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Collusion and Deception.

To any one who observes the trend of matters political, nothing can be more apparent than the collusion between the Government at Ottawa and the different Grit Provincial Administrations. The Dominion Parliament met on the 25th of March, nearly a month ago, and up to the present practically no public business has been done. In anticipation of changes in the tariff, in accordance with the pre-election declarations of the members of the Government and their supporters, the greatest uncertainty has existed in the business of the country. Indeed it might be said that this uncertainty has paralyzed certain lines of industry. But instead of removing this uncertainty and perverting the wheels of commerce to revolve without let or hindrance by announcing their tariff policy at the earliest moment, the Government have held back this all important declaration, and have allowed the time of Parliament to be uselessly frittered away. Why was such a condition of affairs permitted to exist? Because the Grit Government of Nova Scotia had thought proper to dissolve the Legislature one year before its termination in order to assist their friends in Nova Scotia, to keep back their tariff declaration. What cared they though the business of the country should go to ruin, if only by holding the whip over the electors of the sister province they would enable Premier Murray to obtain a snap verdict, and to entrench himself in power for five years more. No matter how false the pretence upon which he should make his appeal, all that the Federal Government cared was that he should delay the people in voting for him. This is but one instance, although a very glaring one, of how little the Federal Government cares for the good of the country or the success of business, so long as this interfere with their own selfish ends.

Let us now turn to our own Province. It is over three weeks since the Legislature met, and very little has been done. The estimates of the expenditure call for over \$300,000; but as the budget speech has not yet been delivered, we are in the dark as to how the Government propose raising this large amount of money. Has the budget been kept back in consequence of the Nova Scotia elections? Are the ways and means to be adopted in raising the revenue to be decided in accordance with the measure of success achieved by the Grits in the Nova Scotia elections? It would seem very much like it. Everything that the Government have brought before the Legislature from the speech at the opening, has been framed with a view to influence the coming general elections. The assessment act is amended, ostensibly to remove its objectionable features; but in reality to conceal those, and with a view to extract greater taxes from the farmers. A large expenditure is to be made for a new building to be used as a Prince of Wales College and Normal School. This is not because the need is crying; but so as to gain popularity in certain quarters. But above all the measures introduced or fostered by the Government, that to repeat the act by which they themselves disfranchised the Dominion officials, bears upon it the stamp of hypocrisy. Giving the indeed must be the duplicity concealed in this measure when the Government themselves had not the temerity to introduce it, but assigned the unenviable task to one of their supporters. The most hypocritical feature of the measure is introducing it under the pretence of anxiety for obtaining a representative plebiscite vote on the question of prohibition. Is there ever going to be an end of fooling certain people with the cry of prohibition or temperance, whenever a Grit Government wants to perpetrate some notorious political scheme? Every one knows the desire, the capacity indeed, of the Premier and several members of his Government to put down the liquor. Why did not the Government have the courage to stand up and tell the truth about the disfranchising of the Dominion officials; why did they have recourse to such a mean subterfuge to try and conceal their real motives? It is well known that they disfranchised the officials so that they could not vote against the Government, were they so disposed. Now a change of government has taken place at Ottawa, and changes have taken place among the officials, and the Provincial Government gives the officials back the franchise so as to get

Provincial Legislature.

BUSINESS was resumed in the Legislative Assembly on Monday afternoon the 12th. After routine the House resolved itself into a committee of the whole to further consider the resolution providing for the amendment of the Assessment Act. The debate that ensued was a spirited one and brought across a few passages at arms across the floor. Mr. Campbell took the ground that the burden of taxation did not fall evenly on the people, and that Charlotte town should be taxed on the same principle as other parts of the country. In this way we should have the influence and support of the city to keep down expenditure and taxation. The greater the proportion of the cost of the ferries, he considered, should be charged to Charlotte town. He pointed out the great disproportion that existed in many districts between the taxes paid in and the amount received back from the Government. In the fourth district of Prince County, for instance, the taxes collected amount to \$3,227.27, while only \$1,356.25 went for roads and bridges. Against the first district of Queen's paid taxes to the tune of \$3,064.71, and received for its wants only \$2,623.25. The second district of Queen's paid \$3,089.70 in taxes and received for roads and bridges \$1,538. But now he came to the district that was treated altogether differently. The third district of Queen's, represented by the Leader of the Government, paid \$2,598.77, and received \$2,682.00. Turning to King's County, he found that the first district in an assessment of \$4,468, while the enormous sum of \$4,468, was expended on public works. These instances would serve to show how unfairly the Government dispensed the public moneys.

