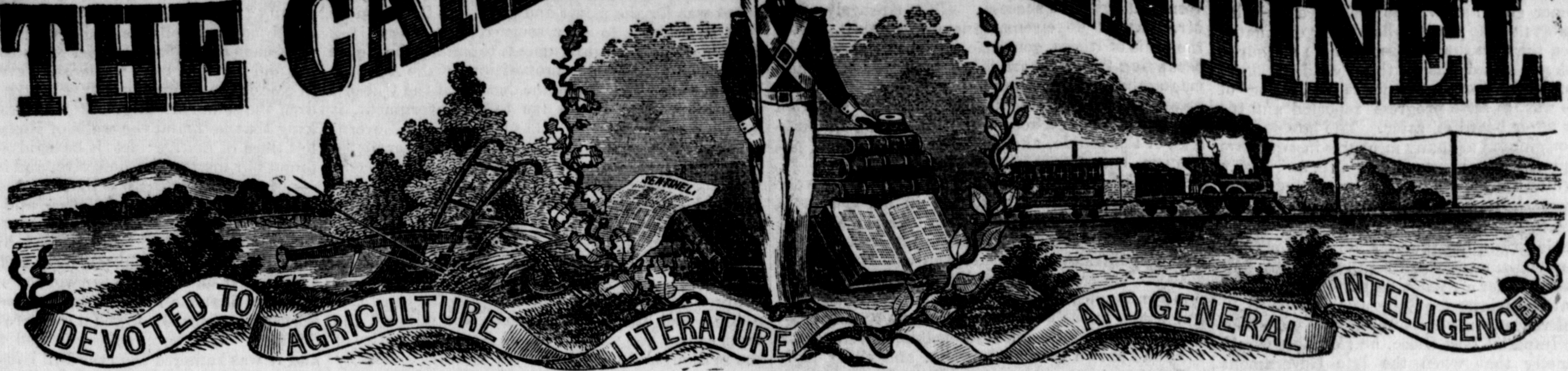


# THE CARLETON SENTINEL



SAMUEL WATTS, Editor.]

"Our Queen and Constitution."

[A. C. & J. A. McLAUCHLAN, PUBLISHERS.]

VOL. IX.

WOODSTOCK, N. B., SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 1857.

NO. 29.

## Parliamentary.

### WANT OF CONFIDENCE DEBATE.—Continued from Fifth Page.

this been complied with. [Hon. Attorney General—"We gave the work to two distinct contractors without tenders; I will explain—" Mr. Johnston continued—He would explain for him. The Law prescribes Tenders—and very properly—to secure the best and cheapest work, and to exclude favouritism; and even if the Commissioners had been appointed they must have conformed to its directions. The assumption of such power might strengthen a government, but it also did that which the Law absolutely prohibits. The Law required tenders, and the Commissioners could not accept a higher tender, until for the protection of the public, they laid them before the Government. How then could that Law be complied with when a member of the Government was himself the agent, and might put his feet down and require the government to follow his views. The House it is true had been informed that Mr. Chandler had got nothing for his travelling expenses; but did that mean that he was not yet to be paid? The hon. gentleman was just as likely to receive pay as any one else; and however good his character might be he had been always pretty well paid. It was wrong to grant him such power as would expose him to so great a temptation. It would be remembered that Mr. Hicks of Canada, either right or wrong, had had things said of him in connexion with Railways. He and Mr. Chandler had once gone to England together on a Railway mission; and the assumption here of a power which Mr. Hicks was said to have abused in Canada, would operate unfavourably in the case of the former.—Again, without the commissioners, who on the construction of certain parts of the works were to pay certain amounts of money, how could the public know what work had been properly done, or what amount of money paid? He did not suspect Mr. Chandler, but he must say that no man in the Province should be placed in such a position. It was contrary to law, and unjustifiable in practice. It was possible to take a higher tender—certify the work—draw the money, and the contractor give a good bonus, without detection. The country did not expect this extraordinary conduct: for at the short Session, when a question was put to the Government on the subject of the Railways, the answer of the Attorney General was that they would carry out the Acts until some further legislation. Had they done so? ["Yes," by Mr. Barbare.] No, they had violated every section of the Law in relation to tenders, commissioners, and appraisers, and they had in this manner expended the public money. In 1856 they had opposed the Railway scheme—subsequently they adopted it—and later still, they acted in its violation. They now also complained that the opposition did not wait for the production of their measures, but this was also contrary to the plan which they had themselves adopted. They might shake a file of papers in the face of the members, and say—"oh, wait till we make you familiar with all these," but the inside of those papers, if so satisfactory, might have been foreshadowed in the Attorney General's Speech, and he would have produced it in that way if he had not been afraid of the consequences. Here the learned member read a section from the law relating to the line from Fredericton to Woodstock, and Shediac to Miramichi, they had it was said devoted a bunch of shingles to the former in marking the line, but both were to have an equal amount. They said when last here that they would carry out the law; but when they went home and consulted among themselves, they acted otherwise. They had not in their conduct towards the line to Miramichi, expended even so much as the bunch of shingles.

