

THE HERALD

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 1899.

PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY. SUBSCRIPTION—\$1.00 A YEAR. JAMES MCISAAC, Editor & Proprietor.

Mr. Peters' Return.

When the Legislature opened on Monday last, Mr. Frederick Peters, of Victoria, British Columbia, was among the members who took their seats in the Legislative chamber.

Mr. Peters, it will be remembered, was Premier of this Province at the time of the general election in 1897, and was elected to serve as a member of the Legislature, for the Fort Augustus district.

But instead of attending to the duties devolving upon him as the representative of that district he resigned the Premiership, although still holding on to his seat, and turning his back on his constituents hid him across the continent and took up his abode on the Pacific coast, where the prospect of gaining gold is much greater than here.

From that time till the present, those who elected him to the Legislature remained unrepresented. Now he comes, at the eleventh hour and coolly takes his seat. We may be very sure he does not do this for the sake of his constituents; but in order to do a service to his political friends, who saw certain defeat staring them in the face should this constituency be thrown open in consequence of Mr. Peters' remaining away any longer.

Reduced to short order the case stands thus: Mr. Peters was elected to represent the Fort Augustus district; but he turns his back upon it and ceases to be a resident of the Province; now he comes back and takes his seat without even saying to those who elected him: "By your leave." Those who elected him are not taken into account at all, he simply comes to the rescue of the party utterly regardless of the rights of its constituents. Such is the nature of Mr. Peters' return to his native Province.

From the very start, somewhat after the fashion of Cassa's advance of the conquest of Gaul, by forced marches. Detective Backet's celebrated chase in search of Lady D'adcock, in Dickens' "Black House," pales into insignificance in comparison to the rapidity with which he was hauled from the Pacific to the Atlantic.

The Government of Canada places special trains at its disposal over the Intercolonial and Prince Edward Island Railway, and the steamer Stanley is ordered across the Straits on Sunday morning this great man over from Pictou. You would almost imagine you heard a repetition of that everlasting "burry" of "Capt. Cheyne's mother in Kipling's "Captains Courageous," as the Lord's day was desecrated by the ordering out of steamers and railway trains for the conveyance of this wonderful man. We would like to know what Premier Farquharson, Hon. Peter Sinclair and other strict Sabbatharian members and supporters of the Government think of this Sabbath desecration! Why was this rush? Simply in order that Mr. Peters might connect with the opening of the Legislature on Monday. Are we to infer from all this that whenever our friends wish to consummate any scheme, all laws human and divine, that would in any way interfere, are to be set at naught?

The Stanley and Charlottetown.

During last week, the question was frequently asked why the Stanley was not coming to Charlottetown. One excuse or another was given for the delay by those favoring the Government. On Sunday she made a trip between Georgetown and Pictou and brought ex-Premier Peters to the island. On Monday forenoon the Steamer Princess of the Steam Navigation Company started from here to go to Pictou. It was a venture and no one could conjecture what success she might meet with.

In the early part of the afternoon notice was posted on the bulletin in the Post office that there would be no foreign mail on that day, and that the Stanley would start from Pictou on Tuesday morning. Shortly afterwards word was received that the Princess had reached Pictou, then a second bulletin was posted to the effect that the Stanley had just started for Charlottetown. Surely for very shame, if for no other reason those charged with the movements of the Stanley felt themselves obliged to make a start when they found the Princess moored at Pictou after crossing over in a few hours. Here we had the ridiculous position of the summer steamer leading the way for the steamer specially built for winter navigation. The Stanley came into this port about seven o'clock Monday evening. It is not much wonder that those in charge of her should feel quite cheap, coming in here in the track of the Princess. Several reasons are given why the Stanley did not come here sooner, or until forced to do so in consequence of the presence of the Princess in Pictou.

