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G. KNOWLING.

The Daily Mail

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The publication of any letter does not signify that the Editor thereby shows his agreement with the opinions therein expressed.

ST. JOHN'S, NFD., JAN. 27, 1914.

OUR POINT OF VIEW.

CONCERNING SURPLUSES

In five years the Morris Government claim to have piled up surpluses of revenue over expenditure of upwards of Eight hundred thousand dollars. In 1909-10 they allege there was a surplus of Three hundred and ten thousand dollars; in 1910-11 One hundred and seventy-two thousand dollars; in 1911-12 Two hundred and twelve thousand dollars; and in 1912-13 One hundred and fifteen thousand dollars.

But during these five years the Government found it necessary to borrow \$1,200,000.00 to cover the huge outlays made through the various Departments of the Government and this extensive borrowing offset the so-called surplus of the five years, in fact left us with a deficit at the end of that time of close on half a million dollars.

Now, in 1909 a Loan Act was passed under the authority of which the Government raised a loan of \$430,000.00. It was in this year that they claim to have had a surplus of \$310,000.00. A very little consideration will show that that year they really got behind financially to the extent of \$120,000.00.

So also in 1911 when the surplus claimed was \$211,000.00 there was a Loan Act for \$520,000.00, sufficient to swallow up the so-called surplus of this year with the surplus of \$172,000.00 credited to the previous year, and still leave us over \$140,000.00 behind on the financial transactions of the two years.

Then the claim was also made that there was an excess of revenue over expenditure during 1912-13 to the extent of \$115,000.00. But in this year there was a Loan Act for \$250,000.00 so that again the expenditure exceeded the revenue and so-called surpluses by \$135,000.00.

By their foolish arrangement to pay the contractors in gold for railroad construction instead of in bonds the Government have caused us an absolute loss of ten per cent. on the total amounts raised as loans for railroad construction purposes. That is, on

the total borrowings of \$6,000,000.00 we have lost \$600,000.00.

Adding this \$600,000.00 to the \$450,000.00 by which the borrowings for public works exceeded the so-called surpluses, we discover that the country's finances during the first five years of the administration of the Morris Government ran behind to the extent of upwards of \$1,000,000.00.

Exception may be taken to the way in which we treat the \$600,000.00 lost through the marketing of our bonds, but after all this amount was merely so much money spent—giving a half-decent present to the contractors.

FINANCIAL MAGIC.

A wizard of finance writes editorials for The Daily News. He should replace Minister Cashin at this juncture, and could be relied on to increase revenue without extra taxation.

In Saturday's number, for instance, he demonstrated as a fact what to ordinary mortals would appear to be nonsense, namely, that by paying an extra \$37.33 per mile per year to the railway contractors, the revenue has gained \$416.66 per mile, as the result of the branch railway contracts, and this is termed high finance, and creditable to the Morris Government. The argument (?) is as full of holes as a sponge.

On its face, the loss of \$37.33 per mile is a yearly loss forever, and the gain \$416.66 is once only. In eleven years, the gain (?) would all be wasted, and the loss would continue.

The alleged gain, is made by estimating that increased wages are paid by the contractors under the new contract, and that one half of the increase is spent for dutiable goods. But increased wages would have been just as necessary if the contractor had been paid in bonds instead of cash. Furthermore, the railway laborers would have earned just as much and the revenue have benefited as much, if they had worked in other avocations than railway building.

The argument (?) by The News amounts to this,—the more it costs to build the railway, the better for the country. In other words, at the present juncture, when increased revenue is needed, do not increase taxation, but give the Reids another branch railway contract, increase their pay per mile, increase the wages payable to the laborers, and presto! an increase of revenue will result. Hurrah for the new policy—growing rich on borrowed money, showered on contractors, (and partially recovered!)

A LITTLE ARITHMETIC

Various claims of excellence have been made by the Morris party on account of their branch railroad construction policy. But none of them will bear the light of a careful examination.