And now, with respect to the tenders, could the Attorney-General deny that Messrs. Small & Crosby had not tendered to do the work for £25,000.—[Hon. Attorney-General—"I deny that there was any tender received from them, in accordance with the notice." What was wrong? He (Mr. J.) had heard that the tender had been refused because Mr. Hatheway had declined to accept the Commissionership. They say they were pressed for time, and that the work could be done in winter as well as summer,—and in hard cuttings perhaps it might; but surely this could not be the case in making the line across a marsh. Why, if they were so much driven for time, had they not sent up to Shediac for the rails which there lay covered with snow, sufficient for six miles? It would be better than to

send for iron which has since been lost. ["It has not been lost," by a member.] So much the worse: for if it had, instead of being wrecked and declared useless, for the present at least, because it could not be got, the country would get the insurance.—The Hon. Attorney General had said that the Provincial credit had been exhausted by the late Government. He denied it. The late Secretary had brought in an estimate to correspond with the expenditures, and a Railway Bill to meet it; and it was better to do so than to lay an improper tax upon the people for money not required. On the contrary, the late Government found the Province heavily involved in debt, and yet they managed, to the last moment, and in the midst of a general depression, to preserve the public credit. [Here several statements relating to the Loan Bill, the Post-Office receipts and expenditures, were made by Mr. Johnston and denied by Mr. Wilmot; and a question of order was argued for awhile on the subject of interruptions.] The debt due the Imperial Post-Office when the late Government came in was £2,114, as they would find by the Journals of '55, and they had paid in two drafts £2,115, while the only amount due when they went out and the present Government came in was £900, for six months; and the Government who came in in June, 1856, were themselves accountable for any defalcation, as they had made no payment till 15th Dec., 1856, when it amounted to £2,394. The Attorney-General thought it a dreadful thing to smile when the opposition spoke of the injury done to our credit by not drawing the Debentures according to law; but when he referred to the neglect to pay the Post-Office, he thought it was a good joke: he may now laugh at the same thing again, and at his own expense. He requested them to tell the name of the man who knocked at the Treasury door and was denied payment. What were the claims not paid? He trusted the present Government had not paid a large claim of Col. Hayward, which the late Government refused, nor the account of the painter who took the note of the Commissioner of Public Buildings for his account, the amount of which the Commissioner had received. He understood this note had been discounted and renewed several times.—The person applied to the Government, but they had paid the Commissioner, and the painter had taken his note when he should have claimed the money. There were other improper claims made, and he trusted these had not been paid, but there were no other; and if the Government had paid any they had done wrong. If they said they managed the financial affairs of the country with more honesty or ability than had been displayed by the late Secretary (Mr. Tilley), then he would tell them the country would not believe it.