In the first place it is hinted that she was kept at the Georgetown end until Mr. Peters was safely landed on this side; for fear any delay might be caused by her possible detention in the straits; for then Mr. Peters would not be here in time to take his seat. Again it is said the railway department was largely instrumental in detaining her on the Georgetown-Pictou route; so as to give the railway a large freight traffic from Georgetown, and thus keep down the annual deficit. One or the other of these reasons may have caused the delay; but in any case the fact of her being kept so long away from this port shows how little Sir Louis Davies, Minister of Marine, cares for his constituents.

In the Dominion House of Commons on Thursday last E. F. Clarke, seconded by Dr. Hal, moved the following amendment: That this House do deem it expedient to inform His Excellency that in view of the wide-spread charges of incompetency, misconduct and corruption in the administration of public affairs connected with the Yukon it is the duty of the Government to appoint, without delay, an independent judicial commission to make a thorough investigation into that subject and report thereon. The debate is still going on.

Provincial Legislature.

The Provincial Legislature opened with the usual formalities, on Monday afternoon last. His Honor the Lieutenant Governor having taken his seat, opened the session with the following SPEECH.

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly: It gives me much pleasure to again meet you as representatives of the people of this Province in Parliament assembled.

Notwithstanding that the harvest of the past year was not as bountiful as anticipated, yet a kind Providence has bestowed peace and abundant prosperity upon our people.

During the past year as you are aware, her Majesty was pleased to appoint the Earl of Minto Governor General of Canada. It is a source of gratification that a gentleman knowing the wants and having the interests of this fair Dominion so much at heart has been sent to rule over us.

The increased interest manifested in Agriculture and Horticulture, combined with the success of our Dairymen, must be a cause of great satisfaction to all concerned and should call for special legislation for the further encouragement of our farming population.

During recess, through the courtesy of the Minister of Agriculture, this Province was favoured with a visit from Professors Robertson and Macoun, of Ottawa. These gentlemen addressed several meetings in the three Counties, and the large attendance indicates that the farmers are alive to the importance of their honorable calling.

The information afforded by these addresses must contribute in a decided manner to the advantage of our people. In this connection, a measure will be submitted for your approval having for its object the appointment of a Dairy Inspector for Prince Edward Island.

In view of the proposed action of the Dominion Government to span the Hillsborough River with a Railway bridge, you will be called upon to participate in its construction in order that our people may have the double advantage of a railway and a general traffic bridge combined, thus doing away with our antiquated ferry system, its many attendant evils and expense. A bill providing for this most important undertaking will be laid before you.

The decision of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, recently delivered, brings this Province within a measurable distance of the realization of some of its long-agoed claims against the Federal Government. Measures are therefore being prepared which I trust will place this Province on a more substantial financial basis, and forever settle this much-voiced question which has for years been perplexing both the Federal and Local Governments. You will also be gratified to learn that this decision of the Privy Council has revealed the fact that the Provincial Legislatures are the proprietors of the for-shore, bays and rivers in the several Provinces, and that the Dominion has a legislative jurisdiction only in so far as England is concerned and is of no advantage whatever to Canada.

The Minister of Customs (Mr. Paterson) told us that the Government had a surplus, and whether Grit or Tory rules we are all glad to hear that. But, Sir, when these hon. gentlemen have a surplus is it not time for them to think about reducing the taxes upon the people. They have preached in that line for a good many years, but I fear that when the Budget comes down, it will give evidence of another broken pledge in this direction.

The hon. gentlemen on the Treasury benches claim that there is great prosperity in Canada. It is perhaps worth our while to enquire as to what they have done to bring about the prosperity which they say exists. Well, it does not take very much study to discover that their policy has not tended in the direction of producing prosperity, because they have increased the taxation, and nobody will contend that that is conducive to the welfare of the people. When the Conservative Government went out of power the taxation per head was about \$3.77, but these hon. gentlemen opposing have succeeded in increasing the taxation until at present

other matters as may appear to you to be for the public good. After his Honor withdrew, the routine work usual at the opening of a session was taken up. Hon. William Campbell, Mr. DesRoches and Mr. Reid, the members elected since last session, were introduced and sworn in, and the decision of the Court declaring vacant the seat of Meddie Gallant was read.

