

THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

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MONDAY, MARCH 22, 1926

THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

While we unhesitatingly and heartily congratulate the Government upon the splendid financial showing for the past year disclosed in the report of the public accounts, we are not blind to the difficulties with which it has been faced or to the dangers of the present situation. During the four years the Bell Government was in power the true situation was never disclosed, but camouflaged by a series of so-called surpluses, an attempt being made to lull the electorate to sleep in the fond delusion that all was well, and that the "best government ever" was at the helm. The Bell aggregation gained power by denouncing and defeating the Arsenault Government plebiscite for an education assessment, a scheme which would have relieved the then financial embarrassment and placed our education problem practically in the hands of the school districts—the best hands to handle it. Having defeated the measure the Bell Government found itself in power without sufficient means of carrying on, and resorted to the obnoxious poll tax, a tax not only unpopular but practically uncollectable, and when collectable at a cost out of proportion to the benefit derived. Finding it unpopular and largely uncollectable the Bell Government made it stick with which to beat its opponents both within and without its party, hauling them before the courts and even getting after some at the point of the gun. A country cannot be governed or administered successfully under such circumstances, as the Bell Government soon discovered, and so resorted to the ruse of making ends apparently meet by defraying current expenditure at the expense of funded debt, plunging the country deeper in the mire. The Stewart Government has had to straighten out the deplorable state of affairs, and the first thing it has done has been the placing of the funded debt on a secure basis and the introduction of an efficient system of book-keeping which shows at a glance the state of our finances. This proves conclusively that if we are to provide for our funded debt and carry on efficient services demanded of an up-to-date province more revenue than we now collect is necessary. How is this to be obtained? The most practical means is the pressing of our claims at Ottawa, claims which have been fully demonstrated in the Legislature last week. No better opportunity has been afforded for cashing in on these claims than the present.

OUR LOST ARTS

Every now and again we are solemnly and regretfully reminded that we of the present generation have lost some art, some custom, some blessed characteristic which sanctified and hallowed former generations. We have lost, so we are told, the politeness, the urbanity, the social graces which made society of the good old days a veritable paradise as seen through the misty distance of years and of hallowed tradition. It has now

been discovered that we have lost the art of conversation. A writer in a recent English publication, under the heading "The Lost Art of Conversation," says: "Speech as it is uttered in the rough and tumble of daily existence, is a broken, disconnected, formless thing. A group of persons talking together rarely finish a sentence or are allowed to say out their say without interruption. The talk is full of loose ends, of things badly said, of ill chosen words. The grammar is frightful. People do not keep to the point. They interrupt themselves and each other with irrelevances. They are long-winded. They will not use one word where a dozen will do, etc., etc."

This is probably all true although rather too general, but why call conversation a "lost art." Few informed men and women would care to admit that the conversation of our day has fallen off in brilliancy, effectiveness or charm as compared with the art of bygone days. Conversation is an art, a gift, if you will, but even when an inherited characteristic, it requires cultivation, language, intelligence, sympathy. Volubility is a gift but not an art, nor is it a pleasing or an admirable characteristic. True, volubility may help conversation but, as is too often the case, when it runs riot at the cost of intelligence and knowledge it loses whatever graces it may otherwise possess.

The art of conversation is one well worth cultivating, it is one of the most desirable of social accomplishments and may be acquired, under such circumstances, as the Bell Government soon discovered, and so resorted to the ruse of making ends apparently meet by defraying current expenditure at the expense of funded debt, plunging the country deeper in the mire. The Stewart Government has had to straighten out the deplorable state of affairs, and the first thing it has done has been the placing of the funded debt on a secure basis and the introduction of an efficient system of book-keeping which shows at a glance the state of our finances. This proves conclusively that if we are to provide for our funded debt and carry on efficient services demanded of an up-to-date province more revenue than we now collect is necessary. How is this to be obtained? The most practical means is the pressing of our claims at Ottawa, claims which have been fully demonstrated in the Legislature last week. No better opportunity has been afforded for cashing in on these claims than the present.

There is undoubtedly much truth in this somewhat serious accusation, but, with all due deference, we submit, it is too sweeping. The occasional ungrammatical and loose talker on the platform, in the drawing room or by the open fire place does not prove the loss of an art. We still have our orators and our brilliant conversationalists, but if we look back over the years we shall find that orators, poets, brilliant conversationalists have never come to this world of ours in flocks but generally in singles. We gain nothing by deprecating our own age. Nevertheless we submit without prejudice and without full concurrence these opinions from widely separated sources. They may serve to warn us against errors in conversation and faults in oratory and lead us into a more careful selection of phrases and words and the use of them.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

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Notes by the Way

Acting Premier Lapointe managed to keep enough Liberals and progressives in the House to stave off defeat, but no sooner had Premier King come back and resumed the leadership than his government was outvoted! And it was on a money vote, too. Well, there are leaders and leaders and some of them are not so capable as others. Was it a good or an evil omen that just as the Premier resumed the leadership of his "co-operating" followers the Toronto Globe stated that what the country needed and expected was "leadership"?

That the Budget will not be brought down until after Easter has been announced by Hon. J. A. Robb, the Finance Minister. After Easter means after the adjournment for that festival which comes this year on April 4th. That will be three months after the opening of the present session. That is painfully slow for the importers, wholesalers and business men of Canada all of whom are kept in suspense as to what tariff changes may be sprung upon them when Budget night shall come.

