THE HERALD

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JAMES McISAAC,
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Debt, Deficits and Deception.

EVER since the Grits attained to power in this Province, in 1891, they have had recourse to one subterfuge after another to deceive the electors. But surely we have now nearly come to an end of this deception; surely the great majority of the people have opened their eyes sufficiently to perceive that they have been most scandalously imposed upon. In 1893 Mr. Peters told the electors that the day of taxation was far off. But he had scarcely secured himself in office by a large majority, than he proceeded to tax almost everything upon which he could lay his hands. For four years he collected large amounts by means of these different tax acts; but at the same time he annually came out with an enormous deficit. In consequence of this recklessness in expenditure he sank the Province several hundred thousand dollars in debt. The people could not help seeing this, and Mr. Peters was well aware that they were getting tired of this accumulation of public debt. Consequently, when the time came to again appeal to the electorate, in 1897, he knew he must try another scheme in order to secure a renewal of public confidence. He accordingly prepared a nice story about a sum of money, a million and more, that he was sure to receive from Ottawa, if only the people would again return him to power. The electors were told, in the most plausible manner, that this great sum of money would pay off all our debt and place our finances in a good condition for all time to come. But the threat was held over them that if they defeated the Liberal Government they need not expect a dollar of this money. This story supplemented by the most unscrupulous boodling secured a renewal of power to the Government. It was but a very short time till the people discovered how much sincerity there was in this plausible story about the millions from Ottawa. They found out how grossly they had been deceived when Mr. Peters resigned the Premiership and betook himself to British Columbia. His successor in the Premiership sent a delegation to Ottawa, and we were once more told that our claims there were in a fair way of being adjusted; but the only claim he seems to have had any anxiety about adjusting was his own personal claim, which he succeeded in having adjusted by taking a seat upon the bench. Mr. Farquharson succeeded to the Premiership, and we were told that now we had a business Government; economy was to be the watchword, and our finances were to be at once placed on a sound basis. What do we see? More consummate recklessness, larger deficits and greater additions than ever to the public debt. It would appear as if the Government, knowing that nemesis is sure to overtake them, have given loose rein to their recklessness, on the ground, as the saying is, that "it is as well to be hung for a sheep as for a lamb." They have apparently come to the conclusion that if they cannot all be safely shelved in offices of emolument, they will at least make to themselves "friends of the mammon of iniquity." According to the Government auditor's report and a statement tabled in the Legislature, in answer to the request of the Leader of the Opposition, the debt of the Province on the 27th of April was as follows:

Balance against the Province Dec. 31, 1898	$117,146.71
Less half-yearly subsidy received Jan. 1, 1899	91,000.00
	26,146.71
April 27, 1899—	
Due Bank of N. S.	42,775.49
Due Mer. Bank of Halifax	10,894.78
Due Mer. Bank of P. E. I.	317,64
Due Credit Foncier	30,000.00
Debenture Account	189,936.06
P. W. College—bal. Debentures	20,000.00
Provincial Loans	170,174.79
Add unearned ½ of half-yearly subsidy	30,000.00
	$520,245.47

Right on the heels of this statement, the Premier introduces a debenture bill that increases the Provincial debt by $26,000, and the end is not yet. In the face of all this the Leader of the Government has the coolness to proclaim in the Legislature that revenue and expenditure will meet. How much longer are the people to be deceived by this gross imposition?

HIS Honor the Lieut.-Governor and Mrs. Howlan entertained the officers of the Caledonian Club and several other friends, ladies and gentlemen, at Government House on Thursday evening last. The early part of the evening was devoted to vocal and instrumental music, recitations, social converse and games. Then all sat down to a sumptuous banquet, at the close of which toasts were enthusiastically drunk. After the banquet some time was spent in social amusement, the "pibroch" in charge of Mr. Peter Ferguson, contributing its share to the delight of the fleeting hours. Finally all joined in lustily singing "Auld Lang Syne." Cheers were then given for his Honor and his amiable lady. The hospitality extended was of that princely nature that has characterized the entertainments at Government House during the incumbency of its present occupants. All present were unstinted in their praise of the Lieut. Governor and Mrs. Howlan and they will long remember with pleasure the splendid entertainment in which it was their privilege to participate on this occasion.

You know what that tired feeling is and you may know what will cure it by giving Hood's Sarsaparilla a fair trial.

Sessional Notes.

