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MONDAY JANUARY 4, 1915.

AMPLE ROOM FOR OPTIMISM

It is just three years, since the Province by an overwhelming majority of 28 Liberal Conservatives to 2 Liberals, returned the present Government to power, and it is opportune that a retrospect be taken of the work accomplished during that period.
To fully appreciate the position it is necessary to recall the condition of affairs in the fall of 1911. The Liberals had been in office since 1891, and from that date the financial position of the Province had gone steadily from bad to worse until it had practically reached a hopeless condition, and the Government was at its wits end to know where to turn to get revenue to carry on the affairs of the Province. Not only had the public services been steadily running down, but our population had declined in twenty years from 109,000 to 93,000, a decline of 16,000. School enrolment had fallen from 23,000 to 17,000. The Public Works of the Province were in such a condition that when an examination was made by the officers of the present Government they reported that in order to rebuild the bridges that were absolutely in need of being rebuilt, and to execute the necessary repairs, it would cost \$123,000.
The late Governments had used up the assets of the Province, even the capital of the Province, to the amount of over two and a half million dollars since the Province entered Confederation. In 1873 we had miscellaneous credits to the amount of \$515,600 odd. These were withdrawn and spent for one purpose and another, and in addition the Province had run into debt to the extent of \$1,072,000.
That was the position which Mr. Mathieson's Government had to face when it entered upon office. It was a serious situation to face, but the Premier and his Executive were undaunted by it. By careful study of the conditions while in the shades of opposition they had planned out a scheme of retrenchment and reform which they would follow when they returned to power. The Province, as we have said, gave them an almost unanimous vote of confidence three years ago today, and we may now take a backward look and see how they have justified this confidence.

At December 2, 1911, the debt and current liabilities of the Province amounted to \$1,072,000.77; at 31st December, 1913, it totalled \$1,002,484, a reduction of some \$70,000. In 1911 the income was \$374,797.82, and in 1913, \$511,327.99, showing an increase of \$136,530.17.

On December 2, 1911, our surplus indebtedness overbalancing the amount to our credit at Ottawa was \$179,206.27; on December 31, 1913, this was reduced to \$108,856.20, or a reduction in two years of \$70,350.07.

These figures speak for themselves and almost require no comment. They point merely to the first two years of the Government's term of office and prove that the people of Prince Edward Island made no mistake in calling a halt to the extravagance and mismanagement that had been running the Province to irretrievable bankruptcy during the previous fifteen years.

We need hardly refer to the successful manner in which the Government made out its case for an increased subsidy of \$100,000 to the Dominion Government. It succeeded where its predecessors had failed:—in fact, the last Liberal Premier but one, soundly declared that it was no use going to the Dominion with any further claims as they would not be listened to.

The present Government took nothing for granted; it laid its plans to Ottawa, put forward a case that brooked no denial, and came back with the promise of an additional hundred thousand dollars.

The same thoroughness, perseverance and indomitable pluck have characterized all its efforts, with the satisfactory result we have before us today. The Island's finances were never, since Confederation, on as sound a basis; the Public Works, institutions and general affairs of the Island were never so satisfactory and efficient, and the Province itself never more prosperous or progressive. Instead of pessimism, gloom and general dissatisfaction we have optimism, buoyancy and a spirit of hopefulness which has given to the Province the reputation of being the most prosperous, progressive and successful in the Confederation of Canada, in this year of grace, 1915.

Were we to go into details of the work of the Government during the past three years, we would require a volume instead of a column of the Guardian to show the upward tendency and improvement which have been brought about. We need merely point out that the Government has expended on the construction of permanent bridges more than twice as much as was expended by its predecessors in twenty years. It has done for education in the past three years, more than was previously accomplished by its predecessors since the days of Confederation. The teaching profession has been re-organized and put in line with the best systems in vogue in the other Provinces. Teachers' salaries have been increased; the enrolment of pupils has steadily increased; school books, which were formerly a sore burden for the average parent, have been put into price and brought within the means of people with limited incomes, and altogether the vote for the Education Department has been increased to a total of \$1,770,000.

