

Better Terms for the Provinces. Mr. CARVELL'S SPEECH In the House on this Subject.

Mr. F. B. Carvell (Carleton, N. B.) moved:

For copies of all memoranda, papers, or documents submitted to the government of Canada on behalf of the several provinces of Canada, urging a readjustment of the provincial subsidies; together with any replies thereto; and all correspondence between the government of Canada, or any member thereof, and the governments of the several provinces, or any members thereof, relating to such readjustment.

He said: In moving this motion I presume that I am drawing the attention of the House to a subject which is not new either to it or the country. But it is one which is of great importance to the great body of the electors, especially from a provincial standpoint. It is a matter of common knowledge that when confederation was consummated in 1867, revenues from which the provinces derived customs and excise were handed over to the Dominion authorities; and to compensate the provinces for the loss of these revenues, it was agreed that a certain amount of money would be paid them. It is unnecessary in this discussion that I should attempt to state in detail the principles on which these amounts were based. At that time no doubt the fathers of confederation had the idea that the amount set aside for the provinces would be sufficient to meet the ordinary expenses of local government, taking into consideration the revenue which they could raise within their own borders. I think it is also fair to assume that the framers of confederation had no conception that Canada would make such strides in advance as it has

within the last thirty-seven years. No one could have conceived then that the revenues from these different sources in thirty-seven years would have amounted to the magnificent sum they have now reached. But while the revenues have increased from a Dominion standpoint, they have not increased as regards the provinces. On the other hand while the provincial revenues have not increased, unfortunately their expenditures have increased to an extent not then anticipated. That increase has become absolutely necessary. It will be admitted that it is impossible to carry on any business to-day as cheaply as it could have been managed some thirty-seven years ago. Nor can any one live as cheaply to-day. The country to-day could not be governed as cheaply as it was when confederation was formed; and in addition, as regards the provinces, there are many matters for which the local governments have to provide that they were then not then compelled to provide for. But outside of all that, the many expenditures which have to be met by the local administrations have increased to such an extent that the amount at their disposal to-day is entirely inadequate. Take the question of schools, I shall not weary the House with a great array of figures, but take the figures in connection with this matter in the provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick alone in 1898 we expended the sum of \$93,833 for schools whereas in 1904 the sum had increased to \$192,735, and that does not include the ex-

pensures or grants to colleges, technical schools and other institutions of learning but simply those ordinary common schools, high schools and grammar schools.

In Nova Scotia in 1898 the amount paid to schools was \$145,200 and in 1904 that item had increased to the magnificent sum of \$263,092. This also does not include the expenditure or grants made to colleges or technical schools.

What is true of the schools of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, I have no doubt will be true of the schools of other provinces of Canada and what is true of the schools is very much true of many of the other subjects which have to be managed and looked after by the provincial legislatures. We all know that the administration of justice is more expensive to-day than it was 37 years ago. We know that it costs more for the maintenance of prisons and asylums. In New Brunswick alone, after giving credit for all the income which we receive from the patients, we are spending to-day \$50,000 in the management of the provincial asylums. Last year this was about one-eighth of the total grant we received from the Dominion Government and what is true of New Brunswick must also be true to a great extent of the other provinces as well. Then too, in later years we have been compelled to make large grants to agriculture and I think that no person in this House or in the country can contend that the grants made to agriculture in any province are improperly made. But, Sir, perhaps the item which has caused the greatest amount of financial difficulty to different provinces is that which most reduced the amount of available money for expenditure for ordinary affairs is the contribution for the construction of bridges and the maintenance of roads which every person must consider to be necessary and above and beyond that would be the amount of money expended in railway subsidies. I may be said, it has been said in the past, and I presume it will be in the

future that many of the provincial governments have been improvident in their expenditures for railway subsidies and I wish to call the attention of the House to the fact that the same electors who elect representatives to this House elect representatives in the local House and through these local members they demand these different expenditures. The very electors and the very people who contribute to the revenues of Canada are the people who demand the expenditures from the local legislature, and I say that in all justice these demands have to be met. It is a question for careful consideration how they are to be met.

