

# Carleton Sentinel Supplement, Jan. 11, 1890.

## Premier Blair's Manifesto.

To the Electors of New Brunswick:—

GENTLEMEN.—The legislature during the session of 1889 passed an act which goes into operation on the first of January next and which greatly enlarges the electoral franchise in the Province. The constitutional effect of this enactment is, that the present assembly, elected in 1886, has ceased to be representative of the people, and following a uniform series of modern British and colonial precedents it has been deemed advisable by the government, to afford the newly enlarged electorate an early opportunity of selecting the persons to whom they shall entrust their political interests, provincially speaking, for the ensuing legislative term.

The country has been put in possession from time to time through the usual channels of very full information as to

### THE POLICY OF THE EXECUTIVE

and its legislative and administrative work in all departments of the government, and I venture to think that upon the whole, its policy has been considered sound, its legislation useful and its administration efficient.

I do not propose to make an elaborate review of our work as a government, covering the seven years during which we have held office. It will serve to recall to public recollection the leading principles to which we have sought to give effect, to indicate in general terms, as I will do later in this address, the enactments we have been instrumental in placing upon the statute book. Nor do I purpose to enter upon a defence either of our policy or of our general management of affairs. If in matters of policy the government have been much at fault, its faults have been shared not only by the entire body of your representatives, opposition and government supporters alike, but as well by press and people, for, excepting the differences which have arisen from the imposition of an increased stampage tax, and in relation to the inland fisheries, scarcely a serious complaint has been raised to our policy either within or without the legislature. Our position before the country upon questions of public policy may be taken to be a strong one, otherwise the country would long since have had alternate proposals before it on some at least of the subjects with which we have been called upon to deal.

Turning to that description of governmental service which may be called administrative, I presume the subject of

### THE PUBLIC EXPENDITURE

engages much the largest share of attention, and as is the case with all governments, excites the most criticism. Even here it is a significant fact that our opponents in the legislature have rather complained of our niggardliness than our extravagance and have commended rather than censured our financial management. That the leading members in the house opposed to the government have yielded us a tribute of praise in this connexion, notwithstanding that finding fault is allowed to be the special privilege of an opposition, says much for the fairness of our opponents, but it also says much for us.

It will not be suggested by any one, I will assume, that the attitude of our opponents has been due in the slightest degree either to indifference to public interests or want of capacity on their part. Although not strong in numbers or marshalled with any approach to organization, it is but just to acknowledge that some of those who have been opposed to the government during the recent term are among the ablest and most experienced members of the legislature.

In calling attention to the almost entire

### ABSENCE OF ADVERSE CRITICISM

in the house of assembly as respects the public expenditure, I must not be taken to convey the impression that the government have been equally free from censure upon these points outside the legislature. A section of the press, either less scrupulous or less accurately informed than the people's representatives, have given us the benefit of a great deal of very vigorous criticism, and are today, in view of the general election, assailing members of the government as the very high priests of corrupt and wanton extravagance. I do not mention this fact to complain of it, but since it is wholly impossible to take up these charges in detail within the limits of this address, I oppose to them the general answer that the charges cannot be true, or the committees upon public accounts, and the members of the legislature generally, must have known the facts and brought them to public notice. The committee on public accounts contains three opposition members out of the seven who comprise it. The accounts themselves, with vouchers, are produced for examination to the committee, and the report of the committee is annually published in the journals, available for public inspection. The printed report of the auditor general on public accounts has invariably been laid on the table of members within three or four days after the opening of the session, and it is out of these reports that the material is gathered, which, garbled and distorted, is dealt out to the people by the section of the newspaper press I have referred to as reliable and trustworthy information.

### HAD THE WHOLESALE ACCUSATIONS

now preferred by some of the newspapers against the government in connexion with the public expenditure been made in the legislature, as they most assuredly would have been, if it had occurred to any one that such charges could be reasonably made, they would have been there and then, answered or explained. The floor of the assembly, in the presence of the chiefs of the departments in which the expenditures take place, with the accounts in detail at hand for reference, is the proper place to make and to answer whatever charges are capable of being preferred, and through the official published reports of the proceedings of the legislature, the charges and answers would, together, go to the people.

