencies at other times than after a census when the constitution provides such a readjustment. He charged that Sir Wilfrid Laurier was afraid to appeal to the constituencies to which he owed his present position. Notwithstanding the successes obtained by the Government in the bye-elections, through the co-operation of two governments in wholesale corruption, ministers were afraid to trust their future on a general election. The Ontario members are up in arms over the gerrymander, and all hopes of an early prorogation are at an end. The debate on this bill will probably occupy two or three weeks.

Sessional Notes.

The Legislative session of four weeks and four days was brought to a close on Friday afternoon last. The session was called at an unusually late date, and was unnecessarily prolonged in consequence of the tardiness of the Government in bringing in their measures. Much valuable time was frittered away because the Government were not ready to go on with the work of the session.

The greater part of Monday, the 15th, was given up to matters of a routine character. Several bills were advanced a stage, and a number of questions relating to the public works department were asked and answered. The bill incorporating the Prince Edward Island Dairy Association passed the committee stage and was reported for third reading. It provides for the incorporation of an association to consist of a board of seven provisional directors, one delegate for each butter or cheese factory, and any person paying a membership fee of one dollar per year. The association will have the power to levy an assessment on the factories in proportion to the milk obtained, the total assessment to amount to \$600. The association has power to appoint an instructor to visit the several factories, and to define his duties. The instructor shall report to the president of the respective factories and also the central authority the condition of the various factories, and make such suggestion as he may from time to time deem fit in order to render more perfect the output of the factories. On motion of D. A. McKinnon, that the bill respecting the practice of medicine and surgery be read a third time, an amendment was moved by Mr. McKinnon that the bill be recommitted for the insertion of an amendment to subsection d of section 10 providing for the striking out of the words "an academic," and exempting a teacher of the first-class from passing a matriculation examination. The amendment was adopted (D. A. McKinnon and Rogers voting against it), and the bill was set down for third reading on the following day.

In answer to Mr. Campbell on Tuesday, Hon. Mr. McNutt said that the Government did not exhibit the cattle on the Government Stock Farm at the Cattle show in St. John's, Halifax. One of the first things he (Mr. McNutt) did after being appointed on the Board of Commissioners was to have the cattle tested, and the veterinary surgeon was here to go on with the work. He called the Commissioners together and found a majority opposed to the test. One of the Commissioners who has a herd of pure bred cattle opposed such action so strongly that it had to be deferred. It was his intention, however, to have the work done as soon as a majority of the Commissioners were in favor of it. He thought all the herds should be tested. A gentleman had offered a price for one of the thorough breeders on the Stock Farm which he wanted for a herd. The man in charge thought the Commissioner would not refuse the offer, and the offer was taken to Halifax. Upon her return from Halifax he (Mr. McNutt) was called up by telephone and asked if he would accept the price offered for the beef. But he refused to sell at any price. Hon. Mr. McLean submitted the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Government of this Province have liberty to introduce a bill in this present session of the Legislature authorizing the issue of debentures in such form and manner as may be deemed proper for the construction of a bridge or annex to the Hospital for the Insane at Falconbridge, also for the construction of certain steel bridges and for the purchase and construction of other public works of a permanent nature, such debentures to run for a period of thirty years and to bear interest at a rate not to exceed three per cent. per annum, payable semi-annually, and the amount for which such debentures shall be issued shall not exceed in the whole the sum of twenty six thousand dollars; and also to make provision for a sinking fund to redeem such debentures by setting apart every year a sum equal to one and a half per cent. on the amount of debentures actually issued. The House went into committee on the resolution, which was reported agreed to, and a bill founded thereon was presented and read a first time. Hon. Mr. Farquharson moved the House into committee to consider an act amending an act authorizing the construction of a building to be used as a Prince of Wales College and Normal School. For the purpose of completing said building, and to equip, heat and light the same, the bill authorizes the Government to issue debentures for \$17,000 in addition to the \$18,000 previously authorized to be raised for that purpose, the debentures to bear interest at a rate not to exceed 4 per cent. per annum, and to run for a period of thirty years. Considerable discussion took place on this bill. Messrs. Campbell, Shaw and other members of the Opposition showed up the history of the whole transaction. They pointed out that the contract for the erection of the college was let privately for \$28,000, upon a plan almost identical with one in accordance with which a tender for \$28,000 had been received. This showed a clear loss to the Province of \$10,000. Last year debentures for the work, amounting to \$18,000, were issued, of which sum \$10,000 had been used as ordinary revenue. Now the Government was asking for another issue of debentures amounting to \$17,000. Adding the cost of heating, plumbing, etc., they had the admission of the Leader of the Government that the total expenditure on the new building would be \$35,000. The affair had every appearance of a job, and the Opposition would not endorse the transaction. The bill passed through committee, and on the motion to adopt the report of committee the House divided as follows: Ayes—Farquharson, McDonald, McKinnon, McLoughlin, McNutt, Rogers, Sinclair, Richards, D. A. McKinnon, A. Peters, Forbes—13. Nays—Gordon, Shaw, A. J. McDonald, J. A. McDonald, Arsenault, McKinnon, DesRoches, Campbell, Birch, Kichham—10.