Agriculture, in addition to benefiting by the vote of \$100,000, has received a subsidy of \$20,000, which is being utilized for the development of agricultural education. The short courses and long courses for farmers are now recognized institutions and, we are pleased to say, being largely taken advantage of and appreciated by the rising generation of this agricultural community.

The oyster industry, which had been steadily declining since 1891, when 43,000 barrels were exported, till 1913, when only 8,835 barrels were exported, has been taken in hand and dealt with in a manner which has not only commended itself to those directly interested in the great industry in the Island, but to the wholesale oyster merchants' associations in Montreal and New York, who have issued on Premier Mathieson's scheme as the only practical method of handling a grave and difficult situation. Some differences and misapprehension existed at the outset, as was to be expected upon an innovation of the kind; but, owing to the manner in which Premier Mathieson handled the question, making the oyster fishermen as well as the

capitalists into his confidence and placing before them all the facts and information bearing upon the subject, these difficulties and misapprehensions have been swept away and today we have practically nothing but approval and commendation of the plans which are being developed and carried into effect.

The question of roads has also been solved in a practical manner. The new scheme met with a good deal of opposition, but the results have proved that the road act of 1912 provided the best means within the limit of our road vote for the maintenance and improvement of the highways of the Province.

The telegraphic system of the Island had been a hardy annual for complaint by the commercial community. The Government tackled it in its first year of office, with the result that now two new cables have been laid and an agreement entered into with the Anglo-American and Western Telegraph Companies for a reduction and improvement in telegraphic service; and a working arrangement with the Telephone Company whereby rates have been provided that put us on an equality with any point on the mainland.

The provision of a dredge for procuring oyster mud as a fertilizer from the waters surrounding our coasts will ultimately be of inestimable value to the farmers not only along the coast but inland, as arrangements have been made with the railway whereby this fertilizer will be carried at a minimum freight rate.

These are some of the items in the programme of the Government that occur to us as suitable for recall at the present time. There are many more deserving of notice and these will occur to most of our readers. We need not refer to the energy with which the Government pursued its efforts to secure the practical fulfilment of the promise for the car ferry. The ferry is now under construction and the ferry steamer is docked in England ready to have its boilers and engines installed.

The efforts of Premier Mathieson and his colleagues to effect the restoration of our original representation in the Dominion Government must be fresh in every one's memory. They left nothing undone that could have been done in order to impress not only upon the Government but the Premiers at the Inter-Provincial Conference, and the Opposition, the justice of our claim, and succeeded to this extent, that the Government left it to the committee of the Redistribution Bill to decide whether or not we should obtain the representation granted on our entering Confederation. The committee did not recommend in the terms we hoped for, but the representations of the Government, together with those of Messrs. McLean and Nicholson in the House of Commons and Senator Murphy in the Senate, resulted in both houses agreeing that our minimum representation should be not fewer than 4. Owing to a breach of faith on the part of the Liberal party, this latter arrangement has so far not been fulfilled, but we are in confident hope and expectation that before the Dominion Government goes to the country, some means will be found of effecting the minimum representation of four as at present.

This brief review at the beginning of the New Year will tend to show that we have ample ground for optimism and satisfaction in that, at a time of universal depression the Government of Prince Edward Island should have been in the hands of men who are able and willing to devote their time, energy and abilities to piloting its affairs from bankruptcy to solvency and general prosperity.

RUSSIA

Intense interest now centres in the struggle in the East between the un-quieted hordes of Russia and the re-inforced armies of Germany and Austria. The reports from this side are vague and often contradictory, but even Germany admits that she is being outnumbered and harassed. And a safe inference is that the Russian steam roller is steadily forcing its way down in the direction of Germany.

Von Hindenburg, the German Commander in Chief in the East, estimates that Russia has 1,500,000 troops at the front. They are fighting along a battle line of 250 miles. The Germans have the advantage of having control of numerous railways and are therefore in a position to move their troops rapidly. Their experience so far has been that when they gain an advantage at one centre they are met by a greatly strengthened Russian force which checks further advance when it does not compel a retreat.

