

The Charlottetown Guardian

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MR. BELL ON "BLUFFING"

The speech of Premier Mathieson in introducing his budget sets succinctly before our readers the salient facts concerning the financial administration of the Government during not only the past year but since the Government came into power. No unbiased person reading that speech can come to any other conclusion than that it was an intervention of Providence which sent the Liberals about their business in 1911 and set the Liberal-Conservative party in power to administer the affairs of the Province. The Liberals were going behind at the rate of \$45,000 per annum without the slightest hope or expectation of improving matters. Everything was going to ruin and decay, and the people themselves were despondent, spiritless and dejected. The change which the Mathieson government has brought about is simply marvellous. All the public services have been vastly improved, the Province has entered upon and enjoys an era of prosperity, the finances are so sound that the greatest authorities in Canada on this subject, the financiers, bankers and lending institutions, deem it the safest proposition in the world in which to invest money. In the stress of war, when money is at a high premium, the Government of Prince Edward Island is in a position to place a loan on better terms even than the Dominion Government itself. There can be no cavilling at this. Financiers and bankers are not politicians when it comes to lending money, it is the security they look to, and in our case, after investigation, they declared our finances thoroughly and absolutely sound, thanks to the wise and prudent policy pursued by the Mathieson Government.

But does Mr. Bell accept the decision of these great bankers and financial institutions? Certainly not, no more than he does the reports of the External Auditors or the Provincial Auditor. Mr. Bell set out in reply to the Premier to attempt to prove that the finances were not what they were represented to be. For the first time, however, since he entered the House, Mr. Bell admitted that the deficit handed over to the Mathieson Government was \$1,072,505.77 as shown by the External Audit. But, he said, there ought to be placed against that a sum of \$64,352.84 which the External Auditors said in a footnote was outstanding. Now as a matter of fact this amount was outstanding, but so "outstanding" was it that the External Auditors declined to consider it as a liquid asset, as it included unpaid taxes running back for years and in a large part uncollectable. Consequently the bankers would not deduct an unknown quantity from the debt.

But this asset does not materially affect the statement which the Premier and the Auditors make, as a similar amount of \$52,018.46 was outstanding on December 31st last, with this difference that the latter amount has a larger portion of collectable revenue.

Mr. Bell juggled a little with the financial showing of 1915 in an attempt to prove that the Government paid out 1915 revenue into 1914 accounts with some ulterior motive. It is quite true the Government adjusted accounts between the two years in a thoroughly satisfactory and business manner, and the Premier took the House into his confidence at the time, as Mr. Bell was constrained to admit. The Leader of the Opposition was good enough to characterize this action on the part of the Government as a game of bluff. Surely the hon. gentleman must have been thinking of his own criticisms, for he has failed to substantiate any of his allegations, and merely has quoted figures to dazzle or bluff those of his hearers or readers who may not be cognizant of the facts.

Mr. Bell made much of some discovery he thought he had made regarding the Agricultural Grant for 1915. He said he had ascertained from Ottawa that some \$14,000 for which the Government took credit was not received until after the close of that financial year. As a matter of fact that grant is payable half-yearly and the payment was made according to the Act and was, as it will be hereafter carried out in the accounts in the recognized manner. It properly belonged to the year to which it was credited, and should be paid on October 1 although it was not actually received till the new financial year came in. The Dominion Government grant is paid half-yearly instead of quarterly, which would be the best system for the closing of our accounts on December 31. This was fully explained by the Commissioner of Agriculture last year, but to read what Mr. Bell says one would imagine that he had just made a new discovery. It is, however, merely what he himself describes as a flutter of bluff.

MR. BELL AND THE GUARDIAN

Mr. Bell has earned a not very enviable reputation for his misrepresentation of facts with a view to obtaining a little temporary party advantage. On Thursday night he made one of his not infrequent references to the Guardian and on the occasion joined hands with the Patriot in falsely accusing us of having reflected upon the French constituencies in New Brunswick. Of course the allegation is absolutely untrue. In commenting upon the result of the New Brunswick election we credited the turn-over from Conservative to Liberal to three main causes, viz: (1) "Sectional dissatisfaction with the policy pursued on prohibition, (2) Lumber grant taxation and (3) The busi-