In our last issue, we referred to the budget speech delivered in the Legislature, by Premier Farquharson, on the 8th. inst. The Premier, with a considerable flourish of trumpets, made the statement that revenue and expenditure would meet this year. Well, any government could make the revenue and expenditure of a year meet, if they would take to themselves Legislative authority to issue debentures in order to raise money to effect such a "meeting;" but surely such a proceeding cannot be regarded as beneficial to the Province. You could close up any gap, no matter how wide, between expenditure and income by supplementing actual revenue with money borrowed on debentures. But by such means you are only putting the evil day a little further into the future; you are only increasing the huge burden of debt under which the Province already groans, and adding to the interest on this debt. By going on in this way the interest on the Provincial debt will soon absorb the total amount received from land tax. It does not require any very accute intelligence to comprehend that this way of conducting the business of the Province must end in reducing our Province to bankruptcy. This is exactly the course the present Local Government are pursuing. Following is the statement of estimated revenue submitted by Premies Farquharson:

Dominion subsidy	$181,952
Public Lands	12,000
Tax on certain classes of traders	14,500
Incorporated companies	5,275
Ferries	4.500
Prothonatories Office	2,000
Registry offices	4,700
County Courts	1,150
Prov. Secretary's Office (fees)	740
Peddler's licenses	720
Hospital for the Insane	1,200
Fines and penalties	450
Casual revenue	250
Private bills	80
Succession duty	1,000
Land trx	30,500
Income tax	6,000
Refund (Mt. Stewart wharf)	3,500
Debentures permanent public works	26,000

As already announced in our last week's report, the Leader of the opposition pointed out that, in consequence of the ruinous policy pursued by the Government, our young men were discouraged and were leaving the Province in great numbers and the old people were left to bear the burden of debt, which was annually increasing. He showed that, according to the public accounts, the debt of the Province was now $536,858,37. This sum, he thought, was sufficiently large to alarm the most hopeful, $20,000 would be required to pay the annual interest on this debt. This sum, if spent for agriculture, would be of great benefit to our farmers.

On Tuesday, the debate on the budget was continued by Mr, Prowse. His speech was a paean of praise of the Premier and the Local and Dominion Governments. He expressed his satisfaction at the idea that the day of deficits was about over. By what process of reasoning he arrived at that conclusion he did not inform the House. He was followed by Mr Birch, who spoke at considerable length in condemnation of the policy of the Government. He pointed out that, last year, the Leader of the Government had told the House that the era of deficits had gone by and a new and better departure was inaugurated. But the ends had not yet met and now in 1899 we are told the same story. We are told the young men will not stay at home, and that some of them go to the Yukon. In 1896, we were told the exodus would cease; but it is now greater than ever. This would go to show that the country was not as prosperous as our Grit friends would have us believe. He did not think the Minister of Agriculture deserved any special thanks for sending Professors Robertson and Macoun to this Province. These men were servants of the people and in coming here were only discharging the duties of their office. The offices which they filled were created by the Conservatives years ago. He thought it would be better policy for the Dominion Government to offer some encouragement to the young men of the Provinces than to bring Doukbobors into Canada at a cost of from $150 to $200 each. Regarding our educational system, we trusted it would be carried out more effectively and that the $129,000 to be expended would be well spent. He hoped the education office would be raised above party politics. He read a statement in the House last year to the effect that 33 students had received licenses to which they are not entitled. One young man, who had twice failed to matriculate had received a letter from the education office telling him to enter the College. Comparing the deficits of the eight years of Liberal administration in this Province with the last ten years of Conservative rule he showed the result to be $16,647,49, in favor of the Conservatives, notwithstanding that the Liberals collected $235,292,77, on an average of $47,058.55 in taxes, while the Conservatives had not collected taxes for more than one year of that period. He next took to the question of roads and bridges, and showed how the present Government made these services contribute to their boodling propensities,

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Mr. Wise followed. His speech was in no way complimentary to the Government He condemned the course pursued by the Dominion Government this season in voting only $5,000 for steamer service between here and the old country, and for limiting the trips to four. We were not to have any steamer call here before July. That was too long to wait.