Hon. Mr. Gordon pointed out that it was but a few years since the people were told by the Leader of the Government, that the day of taxation was far off. But the people, to their cost, have found out that the Leader of the Government did not mean what he said. Large sums had been wrong from them, and with increased expenditures now proposed, the indications are the people will be still further taxed. He did not see how the people could stand more taxation. He argued very strongly for a more equitable distribution of the burdens of the people and more care in the expenditure of public money.

Mr. Rogers, of Alberton, having spoken in favor of the proposed change in the assessment act, and at the same time having put in a plea of defence for his vote on the original act, brought down upon him the censure of Mr. Blanchard who pointed out that Mr. Rogers had said at a public meeting at Bloomfield he would not vote for the act less it provided for taxing the towns. The bill falling to make that provision, Mr. Rogers should in consistency, have voted against it. Mr. Shaw also poured out the vials of his wrath on the member for Alberton for his inconsistency. Mr. Rogers retorted, and for a brief space the debate was more vigorous than parliamentary. Mr. Shaw, continuing, showed that the Opposition, when they went to the people, had acted honestly. They told the electors that taxation would have to come, and that, so far as they were concerned they would make the tax bear as equitably as possible upon all classes. On the other hand the Government had proposed that there should be no tax; but everyone knew this promise had not been kept. Not only were they getting out of the Government more taxes imposed, but each succeeding year a huge deficit had been rolled up; till now our debt was in the vicinity of half a million. The war of words was quite warm; Mr. Campbell and Mr. Sinclair took a hand, and it seemed almost as though the hearer would be set on fire.

Mr. Bell claimed that inequalities existed under the present arrangement of collecting taxes, and that not only individuals, but whole settlements kept down the valuation of their lands. He further claimed that the plan outlined by the Government was powerless to reach the seat of the trouble. If he understood the temper of the people, he thought they were dissatisfied with the present system of taxation.

At the close of the debate Hon. Mr. Gordon, Leader of the Opposition, seconded by Mr. Shaw, moved the following amendment: Resolved that all after the

word "that" in the first line be struck out and the following substituted in lieu thereof:

Whereas, the people were led to believe by the present Government at the election of 1893 that the "day of taxation is far off," and that the affairs of this Province could be carried on for many years without resorting to direct taxation, and that no taxation would be imposed without first consulting the people thereon; and

Whereas, the present Government in 1894 in direct violation of their pre-election promise passed "The Assessment Act" which is unjust and unfair, and bears most unevenly on the various classes and interests in this province; and

Whereas, notwithstanding the large amount of taxes collected, the debt of the province has been bounding upwards at a most alarming rate and it is believed the government has lost the confidence of the country; Therefore resolved, That in the opinion of this House no further powers of taxation should be granted to the Government until the people obtain an opportunity of passing judgment on their conduct. A vote was taken, and the resolution was declared lost on the following division: Ayes—Gordon, Shaw, Jas. E. McDonald, Blanchard, Campbell, Nays—Peters, McMillan, Farquharson, Sinclair, Forbes, McLaughlin, H. C. McDonald, Aitken, B. Rogers, Frowse, Bell, Gallant, Godkin, McKinnon, Cumiskey, Rogers. Hon. Mr. Peters then introduced the following resolution: Resolved, that the Assessment Act, 1894, be amended so that all land taxable thereunder be taxed at the rate of one-fifth of one per cent on its value, such value to be arrived at by declaration made by the owner thereof, and that such section be introduced into the statute as will provide proper machinery to carry into effect such amendment. This resolution was carried on a straight party vote. The Speaker took the chair, and on the motion of receiving the report of the committee, Hon. Mr. Gordon moved an amendment to the resolution moved in committee, as above. This resolution was again declared lost on the same party vote as in committee. Hon. Mr. Peters introduced a bill, amending the Assessment Act, 1894. The bills authorizing the building of a Prince of Wales College, and encouraging the construction of cold storage in this Province were introduced and read a first time.

