

real and this Province of Quebec to accept the consequences by your votes on the 8th. March next, and decide whether the administration of the affairs of the province are to be continued by the party who have so mal-administered them during the past four and a half years.

## I.

## THE HISTORY AND RESULT OF MR. SHEHYN'S CASH OPERATIONS.

I ask your patience to follow me closely in order that you may realize how dexterous my predecessor was, and with what subtlety and ability he hid from the public and the members of the Legislature what our true position was.

On the 12th April, 1887, the Hon. Mr. Shehyn made his first Budget speech in the Legislative Assembly. I listened to it with interest.

He commenced at the outset by assuring the House and the country he was going to deal with the finances "as a business man." He was held out to the country as such and we will soon see how far he has earned that reputation.

At the time, his speech gave, though at some length, a careful expose of the finances of the province, and of our assets and liabilities. He was quite severe on his predecessors, Hon. J. G. Robertson and prior administration, and used the strongest of language, making accusations, if not direct statements, of reckless, dishonest and wilful extravagance.

In that speech, Hon. Mr. Shehyn was full of promise and predictions of careful administration and honest and economical Government. I rather admired the speech, but, after he has had four years of trial, I find not only has every promise been violated but we have as a result, reckless and corrupt administration, our liabilities enormously increased, the burden of taxation raised, and yet our revenue totally inadequate to meet the present expenses.

The best proof of this is of itself evident when we consider that in the scarce five years of rule, Mr. Shehyn has made one permanent loan of \$3,500,000, and a year ago obtained authority for a further loan of \$10,000,000, of which \$4,000,000 has been obtained and spent.

The net debt of this Province has been increased from \$11,389,167.11 on the 17th January, 1887, to the sum of \$24,423,683.62 on the 17th December, 1891. The annual ordinary expenses, according to Mr. Shehyn's own classification, have been increased from \$3,032,771.45 (Public Accounts, 1886, p. 11) in 1886, to \$4,095,520.45 in 1891, and the special expenditure, exclusive of railway subsidies, has run up from \$177,000.00 in 1886, to \$820,510.14 in 1891.

Mr. Robertson did not call this expenditure in 1886 "Special,"