ness administration of the Intercolonial Railway." We said the French constituencies bitterly resented the prohibition law passed by the Conservative government and gave a solid opposition vote. If this be construed to be a reflection upon the French constituencies, then a similar stigma must attach to the constituencies of New Perth and South West Toronto, for both these Ontario constituencies elected anti-prohibition Liberal candidates at the first opportunity after the Government passed a prohibition law there. Moreover, the new Premier of New Brunswick, Mr. W. E. Foster, who is a merchant, in his appeal to the electorate likened the Prohibition Act to goods which he had on the shelves of his store which he did not want himself but which the public bought, consequently he kept them for sale if wanted. In other words, Mr. Foster roundly declared that he did not want prohibition, but as the Conservatives had passed the measure it could remain on the statute book a dead letter unless the public demanded its enforcement. Is it any reflection upon Mr. Foster that he openly declared that for himself personally he did not want prohibition? If not, how can Mr. Bell or the Patriot construe as a reflection upon the French constituencies the assertion that they were of the same opinion as the new Liberal Premier, Mr. Foster, and voted for him? Mr. Foster himself considered it a compliment, and is now trying to adjust matters. The St. John Times, Liberal, blames Carleton, York, Charlotte, St. John and Albert for voting for the old Government "because they have very largely committed the enforcement of the Prohibitory law to the Northern Counties, some of which have license and some of which have not insisted on a rigid enforcement of the Scott Act." Remember this is the Liberal St. John Times that speaks in the Guardian—and what has Mr. Bell got to say to this from the same article?

"THE GOVERNMENT WHICH HAS THE SUPPORT OF THE PROMOTERS OF THE (PROHIBITORY) LAW, BACKED BY A GREAT PUBLIC SENTIMENT, IS NATURALLY MORE ZEALOUS THAN ONE WHICH IS CONSCIOUS THAT IT WENT INTO POWER IN SPITE OF MANY OF THE ADVOCATES AND PROMOTERS OF THE LAW. AND THAT IS HOW THE NEW GOVERNMENT MUST FEEL AS IT SCRUTINIZES THE ELECTION RETURNS, FOR THE LATE GOVERNMENT MADE PROHIBITION A STRAIGHT ISSUE."

There we have the most popular Liberal organ in St. John, after the election admitting that the late Government was defeated on a straight prohibition issue, the new Premier admitting that he did not want prohibition, and yet Mr. Bell and the Patriot would try to make out that it was a reflection on the French constituencies to say that they agreed with the Liberal Leader!

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

The reports of the various departments have been tabled and are now made public. In all of these reports progress is recorded, extraordinary progress when it is remembered that in all government as in all individual effort the pressure of the war was felt.

The report of the Public Works Department, more than any other, reflects the effect of the war. Economy was the watchword and the Commissioner in his report explains that "owing to the high cost and great difficulty of obtaining steel bridges during the year it was decided to use wood in the construction of new ones. Fortunately the large number of bridges built in the preceding year made this year's programme comparatively light."

Notwithstanding the necessary economy two steel bridges were erected during the year, one at Bradshaw, the other at Glenfinnan, the former a 38 foot steel span on a substructure of crosotted piles with hard pine caps; the latter a steel girder span 30 feet long, also on crosotted piles with hard pine caps. Extensive repairs were made to the bridges at Fullerton's Marsh, Grove Pine, Darnley, Mill River and Murray Harbour.

In addition to these a large number of bridges were built with native wood and repairs effected in a number of others. Some 750 feet of concrete culverts were laid in different places and a number of new roads opened.

The Mussel mud dredge in St. Peter's Bay delivered at the Midgell Wharf and St. Peter's Wharf 1320 carloads of mud which was distributed over large sections of King's County, much of it also coming into Queen's. The demand for this valuable fertilizer is greater than ever and the work will be continued during the coming summer.

Extensive improvements were made at Falconwood, the farm buildings which had been in separate groups having been joined up in the form of an enclosure sheltered on three sides. The difficulty experienced in procuring a plentiful supply of water, owing to the presence of salt in the first wells bored, has been overcome by boring two wells 300 feet deep farther back from the shore and it is believed that these will furnish a sufficient quantity of good water for the use of the institution.

Considerable improvement was made in the heating apparatus of Prince of Wales College, an electric light system was installed in the Law Courts building, the Georgetown jail was completed and many other improvements and additions made to other public buildings and public works throughout the province.