A lively debate was precipitated by Mr. McKinnon moving that the House resolve itself into committee on the whole on the following resolution: Resolved that in view of the Provincial qualifications for electors being adopted for Dominion elections, and in order to have an universal suffrage as possible on the Dominion Plebiscite vote on prohibition, it is expedient to repeal the Act passed in 56th year of Her Majesty's reign, chapter 2, intitled "an Act passed in the 53rd year of her present Majesty's reign, intitled "an Act respecting the election of members of the Legislature." Mr. Campbell pointed out that it was not very long since the act, the Government now proposed to repeal had been passed, and it was a satisfaction to know that there was some one willing to repeal the obnoxious bill, even if the ostensible motive were a contemptible one. The temperance question was made to do duty as a subterfuge for the repeal of the act. When the bill first came under the consideration of the Legislature, asking that the right of exercising their franchise be left with those officials, but Government paid no attention to it. But a change had come over the spirit of the Government's dream. Many of the officials disfranchised had been dismissed from office and those who remained would be terrorized by the Government to voting for them or getting out. If the Government were so anxious to lessen the drinking of liquor, why did they not bring in a bill to stop distributing liquor for the purpose of detaching the voters at election times? No doubt the Government felt the meanness of the position they occupied in the matter; for they had not the moral courage to bring in the resolution themselves; but had put up Mr. McKinnon to do it for them.

Hon. Mr. Gordon said he was pleased to know that a move had been made to remove the degradation that had been saddled on the people, by disfranchising a large number of them. It was nothing less than reducing the lot to the condition of slaves. But he had every reason to believe the removal of this disability was not undertaken so much for the benefit of those aggrieved as for the selfish ends of the Government. An election was coming on and they wanted to get all the votes they could. That the ple-

biscite was mentioned in connection with the repeal of the disfranchising act was mere blind. After some remarks from Premier Peters, Mr. Shaw said he was glad the resolution was brought up. But it would be the greatest absurdity to imagine that Mr. McKinnon had anything to do with initiating the matter. He was merely a man of straw put up by the Government. Mr. McKinnon, he said, did not possess sufficient ability to frame such a resolution, simple as it was. It had been said by the Government, when the bill was before the House, that the officials wanted to be disfranchised. The falsity of such an assertion was shown by the fact that a petition bearing over one hundred signatures of officials of both political parties had been presented to the Legislature asking that the franchise be not removed. No attention was paid to this. The officials were treated as mere nonentities; but now the Government pretend to manifest great concern about them. When the bill was before the House, Premier Peters said no connection should exist between Dominion and Provincial politics. But now every-thing in the Local Legislature was managed in accordance with instructions from the masters at Ottawa. In this connection, Mr. Shaw read an extract from Mr. Peters' speech, on the occasion of the passage of the disfranchising bill, which showed how differently he expressed himself then from his sentiments at the present time. The disfranchising of the officials was one of the meanest pieces of legislation since emancipation; and the ostensible motive for repealing the act was little less than contemptible.

Mr. Hector C. McDonald rose to defend the conduct of the Government. As an offset, he interjected matter of an extraneous nature, viz what had taken place under the Dominion election. In this connection, he undertook to read certain evidence taken in the recent King's County contested election trial, which he contended was against Mr. Shaw. This certainly seemed very much out of place, especially as the case is still sub judice. Mr. Hector C. may have considered himself the bravest Trojan of the Government sitting in the House; but it is safe to say that Mr. Shaw proved himself an Achilles, and after a few vigorous sallies turned the tide of battle, and was metaphorically dragging his antagonist at the tail of his cart. The discussion at this point was not perhaps in strict accordance with the letter of parliamentary usages; but it was highly amusing.

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Holy Week and Easter. The solemn offices of the Church, during Holy Week, commencing on Palm Sunday and terminating on Holy Saturday, vided pleasure to us, the suffering, the passion and death of our dear Lord, and represent His beloved spouse mourning over the dreadful tragedy of Calvary. The mournful story of the passion, as recorded by the Evangelists, the wall of the lamentations, and the suppliant accents of the miserere, all tend to awaken thoughts of sorrow and sadness. Tenebrae, signifying darkness, chanted on the evenings of Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, bring home to us, as nothing else can, the gloom that overshadowed the earth when the awful tragedy was consummated on Golgotha. It is true that on Holy Thursday the gloom of the sad and solemn scenes is broken in upon, and a note of joy is sounded in the peal of the organ and the wringing of the bells. But this only serves to bring home to us in the most striking manner possible, that the intense love of our dear Lord for us, and the magnitude of the love, the betrayal of Judas, all the sufferings, insults and indignities to which He was subjected. In a word, His love for us, con- quered everything else. This He manifested by instituting the loaf and the chalice of the Eucharist, on Good Friday the sense of sorrow and sadness is intensified. The story of the Passion read on this day is that of an eye-witness, the beloved disciple, St. John; the cross, instrument of redemption, conceived from the view shed by the organ and the wringing of the bells. But this only serves to bring home to us in the most striking manner possible, that the intense love of our dear Lord for us, and the magnitude of the love, the betrayal of Judas, all the sufferings, insults and indignities to which He was subjected. In a word, His love for us, con- quered everything else. 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