Mr. John A. McDonald followed. The different items of expenditure were reviewed and criticised by him. He pointed out that last year the amount estimated for the administration of justice was $15 825, the sum actually spent was $17 022. This year the estimated expenditure is $15,829. What assurance is there that the expenditure will be less. He thought it would be better to estimate as near the exact amount as possible. The estimate for bridges is $20,000. He was sorry it was not larger as the bridges are in a bad condition. He was also sorry that his district was meeting with such poor encouragement in the matter of the bridge at Grand River. This bridge was very much needed. The road machines were very good in their way in certain places, but on three quarter roads they were of no service whatever. In Lot 18 and part of Lot 14 they had done fairly good work. It is complained that the Conservatives withdrew $200,000 from capital. But the Legislative Council of that day, which was largely Liberal, was a party to the transaction. They might have thrown out the bill if they so desired. He found upon looking over the estimates of last year that in almost every instance they had been exceeded. To the $18,900 for interest there would be added $12,000 yearly, and the $30,900 would eat up all the land tax. It is high time that something were done. He could not see why members of the Executive Council who travel on passes should be allowed mileage. He failed to understand how the expenditure on education could be lessened. He hoped a new school district would be opened at Cape Egmont. He did not think any one would complain of a reasonable expenditure in connection with the asylum. He hoped that the dispute with Mr. Lowe would be settled in some way or other and that work on the annex would be proceeded with. He condemned the Federal Government for their action regarding the plebiscite, and expressed himself as favorable to a license law for Charlottetown. If the government wish to humbug the people and the Temperance Alliance wish to be humbugged it is all right. But it is all wrong to take $250,000 of the peoples' money to humbug them.

On Tuesday afternoon, Mr. DesRoches took up the debate. He said it was well the people were intelligent so that they could pass judgment upon the acts of the Government. By the legislation of the last few years the Liberals have done more to drive the people away from home than anything that could possibly be done by their opponents. First they disfranchised the young men, and then seeing the effect of their work they repealed it. They compelled people to vote as they dictated in order that they might retain power. He failed to see where the present government had done anything except to waste the public money. By the Pubic Accounts it will be seen that Prince County pays her proportion of the taxes, yet nearly all the revenue is spent in Queen's County. The representatives in the Government from Prince County do not see that that County gets a fair share of the disbursements. On roads Prince County is away down, and the same is true of ferries. Prince County does not get fair treatment. The wharves there are going to destruction. In 1897 there was an election in that county and there was a political job given on Grand River Bridge. Some $1300 was spent when half the money ought to be sufficient. The most particular part of the bridge was neglected, and at the first storm it was swept away. This fall another contract was given which necessitated an expenditure of $1,480 owing to the former waste of money. The money in the first instance was not spent as it should have been. He protested strongly against such a system. It is no wonder we have deficits. If this policy is continued we shall soon have neither money nor credit. A wharf was built on the same river some four or five years ago, but it was not put in the right place and was never used; consequently it fell into decay. This is another way the public money is wasted. Another wharf there is allowed to decay for want of repair. It is high time the Government should know these facts and apply the remedy.

Mr. M. McKinnon followed and severely scored the Government. He pointed out that the Legislature had met too late and no time was given to properly discuss the public questions that came up for consideration. He then took up the question of Provincial finances. He showed that, according to the public accounts, the debt is $496-000. Much might be added to this, such as the amount due teachers, and the balance is carried over from last year. But he did not desire to swell the debt. He believed it would be about half a million. This is not very great as compared with the debt of the other provinces; but we must remember that they have large natural resources, while we have not. Compared with a few years ago, our state is truly alarming. In 1890 our debt was $128,429.21; today it is $446,938.27; in 1890 we owed $1.17 per capita, today we owe $4.25; in 1890 our debt per family was $5.85; today it is $21.25; in 1890 we paid $2,967.44 interest; today we pay $18,558 80. Out of every $100 revenue collected in 1890 we paid $1.20 interest, out of every $100 collected today we pay $7.12. It is only a matter of time before all our revenue goes to pay the debt. The Leader says he will make our children's children pay the balance.

Mr. Arsenault was the next speaker. He pointed out that the public expenditures on the roads were not properly made by the supervisors. The mill road near Wellington was in a bad state. The supervisor recommended the spending of $8, and $8 was spent. But the work could have been done for 50 cents. He did not find fault with the supervisor, who had been induced not to spend the money where it was most needed. In Egmont Bay $12 was asked for a road and $8 was spent for opening drains. In the fall the road was almost impassable in several places. Yet there is no mention of these bad places having been repaired. The people probably repaired them at their own expense. On the Wellington road the work was done by road machines. But it was spoiled by the first rain. If the work had been let by public sale and performed by hand the road would have been in better shape and the $20 would have been well expended. Mr. Arsenault instanced several other roads in his district that were not what they should be, and held that the money voted was not judiciously expended. The government are placing themselves in a very bad light with the people and should try to effect a remedy.