While this Department, necessarily one of the largest spending departments of the government, reflects commendable war-time economy, it is gratifying to observe that there has been no stinting of necessary public utilities and no neglect of the bridges, roads and public buildings of the province.

HAPPENINGS OF THE WEEK FORMERLY AGAINST, NOW FOR AUTOS.

It is expected that the marriage of Lord Hartington, son of the Duke of Devonshire, and Lady Mary Hamilton, will take place at Eastbury, either at St. James' Piccadilly, or in Hartfield Church. The Bishop of Exeter will officiate, and probably the Bishop of Southwell and the Rev. William Temple will also take part in the service. Lord Hartington is at present employed in France. It is probable that the Duke of Devonshire will lead the wedding of autos in this province, with your permission I will give my views on the subject. It is not necessary to go back to the early days of the auto in this Island; but the first one to travel this part of the country was run a number of years ago by a party from Charlottetown, and the talk it made among the people, the excitement it created, is quite fresh in the minds of many of our people. Since then (times have changed and the people have changed with them. The great amount of information that people have obtained with regard to the auto and its convenience even during the last year, have led many of our farmers to change their minds, and instead of being a luxury, as they then thought it, it is now considered among the necessities.

We all know that the ratepayers of every school district were asked some time ago to say by a vote taken at their annual meeting, what way they felt in the matter, and the majority of our people at that time were, according to the vote, not in favor of them running. Men will sometimes vote a certain way because others vote that way, very often without giving the question a moment's consideration. One of the late presidents once told the following story: "Moved by John Brown, seconded by Drake Smith, we build a new school. Carried. I also move we take the good material in the old one and use it in helping to build the new one. Carried. I also move we teach in the old one until the new one is furnished. Carried unanimously."

The leader of our present government has told us he travelled from ocean to ocean, and knows of no place where the auto was not used except in P. E. Island. If this be so how can we hold our heads high in the air and say this is the greatest spot on earth. What must pleasure-seekers think when they arrive in, say, Summerside and ask for the number of the car line. They want to take a drive out through the country and want to get a car, and are told that they are not allowed to run on this Island. They would naturally begin to think, "Is this the place we have heard so much about, or have we made a mistake?"

If the Government passes a law allowing them to run under certain restrictions and carry them out strictly and they come to the country with no other charges against them, their political sins will be very few. We imagined at one time that only the city people could afford to buy them, but if there is any wealth in this country, the farmers have their share of it. Only a few years ago I read an account of the amount of money deposited in one of the banks in the western part of this country by the farmers, and any man who would tell us that these people cannot afford to buy an auto is deceiving himself and the truth is not in him.

The roads from one end of the Island are opened for their use, as they promise, under certain restrictions, and the price of the car made to suit, which according to what we read, it can, I like many more who were at first opposed to them, will certainly have one.

JOHN HARRINGTON, Norbord, P. E. Island. matter causing some commotion in London is the decision of the National Liberal Club to employ girl waitresses. Several of the dining-room girls, volunteered for this dangerous duty, and have been duly installed.

H. R. H. the Princess Patricia has recovered from an attack of measles.

Chain teas are still holding favor in the younger social set and are proving most enjoyable. Last Saturday afternoon Miss Alice Cox was hostess at a prettily arranged tea and her guests had a most agreeable afternoon.

Special services were held at this week in the First Methodist Church and also in St. James Church, the services being bright and attractive with good singing and splendid addresses.

Hon. J. A. Hazen of St. John had the honor of being presented to the King in London, on Tuesday and on March 17 Lady Perley and Mrs. J. Douglas Hazen were among the ladies seated beside Her Majesty the Queen at Saturday's national service meeting for women.

The officers of the Anti-Tuberculosis Society are being heartily congratulated on the splendid work they have done as shown by their report made public at their annual meeting on Tuesday evening last.

A most enjoyable and nicely arranged concert was held in Zion Church school room last evening, patronized by a large audience who were thoroughly appreciative.

Miss Winifred McLeod's friends were sorry that she could not come over from Halifax on a few days furlough to her home here before returning to Salmoni where she is attached to the No. 5 Canadian General Hospital. Miss McLeod's mother, Mrs. John McLeod, is now in Halifax and will remain there until her daughter sails.