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SPEECH

Delivered by A. C. McDonald, M. P., in the House of Commons on the 11th inst., during the debate on the address in reply to the speech from the throne.

(From Hansard)

MR. A. C. MACDONALD (King's P. E. I.) Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the long debate we have had on the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, I will claim the privilege of making a few remarks before the debate closes, and in doing so, Sir, I will just refer for a moment to some of the remarks that fell from my hon. friend the Minister of Customs (Mr. Paterson).

In the course of his speech he referred, like many of the other hon. gentlemen who preceded him, to the great prosperity of this country under Liberal rule. He also referred to the immense increase in the foreign trade of this country. With respect to this, Sir, I would just say that I wonder where the prosperity of this country would be today, I wonder where the trade would be today, if it were not for the continuance of the National Policy inaugurated by the predecessors of the hon. gentleman opposite.

With respect to the foreign trade of this country it is my opinion, at least, that the great increase in this trade is largely due to the good crops that have prevailed throughout the country and to the continuance of the National Policy that has enabled our factories to continue their operations. Now, while I agree, in the main, that there has been prosperity owing to these two causes, there are parts of this Dominion where neither one nor the other of these causes exists. What do we find? We find that in the maritime provinces we have not good crops, we have not the manufacturing, and, therefore, we have not the prosperous times that exist in other parts of this Dominion.

In the province from which I come we have no manufacturing, and I regret to say that our crops have been, to a very great extent, a failure. If I am to judge the other maritime provinces by the state of the province from which I come, I think I have no cause to congratulate the Government on the prosperity of the country. The hon. Minister of Customs has told us that the factories of this country are working now as they never worked before. I would ask that hon. gentleman where would these factories be today if they had not continued the policy of their predecessors by continuing the protection that enabled these factories to start under the National Policy? On the other hand, where would the wealth and money of this country be going to if it were not for these factories that were nurtured and brought into existence by the National Policy? They would be going to the people to the south of us, very largely. We have, thanks to the National Policy, become independent of those outside of our own large extent; we can depend on our own factories for the production of our own goods, our own cottons, our own boots and shoes, our own clothing, our own hats and caps, and in fact everything that the general run of people, or the farmers require to carry them over from year to year.

If it were not for the National Policy we would be sending our money out of this country to pay foreigners and to pay for what we are now able to do at home. The hon. gentleman, in the course of his remarks, referred also to the reciprocal tariff, referring, I presume, to the preferential tariff. Now, a tariff in my mind, to be reciprocal, must be beneficial to both parties. In the matter of preferential trade between us and England, Canada has to give everything to England without any advantage to the people of Canada. Therefore, I deny that there is any reciprocity in that tariff. It is one-sided, it is preferential only in so far as England is concerned and is of no advantage whatever to Canada.

The Minister of Customs (Mr. Paterson) told us that the Government had a surplus, and whether Grit or Tory rules we are all glad to hear that. But, Sir, when these hon. gentlemen have a surplus is it not time for them to think about reducing the taxes upon the people. They have preached in that line for a good many years, but I fear that when the Budget comes down, it will give evidence of another broken pledge in this direction.

The hon. gentlemen on the Treasury benches claim that there is great prosperity in Canada. It is perhaps worth our while to enquire as to what they have done to bring about the prosperity which they say exists. Well, it does not take very much study to discover that their policy has not tended in the direction of producing prosperity, because they have increased the taxation, and nobody will contend that that is conducive to the welfare of the people. When the Conservative Government went out of power the taxation per head was about \$3.77, but these hon. gentlemen opposing have succeeded in increasing the taxation until at present

