

THE HERALD
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Editor & Proprietor.

Our Provincial Finances.

In our last issue we gave a brief statement of the receipts and expenditures of the Provincial Government during the year 1902. In this issue our readers will find the auditor's account of receipts and expenditures.

This deficit added to the previous debt of the Province will, according to the Government's own admission, bring the Provincial debt up to more than \$700,000. In the auditor's report on the public accounts for 1901, the Government admitted a debt of \$642,177.72, and in the report under review the auditor places the debt at \$650,409.30.

The recklessness of the Government and their capacity for creating deficits and rolling up the public debt are shown in a most striking manner in the accounts under review. Last year they collected in taxes no less than \$32,861.77, within a few dollars of \$18,000 more than they collected in 1901.

We have shown by the Government's own accounts, as reported upon by their own auditor they received last year \$13,000 more taxes than on the previous year, and \$15,000 more than last

year, as Dominion subsidy, \$33,000 in these two items, and yet, in spite of all this they have run away behind, created a big deficit and largely increased the public burdens by their addition to the Provincial debt. What is the use of paying taxes or increasing the subsidy to such a Government? They are bound to produce deficits and roll up the public debt.

Sessional Notes

The business of the session cannot be said to have been hustled with any ordinary degree of speed by the Government thus far, when you consider that three weeks have almost elapsed since the opening and there is as yet no sign of the budget speech.

On Tuesday, March 31st, the House sat but a few minutes in the forenoon, engaged principally in matters of simple routine. Mr. A. J. McDonald, Georgetown, asked "if a petition praying for the opening of a road on Boughton Island and of the re-establishing of a ferry from Launching to Boughton Island has been received, and if so what action does the Government intend taking?"

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Mr Rogers' bill was further considered in committee on Wednesday, when progress was again reported and permission asked to sit again. Towards the close of the sitting Hon. Mr. Wheel introduced a bill asking exemption from taxation for a period of twenty years, for the Dominion Packing Company.

After routine on Thursday Mr. Arseneault asked if it was the intention of the Government to introduce a system of vital statistics, and if not why not? Hon. Mr. Peters said the matter was still under consideration.

and if it was the intention of the Government to build a new bridge over Haldimand River? Mr. Cammiskey said that tenders for former had been called for, and for the latter the Government had received a report that the bridge is not impassable. The rest of Thursdays sitting was occupied with consideration of Mr. Rogers agricultural bill. It was reported from committee agreed to with certain amendments.

When the house met on Friday morning, Hon. Mr. Wheel called attention to certain articles that had appeared in the Guardian newspaper. These articles were all strongly opposed to the exemption of the Dominion Packing Company from taxation and referred to Mr. Wheel as the "paid agent of the company." If he were guilty of what he was charged with by the Guardian he would be guilty of a misdemeanor and ought to be expelled from the House.

Packing Company Exemption.

As referred to elsewhere in this issue a bill has been presented in the Legislature and read a first time, having for its object the exemption of the Dominion Packing Company from civic taxation, for a period of 20 years.

Councillor Wheel moved the adoption of the bill; Councillor Hooper moved in amendment, seconded by Councillor Lyons, that this bill be not presented to the Legislature until a vote of the citizens be first obtained by a plebiscite. This amendment was defeated, only the mover and seconder voting for it, and the main motion was carried.

Whereas by the Act of Incorporation the Local Government vested in the City Council of the City of Charlottetown the power to assess and to collect taxes on real estate and personal property and other taxes in the said City;

Whereas by a subsequent act the Local Government vested in the said City Council the power to grant exemption from taxation to any new hotel to be built in the City, and to new industries coming into the City, and not in existence at the time of an application for exemption is made for a period not to exceed fifteen

years in the case of such hotels built, and for a period not to exceed five years in the case of such other said industries;

Therefore resolved, that this meeting of taxpayers respectfully urge upon the present Legislature in Parliament assembled that the bill now before the legislature, praying that the Dominion Packing Company (Limited), be exempted from taxation for twenty years is unfair and unjust to the taxpayers of the City of Charlottetown, inasmuch as it does not provide that the City Council of the City of Charlottetown shall have the power to grant such exemption under certain regulations; and further resolved that Mr. Wheel is hereby requested to withdraw the said bill.

The question of granting or refusing the exemption asked for, is a matter that interests the taxpayers of the City of Charlottetown, more than anyone else, and the overwhelming vote cast against the exemption at the citizens' meeting, would seem to show where they stand in the matter. The laws governing the civic corporation require that requests for tax exemption should be published in the newspapers for a certain length of time before the question comes up for discussion by the City Council; but it appears that in this case this requirement was not complied with. The whole business bears on its face the appearance of having been sprung on the public without sufficient notice, and of an attempt to force it through the Legislature before the citizens would have an opportunity of pronouncing upon it.

Fast Atlantic Service.

Sir Tho. Shaughnessy returned to Montreal on the 6th from England. Discussing his trip he said that Mr. Chamberlain expressed a very strong desire to visit the Dominion. And although the colonial secretary will not probably be able to come to Canada this year, he thought he would over here before very long.

In Liverpool, while the ships of the fleet were being refitted, Sir Thomas said the Canadian Pacific had been required a short rest, and two weeks at sea while going and coming had been desired effect, there being very little of a business nature connected with his brief sojourn in Great Britain.

Taylor's Bookstore is showing a magnificent line of Wall Papers, this being the first year handling wall paper the stock is all new, and those buying at Taylor's will be sure to get the latest up-to-date wall paper and the cheapest in the city.

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