Miss Nessie Fitzgerald made a most pleasing hostess when she entertained the Evening Bridge Club at her home on Thursday.

The nurses of the Prince of Wales Hospital at Tottingham, G. B., are de-

AFRAID? OF WHAT? (By George Lee Burton.) Afraid? Of what? The dark of night? The boisterous wind? The tossing waves? Dost doubt His love? Dost doubt His might? Where is thy faith in Him who has? Hast thou so soon forgot the bread He broke, and hungry thousands fed? Hast thou forgot His healing touch—The lame that walk, the blind that see, The dead that live? Forgot how Through all the years He's done for thee? Forgot the birds and flowers, His care Of all things, here and everywhere? O soul of mine, thy God of love Hath built foundations for thy faith: If thou wilt dwell on them and prove, The blessed truth of what He saith, No doubt, no care, can e'er afflict; He'll bring thee joyous through the night!

DAILY SELECTIONS FOR GUARDIAN READERS. Furnished by W. S. Louson.

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Come In and See The Latest in Spring Footwear. During the past week we have received many pretty lines of Ladies New Spring Boots Medium and High cut. All kid, kid with cloth tops. Patent with cloth and kid tops. First Class Repairing Done Here.

GOFF BROS. We sell Silk and Lustre Holproof Hosiery with 3 and 6 Months Guarantee.

"The Haberdashery" Long Wear and Good Looks

Our Boy's Suits combine those two most desirable characteristics long wear and good looks. We would like every mother interested in the appearance of her boy to see our new stock of Norfolk Suits. Won't you bring the boy in to see them—we think you'll both admire our spring selections.

- Boys 2 piece Norfolk gray hair line ..... \$5.00
Boys 2 piece Norfolk brown hair line ..... \$6.00
Boys 2 piece Norfolk stripe worsted brown..... \$7.00
Boys 2 piece Norfolk pin check tweed ..... \$7.50
Boys 2 piece Norfolk brown check tweed ..... \$7.75
Boys 2 piece Norfolk Black and gray stripe ..... \$8.50
also broken checks, overplaid tweed mixtures and blue serges at most every price up to \$14.50

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vegetables in the hospital grounds. If such busy women can find time for gardening, what might not others do with full time? Several prominent Golf Clubs in England are turning part of their links into vegetable gardens. The Royal Wimbledon course is being partly prepared for potatoes, and the members will assist in the cultivation.

Among the visitors to the City this week was Mrs. (Senator) McLean of Souris.

Mrs. E. H. Ramsay has as her guest at The Mansie, Amherst, this week her mother Mrs. D. McNutt of Malpeque.

Fashion is leaving behind the tradition that pure white is necessary for the proper expression of the neck finish. Some of the smartest pieces for dress and for tailored Neckwear are radiant with color, not only quiet shades but the high colors that predominate in the world of sports. The new shades of porcelain blues, the rich tones of green, the lovely hues of the rose, soft and becoming tints in the maize and even lavenders, and wistaria appear, alone or in combination with white or in striking sports patterns on plain grounds. Lawn, organdies, Swisses, chiffon, cloths, Georgette crepe, pongee silks, wash satins and khaki-wool are innovations in fabrics as well as in color. And

NO CHANGE IN PRUSSIAN FRANCHISE. (Special to The Guardian.) BERLIN, March 30.—The Chancellor speaking to parliament said that no changes could be made in Prussian franchise at the present time.

ENCOURAGE THRIFT

Extravagance, always a folly, in these days becomes a crime, thrift always a virtue, in these days becomes a national duty. Is there any more intelligent manner of exercising the virtue of thrift than by regularly saving the amount necessary to pay for sufficient Life Insurance protection? The numberless premiums contributed by thrifty people, are redistributed by the Companies in helping to finance the country and the war—as well as in providing homes and other necessities for thousands of widows and children. More than half a century of statistics develops the fact that only three men in every hundred are self-supporting at the age of 65, and that the other ninety-seven are absolutely dependent upon others for the common necessities of life. A large proportion of this unfortunate situation is due to the failure of young men to establish a definite financial plan for the future. For such a plan Life Insurance is the medium most available and dependable. The policies of the Great West Life give the most protection for the least money and pay the highest dividends to policyholders.

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