Next came this perfect scheme of Immigration; a scheme which needed only to be extended to our own people, and in a few years every one requiring land for settlement, would seek it elsewhere. The only justification of this absurd measure was that it did not abrogate the old plan, but he would tell them in reply to this singular and flimsy defence that it did, so far as the blocks named in the scheme were concerned. New land might be had under the old regulation at 2s. 6d. per acre, with a grant to issue at once, and as much time as could be desired for settlement; but by this "new and magnificent scheme" the poor Immigrant must pay down for it at the old price, must settle on it, build a house, and conform to an impossibility, by cutting down and clearing it in the same season. It was well known that people with large means do not often immigrate here. The class of settlers which we might expect were those who first would come here as farm-servants, and while learning the business of the country and earning a little money, would thus make their apprenticeship productive, and prepare themselves for becoming useful settlers. From such as these the Province lands were by this scheme blocked up for ever. "Aye, but" say the government, "we are going to make the roads." This was not the right way to make them. It was a side wind way instead of a bold and manly way of expending the revenues. Better let the Immigrants make their own roads and credit them with the labour.

But this whole scheme was to be carried out by Mr. Perley, who had ever been an attached friend of the party now in power—so much so that they could never attempt anything without his assistance. But could Mr. Perley go home as an Emigrant agent with his document of last year staring him in the face? In his annual Report dated 14th January 1856, he states:

"There has been a considerable stream of Emigration from this Province during the past year," and "it appears

to me that the existing population is sufficient for the amount of labor to be performed; and until material changes take place in the business and affairs of the Province, I can hold out little or no encouragement to Emigrants of the labouring class."

Thus it would seem that the gentleman's own words were at variance with his mission, and calculated to drive people from instead of inducing them to come to the Province. It was a slander upon the country with the £200 which he was to receive for his services, and the additional £300 for plans and contingencies. He would not at all censure Mr. Perley, but with his own published sentiments, adverse to Immigration, he wondered how he could have the boldness to act as an Emigration Agent. [Hon. Mr. Grey denied the statement of the £500, and Mr. Smith retorted that it had been made by a member of the government. Hon. Secretary—"I said a sum not exceeding £200 for travelling expenses, and £300 for the distribution of plans." Well it amounted just to the same thing. Mr. Perley had better confine himself to the duties of his office at home. He now received £1000 a year as Fishery Commissioner, £300 as Emigrant Agent, and £500 on this service, on which latter he had expended a good deal of time in running between the Secretary's office and Government House, instead of confining himself to the duties of his office in St. John. He had done the country more harm by his letter to Britain in January 1856 than he had ever done it good as an Emigrant Agent or ever would. This country was not fully supplied with labor in 1856 or for many years.—There was plenty of encouragement to hold out to Emigrants, but their coming out might be inconvenient to an Agent who was never in his office, and who could never be found by them. He was not obliged to spend the £500 we are told, but who that knew Mr. Perley would give him a letter of credit for £500 on this service, and ever expect to see a penny of it again. It was much more likely that we should have a further claim.

He (Mr. Johnston) had not heard whether, when the magnificent Railway Scheme of the Hon. Commissioner of the Board of Works was completed, and his road built where the foot of man had never trod, the Poquies Mills was to be the station or not, but he would ask was that a government measure? If it was he thought it would startle people when they came to learn it, if it was not it proved a want of union which must damage their reputation in the country. He (Mr. J.) contended that the Country was not in so low a position but that they could get better men to carry on the Government than those whose antecedents and present professions proved them adverse to that very system which was recognised as the principles of the Government of our Country. It was he stated, the old cry, which had during this debate been raised by the Government, bribery and corruption, it was a very convenient one, and had always been raised by these same men when they obtained power, and were in danger of losing it. There was a time when men could write "Tory" on their hats and obtain seats in the Legislature under that motto, but things had changed, and those who in these times would become the members of the popular Assembly, must yield to the popular opinions and profess an attachment to them, but he contended the members of the present Government were still imbued with the old Tory principle, and now when the voice of the people and of their representatives was about to declare their want of confidence in them they endeavor to bring into contempt the principles of Responsible Government, expressing their disgust at its workings, and holding office, would fain revive the good old system under which those offices would remain theirs in perpetuity. New Brunswick, he said, was his country, at least by adoption, he loved that country, and while he had nothing to claim from ancestry or circumstances of birth, he was happy to live under a constitution which entitled him and his children to aspire to those positions to which industry, talent and virtue fitted them. In his opinion that man who did not possess ambition to rise in the estimation of his fellow men—advance to the highest attainments of his profession, or aspire to a place in the councils of his country, did not deserve a seat in that House, and could not make a good citizen. He would not deny that he himself had such ambition; but he felt it to be his duty to say that he did not desire to hold office in the late government. His feelings would have been better suited had the former incumbent retained the office to which he (Mr. J.) was appointed; but the party with whom he had identified himself did will it so; and it was because he felt it his duty to do what he could for that party, he acted, under