From all appearances the Russian army is fully capable of continuing the war indefinitely. The country's resources in men, money and natural wealth are vast. The population is 175,000,000 or more and increases at the rate of 3,000,000 a year, despite heavy losses at times through famine and pestilence. In the war with Japan it is estimated that the total loss was 350,000 soldiers. In the last great famine in 1892 about 700,000 persons are said to have perished. Such losses would be disastrous to most countries, but in Russia they are hardly noticed, so great is the territory and so vast is the number of the people. As a matter of fact, the Empire can afford to ignore what would cause national worry elsewhere. There is no limit, indeed, practically speaking, to the number of men who can be called to the colors, if the people are willing. And they should be willing at the present juncture, for they are fighting a country they hate. There is no love lost between a Russian and a German.

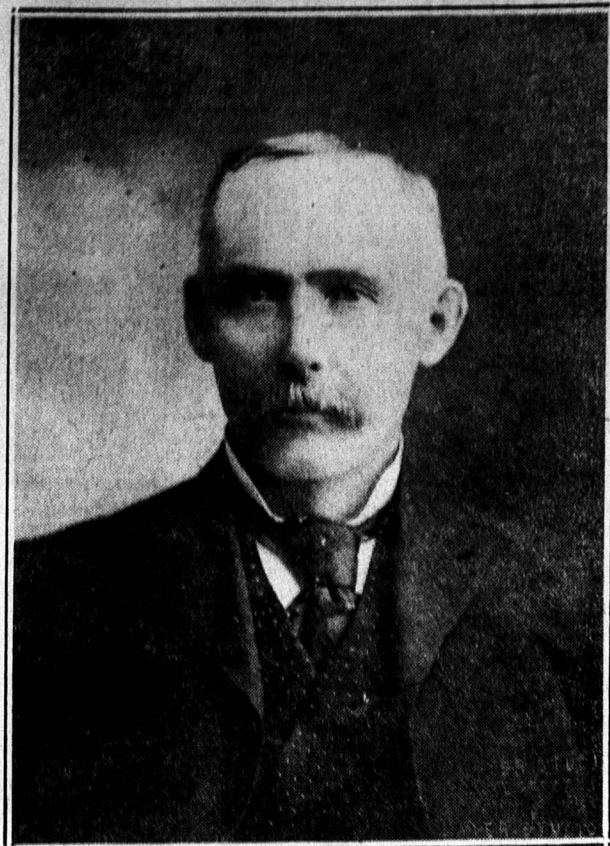
As with men, so with money. Russia has an annual revenue of about £300,000,000 and a war reserve of £165,000,000. At a pinch huge sums could be borrowed at home, for there are many men of wealth in the cities. With respect to food supplies also, there should be no shortage. The country has enough cereals for its population and an easily exportable great amount besides. The fields have not been neglected in the least on account of the war, and there is no limit to the land available for cultivation. To sum up, it may be said that if there is one nation that can afford to wage warfare it is Russia.

NOTES

In our review of the year in our Friday's issue, reference to the magnificent work being done on behalf of the Red Cross Society was inadvertently omitted. It should have been mentioned that the Red Cross Society in conjunction with the Women's Patriotic Fund has collected upwards of \$38,000.

The management of the P.E. Island Railway has been advised that the Saturday excursion rates will be continued after the beginning of the New Year until further notice. It will be remembered that at the recent conference between the Board of Trade and the I.C.R. management, these special rates were granted only until December 31st, with a promise of favourably considering further extension. The action of the management in making this concession will be fully appreciated by all our people throughout the province, to whom the Saturday excursion was a great convenience.

The Government of Holland finds it necessary to borrow \$110,000,000, and intimates that another loan will follow. Holland has been more hardy struck by the war than any of the neutral nations. Holland's sea trade, which was largely in merchandise from or to Germany, has been broken up, and she has been compelled to put guns on the frontier and to care for thousands of soldiers of the fighting armies marched over her borders to save them from surrendering. Also she has had to care for more thousands of Belgian civilians who fled their country before the German invasion. She will have a big claim on the war indemnity fund, wherever in the end they have to pay it.