I say no more upon this topic further than to remark that the preferring of charges such as I have named in the columns of newspapers, for the first time, involves a gross reflection upon the whole representative body. Opposition and government supporters are alike discredited, since, if the facts disclosed by the published reports laid before the legislature justify the condemnation of the government, your representatives must either have countenanced the wrong doing of the government, or must have been incapable of discovering it.

It may be asked in this connection why is it that the government has

### LOST SOME OF ITS SUPPORTERS

during the past term, if its administration has been unobjectionable, to which I reply that we have lost but few friends, and these few have left us because of our refusal to embark upon large railway undertakings, or because of petty local jealousies connected with the distribution of patronage.

The strength of the government in the house of assembly after seven years' tenure of office is unexampled in the political history of the Province; it has enjoyed the confidence of the representatives of the people to an unusual degree, but it has not abused that confidence. It has used its strength in pressing forward useful measures, in enforcing sound economic principles, and, when occasion has required it, in resisting unreasonable demands.

A government in which the country has confidence should, in the public interests be strong, as the stronger it is the better will it be able to resist the undue pressure of combinations to which a weak government would often be constrained to yield.

We have been much criticized in certain quarters because we have not yet succeeded in abolishing the legislative council.

The fiercest denunciations, strange to say, now being heaped upon us for this alleged dereliction of duty, proceed from those who have had nothing but sympathy and encouragement for the opponents of the measures by which we have striven to effect this change. Whether the present ardor of these advocates of abolition will survive the general election remains to be seen. We ask the country to accept the assurance that the government's policy with respect to the continuance of the legislative council remains unchanged. We are committed to the view that under existing conditions a second chamber is not essential to the work of safe and efficient legislation, and we expect to be able at an early day to carry out our policy in this respect to a successful termination. It is said by our opponents that we have been insincere in dealing with this question, and it is pointed out in proof that two of the four gentlemen appointed by us to seats in the council have voted against the various measures for the its abolition proposed by the government. That two gentlemen who, previously to their appointment, had uniformly voted with the government on this question in the house of assembly, have since their appointment to seats in the upper house voted the other way is, I regret to say, quite true, but the government cannot justly be held responsible for the action of these appointees. Their public pledges and declarations in the assembly and before the people are just as binding as any written or verbal pledge which it would have been possible for the government to exact. It is for this reason with others that the government is now going to the country with five seats in the legislative council at the present moment unfilled. I point to these existing vacancies as the most signal proof we could offer the country of the bona fides of the government upon this question, and I venture to say that no government of recent times has passed through a general election without filling with its friends all such places as were at its disposal.

### THE INLAND FISHERIES OF THE PROVINCE.

It is not generally understood, though it is the case, that the dominion government regulates the time and manner of fishing in all inland waters, and that the local government has no jurisdiction or authority whatever in these respects. The provincial government exercises no fishing rights except in the waters within the ungranted territory of the crown and in these only to the same extent which any private riparian owner may do. We found, on our accession to office, that those crown lands, which had valuable fishing privileges attached to them, were fast being acquired for nominal sums by pretended settlers and others, many of whom were simply speculating on the rapidly increasing value of these privileges, and we had also reason to believe that for want of efficient guardianship those rivers upon which the crown had lands still in part ungranted, were being depleted of their fish.

### THE GOVERNMENT AT ONCE DETERMINED

to reserve out of future grants the fishing privileges on all water fronts as the only possible means of retaining for the crown, and, therefore, for the whole people, what still remained of this valuable property. We acted upon the view that if these privileges were leased for a limited number of years they might be made to yield a substantial revenue to the Province, and this they have in fact done, as since we inaugurated this policy the government has realized over \$39,000 therefrom. It was also our view that during the term for which they should be leased the fishing might be greatly improved by a proper system of protection. No man, I have reason to believe, doubts the wisdom of our first line of policy, but it is objected that we should have thrown open the fishing grounds to the public, exacting a reasonable daily license fee from each fisherman to cover the cost of guardianship and other charges. There is no doubt this view has much to commend it to the favor of all who are able to indulge in the sport of fly-fishing, but it was our duty to bear in mind that the rivers had to be guard-

ed and that a large outlay would be necessary for this purpose, if the rivers were not leased, which the license fee would fall far short of supplying. The general revenue of the Province would admit of no draft upon it for such a purpose, and it seemed to us then that the only practicable course open to us, was to put up the fishing to public competition, leasing the privileges for a term of years. When the leases expire as they will in a short period, the government will be free to consider whether a different policy might not then with advantage be pursued.