On motion of the Attorney General the House went into committee on the act to amend the act 61st Victoria chapter 3. The amendment provides that an action for debt cannot be entered in the courts for goods sold by commercial men unless it is first shown that the traveller has procured the usual license to solicit or sell. But the bill as amended was not to apply to or affect any bona fide endorsement of a promissory note, bill of exchange, or other security given or taken in payment of the price of goods sold. The bill was reported agreed to in committee and set down for third reading the following day. Hon. Mr. Farquharson moved the House into committee on the act to impose certain taxes on certain incorporated companies and associations. The bill, he explained, provides for levying taxes as follows:

- 1. Upon all companies accepting risks and carrying on the business of insurance against fire in the province whose principal office or organization is within the province, the sum of fifty dollars each.
- 2. Upon all companies doing business within the province manufacturing or supplying gas or electricity for lighting buildings for any purpose, the sum of one hundred dollars each.
- 3. Upon all companies carrying on the business of common carriers for the transportation of freight and passengers by means of steamships, whose head office or organization is within the province, the sum of one hundred dollars each.
- 4. Upon all express companies doing business within the province whose principal office or organization is not within the province, the sum of one hundred dollars each.
- 5. Upon all companies carrying on the business of brewers or distillers within the province whether their office or organization is in this province or not, the sum of four hundred dollars each.

Mr. Campbell thought the clause taxing breweries was the chief objection. The wedge relative to obtaining a revenue out of liquor. It is a fact, he added, that if this clause is passed the brewery can take out a license for \$50 from the Dominion and carry on business in defiance of the government. He thought the government would not make much out of the brewery. Besides, if the brewery should be removed from the province the place would be short the amount paid for taxes, water and wages, which meant a good deal to the city, while the beer would be sent here as usual. He did not think it would be wrong to tax bicycle agents and foreign manufacturers selling machinery and such goods in this province. He thought it was unfair to tax a small company like the one owning the Electric the same as a wealthy corporation like the Navigation Company. Hon. Mr. Gordon believed that there should be some distinction made between large and small steamship companies. The taxes on electric companies and express companies was a matter for city members to take into their serious consideration. He did not think that much would be got out of the tax on breweries, as he had been told that if the tax were imposed the brewery would be removed to Halifax, from which place the beer would be shipped here. He understood the brewing companies were now paying \$100 in taxes for water and about \$60 a week for wages. Hon. Mr. Farquharson said he had a good reason to believe that the brewery would not be removed from the province. He heard that one of these class of agents boasted that he sold \$40,000 worth of beer on the Island last year. There are 28 or 30 agents coming here selling liquor or beer, and he proposed to get at them in Halifax. They recognized that another bill. They recognized that the tax on steamers was not as fair as it might be, but there was no shorter road out of the difficulty. They did not care to pass a law to pry into people's affairs in order to ascertain the extent of the business they were doing. The tax was small. Mr. Birch also objected to the tax on steamers, which he claimed was unfair and out of proportion. He thought the tax on express companies might lead to their withdrawal from the province, as they were not doing very much business here. He congratulated the Montague Electric Company upon escaping the tax of \$100 as it had been exempted for 20 years that the brewery tax capped the climax. The Government taxed the living and the dead, and were now going beyond the confines of the tomb to tax the spirits. Mr. A. J. McDonald thought the insurance companies would regulate their premiums to meet the taxes. He failed to see why electricity should be taxed while steam was exempt. This tax on electricity might be the means of stopping some extensive enterprise. He thought that it was improper to tax steamers subsidized by the government to take from them with one hand what has been given them with the other. This tax was also unfair, as the Steam Navigation Company was not asked to pay any more than the small companies in Prince of Edward County. The tax on express companies would in all probability mean closing them up here. He thought the tax on the brewery was unfortunate as it would mean its transfer to another province, whilst the product would come here as usual.