For instance in introducing the bill to authorize this work Sir Edward Morris referred boastfully to the fact that the construction work was to cost the Colony \$15,000.00 per mile instead of \$15,500.00 as paid to the contractor by previous governments. He, of course, drew the inference that we were to save \$500.00 per mile or a total of \$125,000.00 on the two hundred and fifty miles which he estimated would be the total length of the branches undertaken.

As usual to his handling of public affairs, Sir Edward made a mistake in his estimate of the total length of the new lines which will aggregate a great deal in excess of three hundred miles, so we will give the Government the credit for a saving in this regard of \$150,000.00.

As a further argument in favor of this wonderful creation of his statesmanlike brain Sir Edward points with pride to the fact that the mail subsidy to be paid by the Government for carrying mails over the new branches was to be \$69.50 per mile which charge by the contractor represented a saving of one-third as compared with charges for carrying mail-matter on the main line and on the old branches.

Figure this out and you will find that the saving per annum under this arrangement comes to less than \$10,000.

Now the calculation as given above represent the Government side of the shield.

But what about the reverse side? It is necessary to state but one fact and that sweeps away all the claims made by the Government that their branch railroad policy was to bring innumerable financial advantages and profits to this country. That is, through the very bad bargain made with the contractor we were forced to unload on the money market so many bonds at a time when conditions were particularly unpromising, that as a result we sustained an absolute loss of \$600,000.00.

Away then goes, at one fell swoop, the Government's claim of having saved the Colony \$150,000.00 on construction expenses, and we are left \$450,000.00 to the bad.

And as for that estimated saving

of \$10,000.00 per year on mail subsidies that vanishes also for forty-five years, at the end of which time, doubtless, other arrangements will be made for the operation of our various railroads.

WASTREL EXPENDITURE

Adherents of the Morris Party profess to be very proud of the fact that the present Government have made extra expenditures during the last five years through the Department of Public Works of \$360,000.00, and through the Department of Marine and Fisheries of \$230,000.00. They also claim that the Government has made large expenditures of money over and above the regular grants through various other Departments since assuming office in 1909.

What they state regarding extra expenditure is an absolute fact, but there is nothing in this huge outlay of public moneys for any party to be proud of.

Any wastrel can spend sums out of all proportion to his income, providing he is thoughtless enough to borrow the necessary cash and can find anybody foolish enough to advance him the sums required.

And the present Government are in exactly the same position as the thoughtless wastrel. They have spent all the public revenue without thought without care, without any attempt at ordinary economy. Then they have borrowed right and left and have expended the huge sums obtained in his way in as careless a manner as they have frittered away ordinary public revenue.

For all these extra grants for Public Works and Marine Works have been made out of loans that have been raised year by year since 1909, and not out of current account.

The public revenue which should prove quite sufficient to meet all the ordinary expenditure incidental to the administration of our public affairs has proved quite inadequate as expended by the Morris Government and in five years they raised through loans almost one and a quarter million dollars to carry on the business of governing this country.

Now in addition to this amount the present Government have also borrowed Six Million dollars to pay for railroad construction. They have therefore increased our public debt to the extent of seven and a quarter million dollars.

Now if they had provided all these Marine Works and Public Works out of current account, that is, from the ordinary revenue of the Colony, we should then have to give them credit for careful, economical and business-like administration of our affairs. But seeing that they have done this extra work through extra money, and have therefore plunged us more deeply than ever into debt, we fail to see where any credit whatever is due the Morris party on this account.

In fact, considering that we have a find interest on these borrowings every year to the tune of about a quarter of a million dollars, we feel sure that all thoughtful people will join with us in commiserating the fact that the administration of our affairs is in the hands of men who have shown themselves absolutely devoid of that care and foresight which are the distinguishing characteristics of the statesman as compared with the vote-seeking politician.

OBSERVATIONS.

Many of us suspect that the professed enthusiasm of members of the Morris Party for the policy of the Government is merely so much gush.

Judging by their actions in the House, there are some members of the Government who believe that energetic use of hands and tongue compensates for lack of brain.