their direction, and took office. He (Mr. Johnston) thought that one error into which young politicians too often fell, was taking office too soon. He compared the present government, with their predilections—pretending and offering to work out liberal and progressive principles—to the inventor of a piece of machinery offering to work a machine made by another mechanic, which was an improvement upon his own—calculated to supersede it and destroy his fame, whose interest it would be to prevent rather than assist the good working of the same; so the Govt., believing departmental Government wrong—an infringement of their rights—steps in to work it out, or in other words, modify its workings and prevent its mischievous consequences.

He (Mr. J.) thought it a matter of regret that the Hon. Provincial Secretary should have had forced upon him so many different offices—and it was a little singular he thought that they happened to come from so many different parties. The Provincial Secretary had stated that not wishing to take that office himself he had written to another hon. member, Mr. Kerr, requesting him to accept it.—But the Provincial Secretary knew full well that Mr. Kerr did not want the office and was so situated that he could not well, if he wished, accept it; and under those circumstances the offer was certainly very magnanimous.

He felt justified in saying that most of the members of the government had always been opposed to the principles of Responsible Government. To the Hon. Solicitor General these remarks were applicable—as also to the honorable member from Restigouche who was opposed to those principles.—[Hon. Mr. Montgomery—"I am not, it is now the recognized government of the land, and I go for it." Exactly so, and the hon. member compelled goes with the tide, while that hon. gentleman had always expressed strong opinions and been a consistent conservative, he (Mr. J.) gave him credit for sincerity—he wished all the other members of the government were like him and then it would be known where to find them. But as it was they in their individual capacity went to such wide extremes of opinion—now advocating and strongly upholding Toryism and again rushing to the other extreme and declaring for universal suffrage: that it was impossible to tell when or what they were. Two straight lines cannot enclose a space—but the Hon. Attorney General and Provincial Secretary had endeavored to enclose a very large space by their crooked lines.

He (Mr. J.) would ask the House whether the men had so changed, and how or when that change had been effected, as to induce those who opposed them in '54, to vote to sustain them now.

But, said Mr. Johnston, "some men tell us they want a coalition government formed; they want the best men of both parties." He (Mr. J.) did not believe in the doctrine; it had been exploded every where. He quoted from the Westminster Review, a Tory publication, in which the question was fully discussed and the position strongly defended that the doctrine of coalition was not a good one. There was a necessity for a strong opposition—the best men of both parties would soon be the worst men of both parties in a coalition.

He (Mr. J.) did not see that the addition of the P. M. G. and Board of Works to the government had bettered that government any; they did not seem to understand their own business or the business of the government. The P. M. G. got up to explain a matter which was transacted a short time before, when the Hon. Provincial Secretary got up and said that the P. M. G. could not explain the matter—in fact the Hon. Provincial Secretary seemed to be the only member of the government who understood the business of the departments, and for a long time he held all the offices. [Mr. Montgomery—"He's Governor General." He may have been Governor General of Committees.

The Provincial Secretary had stated that the P. M. G.'s office had been filled before they had appealed to the country. Possibly the government had an object in filling that office before the election.

The two most important offices had however been allowed to remain vacant for months to suit some political scheme—he referred to the office of Board of Works and Surveyor General.

He (Mr. Johnston) did not know that there existed any immediate necessity for the filling of the office of P. M. G. Mr. Howe had acted and would have continued to act until such time as the necessity contemplated in the act occurred.

He had ever been consistent, at all events his lips had always uttered the same sentiments and he