HON JOHN McLEAN.

THE BELGIANS. WHAT NEXT?

Sir.—The sympathy already awakened in Canada for the disinherited Belgians is one of the finest incidents which has marked the progress of the European War. Canada in common with England has recognized that the Belgian people have rendered imperishable service to the cause which the Allies represent—the cause of freedom and popular government as against autocracy and militarism—of international law and order against the people's "greed and self-interest" and of Christian civilization against barbarism and predatory violence. The British Empire became debtors to the Belgians for the heroic defence of Liege when for ten days, General Leman and his twelve forts kept the gate of Belgium against the whole military force of the German Empire. Those ten days saved Paris and made a successful resistance possible on the western line of defence. Belgium has paid for her heroism by the most terrible desolation which has overtaken any European people in modern history. A million and a half of her people are exiled. Twice that number are still on the Continent and out of work—and without the means of opportunity of employment—their homes destroyed—their capital confiscated or swept away—and their prospects of recovery removed into a distant future. At this moment those who recognize our debt to Belgium feel that the first thing is to keep the people from starving—and this is being done, owing to the generous supplies which have come from this side of the Atlantic. But the present efforts at relief are only postponing from day to day the pressure of starvation, and many must already have asked the question—What next?

A people so far-sighted and practical as the people of Canada must have asked that question already—so that no apology is required for submitting some considerations which may be found useful.
1. Among the refugees in London there are many who can think of no future except a return to Belgium and an attempt to rebuild their homes, which have been ruthlessly destroyed. But this is not the mind of the young men. They are inclined to say—"We have seen everything we care for and worked for destroyed. We must begin life again somewhere, and we mean to begin where the fruits of our work will not be taken from us. Our experience such as we have had is enough for a lifetime. Our eyes are turning now to the new world across the land of hope for us. Is there any way of getting a start there?"
2. The Belgian people are as a whole so thrifty, clean, industrious, and as willing workers as any that are found in Europe. But they are so situated in a community-fold, they have not the time or independence which makes the Scot an ideal emigrant, or the smiling humor which makes the Irishman at home anywhere. If they come over here as individual units and strays they will probably succumb to the strangeness of their new surroundings—drift into the foreign quarters of large cities, and add a fresh element to an overstocked market for casual labour. If they could come over as communities—agriculturists—shopkeepers—Clerks—teachers—headworkers and labourers together—is something like their old relationships, they would find it much easier to "make good," and they would probably add a much more positive and useful element to the life of Canada.

3. Such a migration of communities to Canada would not seriously interfere with the repopulation of Belgium when that becomes possible. Belgium was a densely populated country with a population of nearly eight million packed into a strip of country only a little more than half the size of Nova Scotia. A dense population can live on a narrow strip of ground when it grows there—but once disturbed it is very difficult to get it back. It will be many years before Belgium is in a condition to support the same number of people as it maintained before the war. While we are waiting for that, there is almost time to create a new Belgium on this side of the Atlantic. On the other hand the Kaiser succeeds in keeping any part of Belgium for his German subjects, the Belgians will not want to return to bear a foreign yoke—nor will they be wanted by the Germans except to pay heavy war taxes.

4. There are in Canada considerable tracts of land which might be used for Belgian settlements. These are probably many patriotic and philanthropic Canadians ready to advance capital with the object of securing a pied a terre for the Belgians, and at

the same time adding a valuable element to the population of Canada. They know that if the Belgians come here they will bring them their own skill, industry, and proficiency in such arts as flower-culture, lace-making, glass manufacture, and the thrifty habits of continental civilization.