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sent it mounts up to \$4.22 per head. My hon. friend from East Prince (Mr. Bell), delivered a very good speech in moving this Address, and I congratulate him upon it, but I fear he was completely at sea when he said that the prosperity of the country was largely due to the economical administration of this Government. We have not yet had a member of the Government who will wait a long time for any evidence of economy on the part of the hon. gentlemen now in power. They came into power claiming that protection was the ruin of Canada, that it was bleeding the people white, and yet when they attained power they continued this very same policy of protection. True, they have made some small pretence towards making alterations in the tariff in order that they might endeavor to hoodwink the electors into the belief that they kept some of their promises. But the Minister of the Interior (Mr. Sifton), speaking as a member of the Government, says: That the tariff is now a dead issue and is finally settled; and it is worth while for us to inquire how they have settled it. It is not many years since my hon. friend the Minister of Marine and Fisheries (Sir Louis Davies) said, that a protective tariff was "a thing accursed of God and man," and the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Richard Cartwright) in these days of old told us: That protection bred corruption. Let us inquire for a moment in what respect they have altered the protective tariff which they found in operation when they came into power. The total number of items in tariff as it stood under the Conservative Government was 456, and of this number the Liberals changed 144 and left 312 unchanged. Let us see what they did with these 144 items. They reduced the tariff on eighty of them, causing by such reduction a loss of revenue—calculated on the imports of 1897—of \$200,000; not much of a reduction, Mr. Speaker, you will agree with me, after all their outcry against protection and their statement that it was bleeding the people white. But the Liberal Government did not rest there with the tariff. They took 61 items and increased the tariff on these adding by this increase—exclusive of cigars and tobacco—\$705,000 to the revenue, and consequently, increasing the measure of protection to that extent. Now, Sir, 42 out of these 61 items included goods manufactured in Canada, and we have therefore the right to conclude that the present Government added additional protection, to that protection which under Liberal Conservative rule they said was "bleeding the people white." What an exhibition of inconsistency on the part of these hon. gentlemen, and how gleefully they have swallowed all their promises to the people. Among the principal items they changed in their tariff were binder twine, coal oil and corn. They removed the duty from binder twine, and their statesmanship in that has resulted in compelling the people to pay more for that article today than they did when the Conservative Government was in power. But there is more to be said in connection with this binder twine matter. The Government was running a binder twine factory the proprietary at Kingstons, and as they had not to pay for the labor they turned out the twine at a very low rate. I am informed that last year they sold over 1000 tons of this binder twine, practically without cost to the Government, and that the cost to the consumer was three times the price they would have paid if they could buy it direct from the Government, and if the Government had chosen to give the farmers the benefit of the low price of production made at home. The American Government, having through the policy of this Government, killed off the binder twine factories in the Dominion of Canada, are now adding insult to injury by offering us a free market for binder twine in their country. The result of the action of the Government is, that the farmers of this country are now obliged to buy their binder twine from the American combines and pay exorbitant prices therefor. The Government also lowered the duty on coal oil, and granted other concessions to a foreign monopoly, whose effects are felt, not only in Canada and the United States, but in Europe, with the result that this huge monopoly has been enabled to gobble up all the oil refineries in Canada, and with the further result that the price of oil has gone up two cents a gallon. They also, Sir, in tinkering with our tariff, took the duty off corn. What is the result? The result is, that a vast amount of American corn is brought into Canada, displacing like amount of coarse grains that are grown by the people of this country.

Having said this much on that subject I will turn my attention for a few moments to another matter that is mentioned, the plebiscite. It appears, Sir, that that measure has cost the people of this country \$250,000—for what? To take the votes of the temperance people of Canada, in the interest of that? Not temperance, for hon. gentlemen opposite say there is no intention of following the result of the vote with prohibitory legislation. Therefore, I think I am right in saying that a large amount of the people's money has been spent in lulling and deceiving advocates of temperance. It has cost this country directly \$250,000 to bring this result about. It has cost the temperance people of this country, I dare say, fully as much more, if not more, for the expenses of printing, hall hire, payment of public speakers, time given by the people of Canada to the discussions, providing and paying representatives at the polls, and loss of time of half a million voters. Now, Sir, I do not think I am drawing an unfair inference when I say that the temperance vote, on account of the promises made by the Liberal party and by the leader of that party, that prohibitory legislation would follow a majority vote on the plebiscite, even if it should cost his party power forever—

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