

service—that is, of convincing him of an error of which he has availed himself, without regard to justice or reason, to criticize the policy of his predecessors.

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES, JUNE 30, 1887.

The statement of the assets and liabilities of the province at the close of the last financial year differs little as to the amounts from that which the hon. Treasurer presented over a year ago. The provincial debt is brought to the figure of \$22,188,700, but contrarily to what is practised everywhere else, the railway subsidies voted, but not due, are not counted. The assets are calculated at \$10,859,059, leaving a net debt of \$11,329,640. The hon. Treasurer afterwards went into long details on the floating debt so as to convince the house, if possible, that the famous loan of \$3,500,000 was absolutely necessary, still with the design of casting the responsibility for it on his predecessors. He has told us that, on the 30th June, 1887, he had to meet a floating debt of \$3,861,466. But why does he not acknowledge, what we all know, that a million and a half of that sum was composed of bonds which were not to fall due for a long time, and some of which will never fall due at all. He calculates the realizable assets on the 30th of June, 1887, at the modest sum of \$300,000. And still the statement of receipts for the nine months ending on the 21st of March last proves that, at that date, the hon. Treasurer had easily collected the sum of \$782,000, on account of our assets of June 30 preceding. Evidently the realizable assets bequeathed by the former Government rose to more than the \$300,000 of the hon. Treasurer's estimate.

THE LOAN.

Let us now pass on to the examination of the question of the famous loan. After the strange events that marked the negotiation for the loan of \$3,500,000 it was only to be expected that the hon. Treasurer would do all in his power to put a favorable color on the affair. He accordingly devoted a third of his speech to it. It is my duty to say that, notwithstanding that long and elaborate production, he has not succeeded in proving the absolute necessity for the loan, nor in justifying his Cabinet for the manner in which the negotiations were conducted—the result of which was the creation of a consolidated debt of \$3,500,000.

It is important to recall the exact position taken by the two parties in this house last

year on the subject of the ministerial project of contracting a new permanent loan.

The Government, on their part, in order to convince the house that it was right to authorize a loan of \$3,500,000, said that almost immediately obligations to the extent of nearly \$4,000,000 had to be met and that there were no financial resources to sustain the provincial credit.

On our side, we combated that loan policy, replying that the ministry greatly exaggerated the amount of its pressing obligations; that before contracting a new loan, the Cabinet ought to collect with energy what was due to the province, and that by so doing they could avoid, if not wholly, at least in great part, the permanent addition of \$3,500,000 to our consolidated debt.

Whoever will judge impartially the events that have taken place since last year, must admit that they fully justify the position that we then took. The Legislature was hardly prorogued last year when the Privy Council rendered judgment in favor of the province in the question of the commercial corporations tax. On the 30th of March last, the Government had already collected from those arrearages the sum of \$557,665. With the \$100,000 received from Ontario and the \$125,000 in the settlement of the account with the city of Montreal, we find a total of \$782,665. It is certain, therefore, that the Government could make the assets meet much more than they have made them yield to meet the extraordinary obligations that fell due.

In the second place, events have proved that the provisions of the hon. Treasurer as to the amounts he would have to pay, and for which he asked authorization to borrow \$3,500,000 were greatly exaggerated. I will, I hope, be allowed to remark that my own have been realized. On the 12th of May, 1887, I said :

"The hon. Treasurer has told us that from now till the 30th of June, it was imperatively required to meet obligations amounting to \$1,900,000. This forecast was very exaggerated. I calculate as follows what the Government will have to pay from now to the end of the current financial year :

Railway subsidies.....	350,000
Court House and Parliament Building, Quebec.....	250,000
Northern Railway and Exchange Bank.....	37,000
Deficit of 1886-87 at the most.....	200,000
Total.....	\$837,000