5. What is required now is a definite proposal, or a series of definite proposals—putting on the most favorable terms possible the opportunities which can be offered to Belgian communities to settle in Canada. Such offers should be free from any suspicion of exploiting a suffering people for private interest. It is a case where the most unselfish consideration of other people's needs will bring an abundant return after a term of years. But at this moment those who have charge of Belgian interests in London will take care that only genuine and advantageous offers are submitted to them, is it not an occasion for Canadian initiative as well as Canadian philanthropy? This is a matter which must be left with the intelligence and conscience of the people of Canada. We owe it to humanity—as well as to the credit of the British Empire—to do our best for a people who have laid us so deeply under debt. Many will envy Canada the opportunity it has of doing something to make up to these people for the cruelties and indignities they have suffered. I have perfect confidence that when the question is clearly put before the people of the Dominion they will be found ready to give an adequate and sufficient response to the need of a brave people in a great emergency.

I am, Sir, etc., DUGALD MacFADYEN, Hotel Seville, New York, N. Y.

KAISER SINGS HIS USUAL GODLY CHANT.

BERLIN, Jan. 2.—Emperor William's Christmas celebration at the German military headquarters is described today in the Koelnische Zeitung, which says a large number of officers and soldiers attached to the headquarters participated in the festivities. The celebration was held in a large room which was decorated elaborately with Christmas trees. The Emperor, on entering the room, greeted the soldiers with: "Good evening, comrades." After a short sermon had been delivered, Emperor William made the following speech:

"Comrades, we are here assembled in arms to celebrate the holy festival which otherwise in peace we would be celebrating at home. Our thoughts go back to those whom we have left at home, to whom we owe all the presents on the tables before us. "It has been permitted by God that the enemy should force us to celebrate Christmas here. We have been attacked. We armed ourselves with God's help. We hope that for us and our country rich victory may spring from the hard fight. "We are on hostile ground. The point of our sword is directed against the enemy, our hearts to our God. We say, as once the Great elector did, 'down with all enemies of Germany.'"

NEW YORK QUARANTINED FOR CATTLE DISEASE.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 2.—New York City and New York County were quarantined yesterday by the department of agriculture because of foot and mouth disease in cattle. "Palm Olive—a pure, clean soap with a soft creamy lather that thoroughly cleans and tends the skin. Palm Olive is the cream of soap purity. It is sure to satisfy you. MacKinnon Drug Co., Cor. Great George and Kent and Kent Streets, Montreal.

Prince Edward Trey O'Hearts EPISODE NO. 9 "As the Crow Flies" This great picture has now struck its proper stride. Today's number is crammed full of life and action. S The daring and sensational rescue and flight E in a Hydroplane, the sensational escape of E Allan and Rose on a special chartered engine. The Edison Company Presents AUGUSTUS PHILLIPS -IN- Within the Enemy's Lines -A Civil War Drama in Two Parts- -FROM- "A CAPTURED SANTA CLAUS" By Thomas Nelson Page. Col. Heeza Liar Fire Proofing Babies Animated Cartoons by J. R. Bray. Pond Life Educational. Matinee 3 to 5 Night 7 to 10.30. The Old Plaid Shawl Mr. Arthur Huskins.

-To Our- Soldiers and Sailors Customers and Friends Hyndman & Co. Ltd. General Insurance Agency. 61 Queen Street, Charlottetown. Includes illustration of a child with a sign saying 'BEST WISHES'.

A Comfort in Cold Weather The Perfection Oil Heater is the neatest, most economical and satisfactory for heating any room—large or small. It will heat quickly and thoroughly, is smokeless, odorless and safe. The Perfection uses less fuel, gives more heat, and can be used for many more purposes than others. Call in and see the line we are showing. Fennell & Chandler Victoria Row. Includes illustration of an oil heater.

Hockey Boots We have on hand a complete line of hockey boots for you to select from. Made from the proper materials and will fit to insure you the greatest comfort. All heels are securely riveted and seams strongly sewn. McPhersons Lighting Hitch in Myle Hide & Box Kids with half and spring heel—made of strong leather—giving you a firm ankle and making skating much easier. Men's, Women's, Boy's, Children's in several leathers at moderate prices. GOFF BROS 128 Richmond Street