

PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE.

(Continued from page 2.)

The same hon. gentleman said further that there was "nothing in it but a piece of birch bark." "I dare say," added Mr. Birch, "that the hon. gentleman's acquaintance with birch bark is much greater than mine. I have no doubt but the birch bark canoe as it glided noiselessly down the Hillsboro propelled by an ashen paddle, and the birch bark wigwam that graces the hillside, are much more familiar to the hon. gentleman's friends than they are to mine.

Mr. Peters rose to a point of order and said that if the hon. member meant to insinuate that there was Indian blood in him he was mistaken. There was no Indian blood in him.

"If the hon. gentleman had not been so personal he might have saved himself," remarked Mr. Birch, "but I have told him that I shall always give him an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." The hon. gentleman's next charge was that the Conservatives took "\$200,000 from capital." The Conservatives do not deny it.

But if they took that amount they were ably assisted by the Liberals of the Legislative Council. At that time, said Mr. Birch, there was another branch of this Legislature, and all measures had to pass that branch as well as this one, and to become law it was just as necessary for a measure to pass the Legislative Council as it was to pass the House of Assembly. At that time the Council was composed of ten Liberals and three Conservatives, and if it were not for the assistance of the Liberal Councillors the money could not have been drawn. But what did the Conservatives do? They, by the able manner in which they have always managed the affairs of state, were successful in placing to our credit at Ottawa an additional subsidy of \$20,000 a year for all time to come. The hon. member from St. Peter's says they came into power to "economize and to make both ends meet." Yes, and this is how they economized: In the year 1893 they spent on the roads alone \$42,971.42, or only \$27,971.42 more than the total vote of the House for that service. There was spent that year in Queen's County \$16,821.51. Will the hon. gentleman tell this House why such an extraordinary expenditure took place in Fort Augustus? The Supervisor of District No. 8 spent \$3,521.54. Was this an honest expenditure? Were their roads so bad in that district that they required about one-fourth of the total vote for the Island? Or was this an election year? When the hon. gentleman talks about deficits one would think they were strangers to them. The gentlemen on that side of the House look upon them as a horrible nightmare ever since they promised the people of this Island that they would make ends meet. For the information of the hon. gentleman whose memory seems bad he (Mr. Birch) gave a list of the deficits since these economical gentlemen came into power:—

1891.....	\$ 30,459 20
1892.....	37,651 29
1893.....	119,216 33
1894.....	20,164 21
1895.....	32,682 80
1896.....	14,135 65
1897.....	33,201 65
1898.....	25,516 77
1899.....	36,915 03
	\$355,102 93

Or the total sum of \$355,102.93 in deficit for nine years. This is a pretty bad showing for men who came into power to make ends meet. And then these men promised us that the day of taxation was far off. The Premier in 1893 said that he could not see that day with the no-powerful telescope he could procure. But alas for their electioneering pledges; they were like pie crust, made only to be broken. In the year 1894, regardless of

their most solemn declarations to the contrary, a tax act was imposed on the people by which these gentlemen have taken out of the pockets of the people the sum of \$284,143.66 in six years. What reliance are we to place on the declarations of such men? Then they say the Conservative Government got refunds which helped them. To hear those men you would think they never got any such thing as a refund, and that it was almost criminal to look after the best interests of the Island. And while they condemn the Conservatives for getting refunds they deny that they got any. What are the facts? They got in the year,—

1891.....	\$ 1,289 00
1892.....	6,693 20
1893.....	3,229 93
1897.....	11,843 16
1899.....	3,500 00
Making the sum of.....	\$ 26,555 29

This shows that in order to be correct we must investigate for ourselves and not take the statements of these gentlemen. Then they say that the debt of the province amounts to \$590,000, a very respectable sum. But upon investigation we find it much larger than that. The statements as shown in the Public Accounts are as follows:

Due banks.....	\$136,756 77
Debitures ac.....	169,693 70
Debitures, P.W.C.....	35,497 50
Loans ac.....	160,464 89
Teachers salary.....	28,599 08
Balance on contracts.....	42,509 39
Total.....	\$571,797 26

When the Conservatives were in power the debt was a little over \$1.00 per head; but now we find those men have increased it to over \$5.00 per head of our population. The Leader said that we were the highest taxed people in the world, and cited New Brunswick with \$8.53, Nova Scotia \$8.24, Quebec \$23.00, Ontario \$28.16. His ambition seems to eclipse these provinces, and he would accomplish it if he keeps going at his present pace. Now how do we compare with those provinces named in regard to resources? Where are our minerals? Where are our coal deposits? Where are our gold mines? We have no natural wealth to fall back upon, only, like the cat, one trick, direct taxation. Then we are told that we have thirty-two road machines which are a very great factor in giving us good roads. Well, he (Mr. Birch) watched closely the operations of those road machines and was fully convinced that they are an injury rather than a benefit to our roads. We find that where they have been operated on our roads that is just the place they are in the worst condition. Those road machines cut the brow of the road away, throw it in the centre, then those sods are covered with loose clay, and when driven over leaves the roads full of ruts. When the rainy season comes on the roads are just a mass of mud. Then those men tell us how grateful the people of this Island ought to be to the present Liberal Government at Ottawa for the Murray Harbor and Belfast Railway. They forget to tell the people of this country that in 1896 John Haggart, Minister of Railways and Canals, passed a resolution committing the Government of the Dominion to the construction of not only 60 miles of railway but 105 miles as follows:—