The Board of Trade having started an exhibition of relics and antiques by placing some portions of old water mains in the window on Water Street, objection has been raised in the Municipal Council. The Councillors evidently believe that the proper place for such article is underground.

Yes, it is quite true, as stated by Mr. Moore, that there are a number of Morris members who have not been bought, "body and soul." Judging from their conduct, we are led to conclude that some of them had very little of the latter commodity to market. As for instance—oh, well, try a guess or two.

The Colonial Secretary, says the Morris evening organ, declared in the House that "the policy of the Government as to railway construction and otherwise has been amply justified." The "otherwise," being interpreted, probably means when in doubt err on the side of the contractor.

The trouble is, though, that few of our people will regard the premier's error of \$4,000,000 in estimating the cost of the branch railroads as "justifiable."

TO THE EDITOR.

RESENT HIS ACTION.

(Editor The Daily Mail.)

Dear Sir,—British Harbor Local Council bitterly resents the action of Sir Robert Bond in his resignation as Leader of the Liberal-Union Party, also his remarks made in his letter in reference to President Coaker and the F.P.U.

Such actions will strengthen the Union in spite of its enemies.

NOAH J. GARDNER,
Chairman Local Council.
British Hr., Jan. 16, '14.

THE AGRICULTURAL POLICY

(Editor Daily Mail)

Dear Sir,—Please allow me space in your paper for a few remarks concerning the agricultural policy of the present Government. I would like to know what became of all the pigs that were sent to Clarke's Beach, for there is not one to-day to be found. Where are all the sheep? Where is the bull? Where did all the lime go? You can look around and see it on the fences.

In the spring there are a few sacks of potatoes sent around. Who gets them? Why, a few heeleders. The people go to those agriculture heeleders with their pocket handkerchiefs and get five or six potatoes.

We don't want any more poor relief of this sort here. Let the Government provide a way for people to sell their own raising, so that they will not have to shovel them out of their cellars every spring.

And let the Government give us the money wasted in this way to fix up our roads.

—COR.
Clarke's Beach, Jan. 25, 1914.

AS OTHERS SEE IT.

MODERN SURGERY

(Montreal Star)

We take as lightly as a pin-scratch nowadays capital operations that before his day meant certain death. We bear no longer the same burden of terrible anxiety for those who go under the surgeon's knife. The instrument of certain torture and uncertain cure has become the speedy herald of hope and health where hope and health were dead.

TELEPATHY NOT NEW

London "Chronicle"—"Telepathy" is an instance of a new-fangled word for an old thing. (Bacon called it "sympathy" between two distant minds.) Izaak Walton similarly explained Dr. Donne's vision in Paris of his wife and dead child, observing that "if two lutes are strung to an exact harmony, and one is struck the other sounds." Scottish highlanders, who would have been puzzled by the word "telepathy," have long been familiar with the idea for which it stands. Andrew Lang quoted the case of a poor highland woman who wrote to her son in Glasgow: "Don't be thinking too much of us, or I shall be seeing you some evening in the bye."

A man one had a curious telepathic experience. He was dressing in his bedroom one morning when he suddenly saw the face of a Scotch servant girl, contorted with agony, in the looking glass before him. He went downstairs in the kitchen and found the girl writhing in a fit upon the floor, her face exactly as he had seen it in the mirror.

THE REQUEST

Pray close the door upon the past, Old Father Time, and lock it fast! I would go on without a thought Of years with only sorrow fraught; Alone I'll tread my future way— Pray let no bitter memory stray 'Beyond the portal! Thus I'll go Unhampered by no old-time foe!

Stay, Father Time, your willing hand, Nor grant my foolish, rash command! As forth through life my lone steps trend What shall I do without the friend Of bygone days? Where my delight Of memory of moments bright Are kept forever from my mind, And all past joys are left behind?

Nay, do not close the gate, Old Man, But fling it wider, if you can, Let friends and foes my steps pursue; The bad, the false, the good, the true. Let thoughts of saddest hours remain.

And old-time pleasure thrill again, Take not from me the sad old year, But merely add the New Year's cheer.

—Laura Sheldon.

C. L. B.

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