It is needless to say that the government makes no pretence of having accomplished all that could have been desired. We have perhaps

### ADHERED TO A MORE RIGID ECONOMY

in some departments of the public service than has been consistent with the most complete efficiency, and much useful legislative and other work calling for present attention still remains to be performed, but we think we may point to the enacted laws during the past seven years, to the healthy condition of our provincial finances, to the unexampled solidity of the public credit, to the impetus given to agricultural industries in more than one direction, to the additional safeguards thrown around the public health, to the introduction of shorthand reporting in the courts, to the collection and preservation of vital statistics, to the improved joint stock companies laws, to the extension of the franchise, to the improvement in the highway laws, to the expansion of our railroad system, to the improved condition of the roads and bridges of the Province, to the more economical administration of criminal justice, and to the contentment and general hopefulness which prevails throughout the country, as evidence that the policy of the government, while prudent and conservative, has been liberal and progressive.

The government is now making its

### APPEAL TO THE CONSTITUENCIES,

composed as respects its personnel much as it was at its original formation. It is not proposed to resort to the expedient, which has not infrequently been resorted to, of making changes on the eve of the election, so as to appear before the country as a new government, disclaiming responsibility for what has been done by it before its reconstruction. We are now submitting ourselves with our record of seven years to the judgment of the electorate and only ask that we shall be judged with fairness.

As the future policy of the government it is not proposed that there shall be any departure from the main principles to which we have heretofore rigidly adhered. We have

### NO SENSATIONAL PROGRAMME

to lay before the electors. The sphere of legislative and administrative action in provincial matters being necessarily limited, we can engage to do little more than to continue to manage your affairs honestly, prudently and economically, to husband the provincial resources, to propose such useful measures as from time to time the public needs demand, to guard sacredly our constitutional rights, and so far as shall be in our power to so frame and administer the laws and so discharge our public duties that to every citizen may be guaranteed, irrespective of race or creed, equal rights, equal justice and the enjoyment in the highest measure of the benefits which attach to the free institutions under which we live.

I remain, gentlemen,

Yours respectfully,

A. G. BLAIR.

Fredericton, Dec 31, 1889.

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### Central Hampstead (Q. Co.) Items.

Jan 1, 1890

The New Year entered very quietly, weather in the morning was clear and quite cold, but as the day wore on clouds from the south began to appear and at 9 o'clock in the evening the indications are that it will rain before morning.

The friends of Mr. John Slipp will regret to learn of his severe illness which has lasted for over two weeks. He is still in a very critical condition; the Dr. has very little hope of his recovery. He is a brother to G. L. Slipp of Lower Woodstock, and uncle of G. W. Slipp, your popular merchant.

A very pleasant affair is taking place this evening at the residence of J. W. Stuts, Esq., in which his daughter Eva and Mr. L. A. Belyea are the principals. Rev. B. H. Nobles of St. John, ties the knot; they leave after the ceremony for their home on the Washademoak Lake, followed by the best wishes of their friends.

Arthur B. Slipp is at home spending his holidays; he is student in the law office of Messrs. J. A. & W. Vanwart, Fredericton.

Messrs. King & Farris, of Grand Lake, have a large crew of men in the woods near Otnabog Lake; they expect to do a large winter's work.

The Women's Missionary Aid Society of F. C. Baptists of Hibernia, intend holding their anniversary on the eve of 8th inst. There will be speeches, readings and dialogues interspersed with music; at the close of the entertainment they will sell at auction their missionary quilt. At the same time and place the ladies of the church will hold a pie social, proceeds to go to the Organ Fund. A good time is expected.

The ice on the river is very good and the young folk are enjoying the good skating.

Snow nearly all gone, some are driving wheels.

To rent, comfortable and convenient rooms in basement of J. D. Reil's house, Connell St. Enquire of R. B. Belyea & Co.

The Pope celebrated the festive season in characteristic fashion by giving from his private purse nearly 50,000 francs to the poor of Rome.

The Emperor High Over Boat at Bailey Bros.