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criminating in such matters. With regard to the Navigation Company he knew they were not paying dividend. Mr. A. J. McDonald showed that they had made a discrimination in the matter of income tax. The clause passed, and the clause bearing upon the taxing of steamers came up for consideration. Mr. Shaw endorsed what had been said by Messrs Campbell and McDonald regarding the unfairness of the tax, and moved an amendment providing that the companies be taxed at the rate of \$100 on each steamer owned by them. Mr. D. A. McKinnon also thought it was unfair to tax small and large companies alike. He also disapproved of taxing steamers subsidized by the local Government, and moved an amendment providing that such steamers be exempt. Hon. Mr. McLean could not see why there should be a distinction between steamers subsidized by the local government and those subsidized by the Dominion. Hon. Mr. Farquharson failed to see why subsidized steamers should not pay a part of that subsidy back in taxes. Hon. Mr. Rogers expressed himself as approving of Mr. Shaw's amendment. When progress was reported this clause was still under consideration. The House then adjourned.

On Wednesday, Mr. Richards' bill respecting tuberculosis in cattle passed the committee stage and was reported for a third reading. The bill provides for the examination of cattle imported into the Province by a specially appointed for that purpose. The Attorney-General submitted a bill amending the Hillsborough Act, which was read a second time. The Attorney-General explained that the Minister of Railways, to whom the bill had been sent, objected to the clause providing that the amount to be paid by the Province should be the 'completion of the contract. To meet this objection the amending bill now introduced gives the Provincial Government authority to enter into an agreement on this point at any time. Mr. Shaw moved an amendment to this agreement be entered into provided work be commenced on said line before 1899 and be completed not later than 1901. The House divided on Mr. Shaw's amendment which was declared lost, and the bill as submitted by Mr. McDonald was carried. On motion of the Attorney-General the bill was referred to a committee on the bill imposing a direct tax on certain classes of traders. He explained that the bill provided for adding \$5 to the tax on commercial travellers, excepting liquor travellers upon whom the tax would be \$200. Provision is also made in this bill for imposing a tax of \$200 on liquor sellers in Charlottetown, and for the imposition of fines and penalties for violations of the law. This bill evoked considerable discussion. Hon. Mr. Gordon said he was not in sympathy with the idea of adding \$5 to the \$15 already paid by commercial travellers. These men spent a good deal of money here, and the increased tax might have the effect of keeping many of them away. This will lessen the revenue. It will mean a loss of much more than it is expected to raise. He had always been opposed to the tax of \$15, as he considered it arbitrary. This tax was discredited in other sections of the Dominion, and had brought the Province into disrepute. Mr. Shaw characterized the increase in the commercial traveller tax as small business. These men spent a good deal of money in our midst and in many ways were a benefit to the Province; consequently he should be encouraged to carry on business in defiance of the government. He thought the government would not make much out of the brewery. Besides, if the brewery should be removed from the province the place would be short the amount paid for taxes, water and wages, which meant a good deal to the city, while the beer would be sent here as usual. He did not think it would be wrong to tax bicycle agents and foreign manufacturers selling machinery and such goods in this province. He thought it was unfair to tax a small company like the one owning the Electric the same as a wealthy corporation like the Navigation Company. Hon. 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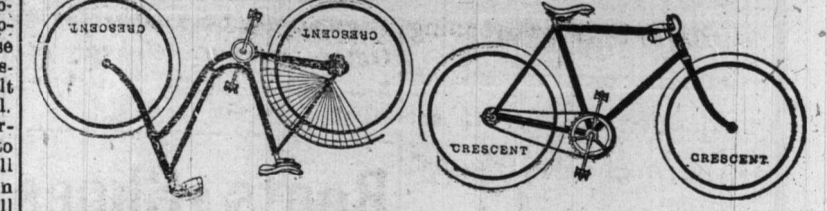
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to whom I let some viewed, a condemn attitude pointed on previously say I am been used no guaran proposed ordinary clause I vote, I introduced seconded out of order. Whereas insurrection forded to Insane bar before the And Wit vide the ne been borro And Wit tract with the constr Therefore ion of this the contral all the dam should be Government with the session the was compla closed on lock, and fixed at the vide the certifica medical in fine of \$100 to be me were struck The House During T bill, a I of marsh matters of During the Argubarsco of the bill tain incorp ocialion, motion as of McDonald, A. J. Peters, Reid, A. J. Macdonald, McKinnon, Campbell, Kichham, Forben, Pe don, Shaw, donald, A. J. bell, M. A. K. Farber, J. was then g the liberat close reind of beds of ring licen with other made a vig provided the as second oyster bed or leased i excepting licenses w The House as follows: McKinnon, Kichham, C. McDonald, Richards, Forbes, Pat The am Speaker loo man report In amend r-part of the DesRoches s cognized an amendment The Hou which was division as of the bill