Miles.	
Summerside northward.....	3
Emerald northward.....	7
North Wilshire Station South.....	10
Royal Y Junction northerly.....	9
Southport south eastwardly.....	60
Harmony eastward.....	8
O'Leary Station westward.....	8

One hundred and five miles in all. Those gentlemen did it in a business-like way. An estimate was made of the total cost, \$1,088,000, and he firmly believed that if the Conservative Government had been returned to power the lines above enumerated would have been in operation before this. They would not do as the present Government has done—call for tenders for 11½ miles, turn the first sod and apparently go no further. He would ask those hon. gentlemen how it is that the contractor has discontinued the work? Will there be another demonstration to turn the sod back. Thus the Island has lost 45 miles of railway by the misfortune of returning the Liberals to power. He would like to ask the Leader of the Government if the report is true that is in circulation that the bridge we are to get across the Hillsboro is the old iron bridge which now spans the Mirimachi River and which the Minister of Railways and Canals has discovered is too weak for the large engines of the I. C. R.? Is this the reason the Leader is unable to table the specification? There appears to be a mystery surrounding it which no supporter of the Government will rise to explain that a bridge of such magnitude is to be constructed without a specification, is beyond apprehension. The hon. gentleman says that "they take no stock in bye-elections." Well, that is a fact; up to the present time they have not. But the electors have been taking stock of them. They have weighed them in the balance and found them wanting. Out of the four bye-elections the people have refused to have those men reign over them. Is it not a fact that every device and artifice known to political schemers has been used by the Government? They even had Sir Louis H. Davies brought in to service and what he could do with eloquence threats and intimidation was done. But the voice of the temper was not heard, and Summerside, Tignish, Murray Harbor and Belfast returned opponents of the government. The hon. gentleman has said that the Conservatives when in power paid the banks 6 and 7 per cent. interest on overdrafts, but when they came into power they issued debentures which they only paid four per cent. interest on.

Well, if this is a fact the Conservatives must have had very small overdrafts as their average interest was only about \$3000.00 per year, and those gentlemen are paying over nineteen thousand dollars a year in interest. He would ask the hon. gentlemen why they do not issue debentures and pay off the overdraft that they have now at the banks and for which they are paying 6 or 7 per cent? According to a statement called for by the Opposition they had an overdraft of over \$159,000, which is an alarming state of affairs when they got the half-yearly subsidy in January, and proves conclusively the extravagance of those men. They say the Conservatives were a government of delegations. He thought they could not pay a higher compliment to them than to acknowledge that. What honors we conferred on our country by such delegations! We got the better terms of fifty thousand dollars a year; we got one hundred and seventy-three thousand dollars for wharves and piers and an additional subsidy of twenty thousand dollars a year for all time. Surely we have been successful. Had they men of the same stamp and ability they might not have had so many fruitless missions to their credit. The hon. member for Tignish (Mr. Pineau) gives it as his reason for changing his political creed, that when he came into this House and looked up the Public Accounts, and found a surplus of \$5,800, he changed his mind. What reliance is to be placed on this statement when it is known by every member that he sat in this House and voted with the Government on every question for seven days, before he ever saw the Public Accounts or they were laid on the table? Next he says he was no sooner elected than the Conservatives wanted to get clear of him. Never was a statement further from the truth. They treated him with the utmost confidence and respect. He never called a public meeting to contradict stories circulated in reference to his allegiance to the Conservative party. The only meetings he called was the "conveners' meetings," which meetings he never attended because he left for pastures new before the time arrived to hold those meetings. Neither was there a candidate chosen to take his place at the next elections. All those statements are miserable subterfuges for a crooked and unmanly course. Mr. Pineau says he has a number of letters from Conservative electors approving of the course he has taken. He (Mr. Birch) defied the hon. gentleman to produce one. He would not pursue this matter any further. He would leave Mr. Pineau to the tender mercies of an indignant and outraged electorate who will deal with him as he deserves. In a few short months the noble youths who have gone to the Transvaal and who have won such honor and fame not only for the Island but this broad Dominion as well, will be returning to this grand old city of Charlottetown. He could already see its citizens all alive wending their way to meet them. He could hear the strains of martial music, the tap of the great drum, the roar of artillery, the crash of musketry. He could see the illumination in every window, and the magnificent fire works which illuminate the very heavens. Why is all this for the boys? Because they deserve it. On the other hand he could see the hon. gentleman returning to his home after this session is over. No anxious crowd is pressing to the station, no martial music is playing, the roar of artillery is hushed, the crash of musketry is not heard, no illumination pierces the blackness of the night, no fireworks illuminate the heavens. The record of this man is dark; he is getting his just deserts.

ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL.—After the festival service in St. Peter's Cathedral last evening, in connection with the feast-day of Trinity Sunday, the choir proceeded to the sanctuary and sang a Te Deum in thanksgiving for our late successes in South Africa. The National Anthem was then sung.

The Prince Edward Island Magazine for June is now on sale at all the book-stores and newsstands. If you are not a regular reader of this interesting magazine begin by getting a copy of the June number.

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