Slow coaches head the procession in both government and legislation. At every step it is admitted that the Co-operating Progressives must be consulted. Ministers propose measures, tariff changes and what not, but the Progressives dispose of them. Little wonder that progress is "slow as cold molasses" and not so sweet, and that the Budget, the crucial point in the session, is delayed. It is like one of our narrow gauge trains when the track is drifted with snow, or buried in ice and can only make half schedule time for fear of being derailed.

How much is a promise of Premier King or of any of his Ministers worth under existing conditions? The promise may be made over night and the promiser unable to fill it in the morning. A case in point was related in the Legislature of Nova Scotia by Mr. Barnjum. He said: "Four years ago Premier King promised me that he would pass an Order in Council tomorrow prohibiting the export of fee land wood from Canada but by tomorrow representatives of American paper manufacturers had interviewed Mr. King and he had suddenly changed his mind and was no longer in favor of the measure." That is the way it is if the Progressives or the Americans are opposed to what the Premier has promised.

Mr. Barnjum was a Liberal in those days, but he is not now classed as an ardent supporter of Premier King. After all it is more convenient and satisfactory to follow a party leader who gives evidence of some reliability and stability as well as ability. The estimates have been submitted to Parliament and certain Liberal journals even in the Maritime have expressed their pleasure that appropriations have been listed for public works and buildings here and there on the mainland. But we have not noticed any exultant shouts from our Liberal members, or from the Liberal press of Prince Edward Island over the generous expenditures to be made within our shores. However, the completion of the Hudson Bay Railway is on the list all right.

Political co-operation works like that. It has been found more profitable to stand outside of the official Liberal party and give orders that must be obeyed than it is to be inside and compelled to obey. And the outside Co-operators have all power to enforce their orders, holding the life of the Government in their hands.

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The Public Forum

This column is open for the discussion of questions of interest. The Charlottetown Guardian does not necessarily endorse the opinions of correspondents.

SAUCE FOR THE GOOSE

Sir.—The Patriot thinks that the sauce for the goose is too good for the gander. The Bell government adhered tenaciously to the practice of excluding Sinking Fund appropriations and Capital expenditure, from its Ordinary accounts in order to make up its fictitious surpluses. Now that its opponents are in power it deliberately adds those Sinking Funds and Capital outlay to the Stewart government balance in order to conjure up a deficit. If this practice was right when the Patriot editor was a member of the Government, it is equally right to follow that course today. And if it was right at that time, then it is nothing short of political effrontery to denounce and condemn the Stewart government for doing the same thing today.

I do not claim any preference for one system over the other, but do declare against that want of principle which seeks to make capital against an opposing party for doing the very course they followed themselves.

POLITICAL HONESTY

THE PATRIOT AND THE PUBLIC DEBT

Sir.—What is it that is causing such a burning indignation on the part of the Patriot and its inspirers in regard to the Public Debt? Is sore disappointment responsible for its flare of fallacy and misrepresentation? It may feel anger because the Stewart government is not such a rapid debt builder as the Bell combine, of which its editor was a member. But why show its hands so rampantly as to betray its weakness? Severe disappointment is no excuse, even though its prophecies during the bye-elections are ripped into rags. Here is one of them.—(Patriot, January 7th): "He (Mr. J. J. Johnston, K. C.) challenged Mr. Myers to state to the audience whether or not the liabilities of the Province were greater or less than two and a quarter million dollars, and then adding in big black type, 'BUT MR. MYERS WAS SILENT.'"

And now the Liberal manager is forced to admit that it was only a trifling two million of dollars astray in its estimate; that the total debt is two millions of dollars less than they anticipated, and the Stewart government's financial achievement is two million dollars better than the Patriot and its Liberal friends thought possible. This is sure economy, even if it does hurt opposing propagandists. Another of these truth-twisting lies may be found in the Patriot of Dec. 29. It's another of those brilliant gems of inaccuracy for which the Liberal organ is famous. Here it is: "We know that at the last session of the Legislature the public accounts showed an increased liabilities of \$329,000." Now the Public Accounts of Dec. 31st, 1925, the last year of the Bell government, showed the Liabilities to be \$1,791,653.37, and the accounts for 1925, (published in the Patriot) places the present Liabilities at \$2,048,740. This shows an increase of debt during the whole three years of the Stewart government to be only \$257,086.63, or nearly one hundred thousand dollars less than the dreary Liberal prattler charges against it in a single year. Can there be no relief from this straining of the truth?

Daily Selections FOR Guardian Readers

March 22, 1926

OUR STRENGTH AND SONG— "The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation. He is my God and I will prepare Him a habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt Him." Ex. 15-2.

BIRDS— "Darlings," God said to the birds, "Go now and sing. For men are weary of Winter, Go and bring Promises to empty branches" etc.

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That Body of Yours

Some idea of where dentistry and the dental profession are heading can be gained, when we learn that at some Universities the dental and medical students take a great many of their lectures together.

SAUCE FOR THE GOOSE

Some idea of where dentistry and the dental profession are heading can be gained, when we learn that at some Universities the dental and medical students take a great many of their lectures together. This is not hard to understand when we remember that medical and dental students must both understand anatomy, physiology, chemistry and so forth, but they must go along together still further because now a great many of the ailments that attack the entire body are known to be caused by poisons from the teeth. In fact our dental friends are doing considerable research work along this line.

In common with medical research men they are finding that abscesses at the roots of teeth, where the nerve has been killed, may be causing serious heart, kidney, and intestinal ailments. Before the advent of the X ray the dentist went calmly on, killing the nerve and filling the teeth, and as long as the teeth gave no pain he felt that his work was well done. The X ray showed him that 90% of these teeth where the nerve had been killed, had no root filling, or else incomplete ones.

THE PATRIOT AND THE PUBLIC DEBT

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