Mr. Shaw commenced speaking on Tuesday afternoon. He had the floor when the House adjourned at six o'clock, and resumed the debate on Wednesday. Needless to say he gave the Government a severe castigation on the manner they were carrying on the public business and running the Province into debt. He severely criticised the Premier's budget speech. During his speech the Government winced under his denunciations, and there were a few lively scenes when Government members attemp'ed to interfere. Taking up the financial phases of the situation he made a sorry exposure of the methods now in vogue. He pointed out that from 1880 the Conservatives paid $37,183 in interest, or an average of $3,380 a year. Notwithstanding the large amount the Liberals raised in taxes, they paid for interest $94,000, an average of $13,527 a year, or $10,000 more than the Conservatives. Last year they paid $18,000 for interest, and the estimate for the year is $18,900. The interest barometer indicates the extent of the debt. The people were, year after year, assured that revenue and expenditure would be made to meet; but as regularly as the years rolled by the deficit was forthcoming. They intend to issue debentures for $26,000 for the asylum, and $25,000 for the Prince of Wales College. These debentures would be an additional charge on the revenue of this province. The leader tells us that he expects to receive $14,500 from a tax on certain classes of traders From what class is it expected to obtain this amount? Is it the farmers? Is it the intention to raise this amount from the liquor sellers? Is it possible that the Leader who has for years been holding up his hands in holy horror at the liquor trade, and shouting prohibition throughout the length and breadth of the province, is to do this thing? Is it he who is to turn the wheels of temperance back fifty years, and clothe the liquor business with the mantle of respectability? The debt of the province is $536,000. Add to this $25,000 debentures for the annex, and $25,000 for the Prince of Wales College, and it will be seen that the debt is upwards of $600,000. They have already passed a bill expending $400,000 for a bridge across the Hillsborough. This will bring the debt up to $1,000,000. The farmers, upon whose shoulders this burden will fall, find it hard enough to get along now; but when they are compelled to pay interest amounting to $30,000 per year while the country is going back at the rate of $45,000 a year, it becomes a serious matter. On the 27th of April the Government owed the banks $53,000. Of this amount there was owing to the bank of Nova Scotia $42,000, to the Merchants Bank of Halifax $10,894 78, and to the Merchants Bank of P. E. Island $317.64. This is in addition to the statement in the Public Accounts, and the money has been drawn since the 1st of January. The Leader borrowed $30,000 from the Credit Foncier, a foreign institution, at the rate of 4½ per cent. If the Government can float debentures at 3 per cent., why borrow from the Credit Foncier at 4½ per cent.? In addition to these sums which they borrowed since the 31st of December, they also borrowed $11,000 by private loans. On the 1st of January they received $90,000, half the yearly subsidy, and with these receipts they fell behind to the extent previously pointed out With this enormous debt, amounting to upwards of $1,000,000 if the bills passed through this House are carried into effect, the future of our Island home presents a gloomy future. He had every reason to believe that when an opportunity presented itself the party which has fastened such a burden on the people will be brought to a severe account.

Mr. Campbell followed Mr. Shaw, and plyed the lash unmercifully to the Government. He characterized the Premier's budget speech as the weakest of the twenty-six budgets he had listened to in the House. He pointed out that the Government had done nothing to advance the interests of the farmers or fishermen, the only two classes of wealth producers in the Province. An ambassador had been sent to England; but he never would have been sent, if he had not kicked in the traces. Mr. Campbell then exposed, at length the inconsistency and hypocrisy of the Liberal party in the matter of trade, and held up to redicule their record of broken pledges. The question of delegations to Ottawa was then touched upon, and the barrenness of the visits of the present compared with the success which had attended delegation to Ottawa when the Conservative Government was in power here. On the question of building the Hillsborough bridge, he showed that the Government had gone into the question without one iota of information regarding the cost. He considered the Government's method of taxation was to wring the last dollar from the hard working farmer, while allowing our wealthy men to go free, He considered that if the Government would complete the Prince of Wales College, and build the contemplated steel bridge at Victoria this year, they would be $33,000 short. This with the $40,000 of a deficit already this current year, would make a deficit of $73,000 for next year; notwithstanding the misleading statements made in the budget. Regarding the department of education, he pointed out that it had, to a considerable extent, been converted into a party machine, and some of the school inspectors went

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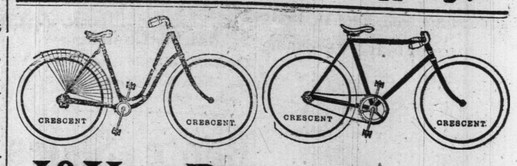

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