In 1868 the total revenue of the Dominion from customs and excise duties together amounted to \$11,590,998 and the total payment to the provinces amounted to \$2,763,906 or 24 per cent of the total revenue of the Dominion from these two sources. In 1904 the Dominion received from these two sources of revenues the sum of \$53,379,568 and they paid to the provinces altogether, exclusive of what it may have cost to maintain the government of the Northwest Territories which I did not take into consideration, the sum of \$4,402,291 or a total of only 8 per cent of the revenue from these two sources. If you will add to that the proposed amount to be paid to the new provinces by the bill now under discussion, we will then be paying less than 12 per cent of the total revenue from these two sources or, in other words, we will next year be paying less than one-half the percentage of the money which we receive now as compared with the money which we received in 1867 at the time of confederation. Now, Sir, this gives rise to many questions, and it has given rise to discussion particularly by the members of the local government. Various means have been taken in order to remedy this difficulty and it is not necessary for me to go into details. I shall only call attention to the fact that in 1867 the assembled wisdom of five of the provinces gathered at Quebec and there made certain suggestions that I am sorry to say were not carried out. They did not meet with the approbation of the government of the Dominion of that day, and the difficulty, instead of decreasing is increasing, the different provincial governments have found themselves face to face with greater problems every year until 1902 the wisdom of the different provinces again met at Quebec and again passed a series of resolutions, and it seems to me that the time has arrived when something ought to be done, when I believe something will be done in order to meet the requirements of the different provinces, because I contend that a certain amount of the money should be expended by the provincial governments. They can get nearer the homes of the people, can better judge their requirements and can do more good by the expenditure than can this House, and therefore I think that we may well consider whether or not a revision of these subsidies should not take place by which a large amount will be placed to the credit of the different provinces so that they would be in a position to better meet the requirements of the people than they are at the present time. Holding these views I felt it my duty to present them to the House in as brief a manner as I could, and I trust that this discussion may be the means of bringing about some arrangement between federal government and the governments of the provinces, or rather of some arrangement being made by this parliament by which these subsidies will be re-arranged, so that the different provinces will receive a greater amount than they have received in the past.

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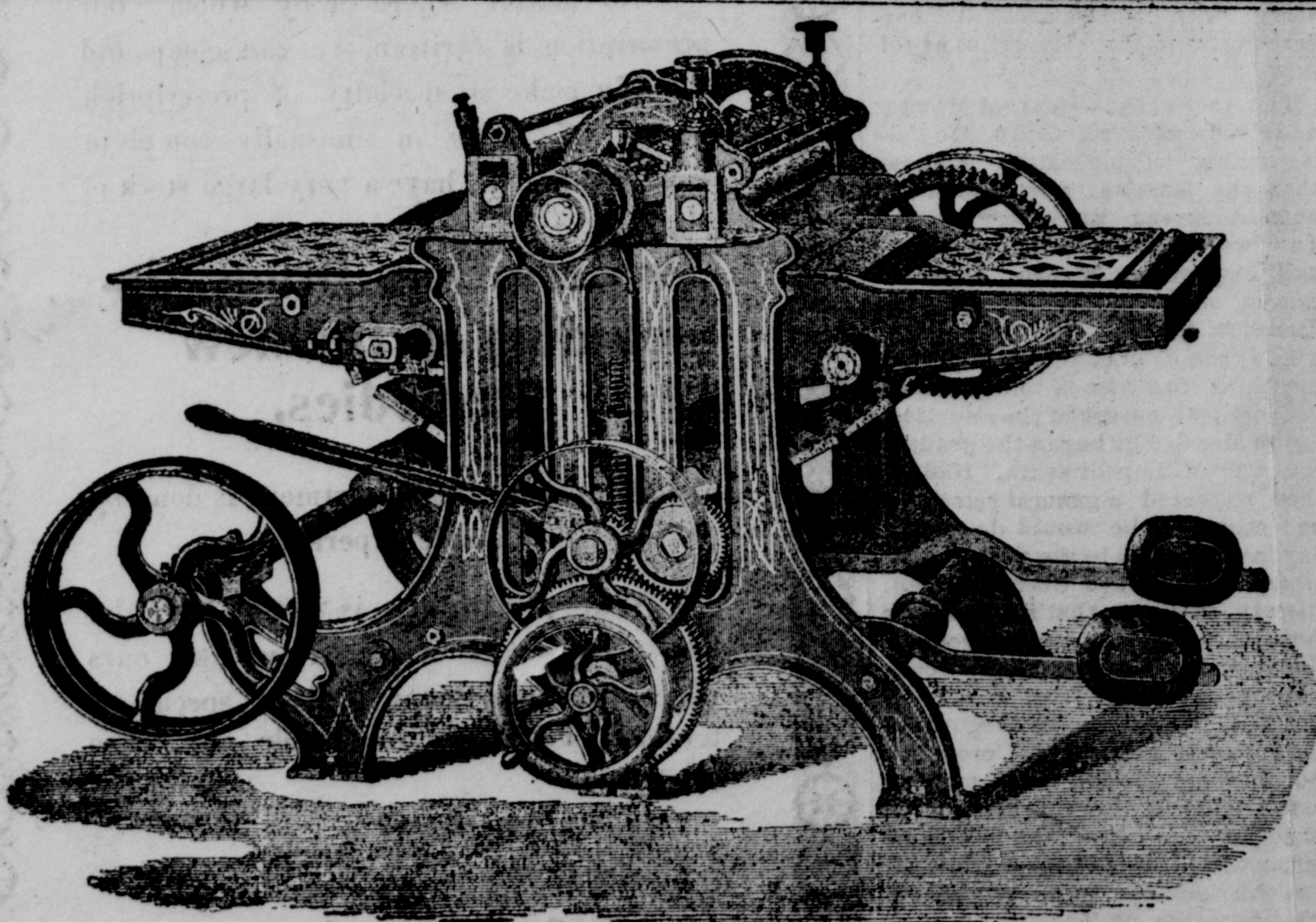
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