THE HERALD.

VOL. VI., NO. 24. FREDERICTON, N. B., WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 1895. $1.00 PER YEAR.

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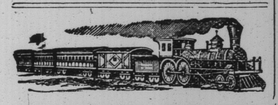

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McMullen, Lister, Cartwright and Mulock, lay Bare the Government's Duplicity.

FOSTER AND HAZEN DEFEND THEIR "DEAR FRIEND" GIBSON.

A Very Lively Discussion.

(From Hansard.)

[Continued from last week.]

MR. FOSTER.

I do not rise for the purpose of discussing this matter on the information—naturally somewhat partial and incomplete—that has been presented to the house by the hon. gentleman who made the motion. When the papers are brought down, as they will be, I shall take the opportunity of having something to say on the subject. [Mr. Foster then applied a liberal dose of taffy to Mr. Gibson.] It is plain, according to the hon. gentleman, that there was a bargain, a corrupt bargain, and that the Finance Ministcr was in it as well. I am not at the present time going to defend myself against a charge of such a nature and coming from such a source. By and by, if it comes from gentlemen who have more standing——

Some hon. members. Oh, oh.

Mr. Foster—when it comes from gentlemen who have probably more of that weight and character behind them to make it a point to be considered whether an assertion that they make in this house might not have some weight in the conntry, then it will be time for me to say something with regard to it.

SIR RICHARD CARTWRIGHT.

I think that before he is done with him the hon. gentleman will find that the charges made by my hon. friend from Wellington (Mr, McMullen) are not to be lightly set aside. My hon. friend has won for himself, though the hon. gentleman may not know it, a very high and well deserved reputation throughout this country as a man——

Some hon. members. Oh, oh.

Sir Richard Cartwright—yes, a high and well-deserved reputation as a man who has stood upon the floor of parliament, times without number, against overwhelming odds, for the purpose of uplifting his voice against those who were despoiling the people of their inheritance. My hon. friend's record will bear comparison, and good comparison, with that of the Minister himself. My hon. friend behind me did not climb into power on the shoulders of, what shall I call them? "association," perhaps, would be resented, but he did not climb into power as the professed champion of an object for which, since he got into power, he has done very little. So far as regards Mr. Gibson, I am perfectly prepared, and so is every man on this side of the house, to give him all the praise for enterprise, for anything he may have done honestly and genuinely to promote the welfare of his province, or of the country at large. I believe he has done much in that way. I am quite prepared to give him all credit for it. But, sir, Mr. Gibson, as well as other people,

HAS HIS MOMENTS OF WEAKNESS.

Mr. Gibson, as well as other people, possibly desires to obtain for himself a little larger—gratuity shall we say, or assistance shall we say, or recognition shall we say, from the public treasury, than, perhaps citizens of less wealth are likely to secure. Sir, this particular transaction is a very old friend of mine, and, as perhaps the hon. member from York knows, this is not the first time it has been before us. It is not the first time we have had to comment upon it, it is not the first time that very extraordinary statements, some of which I have under my hand, were made by former Ministers, Sir Charles Tupper, Sir John Macdonald, and the hon. member himself, when these matters were under discussion before us. Now, sir, I can understand that the Minister of Finance, as a Maritime champion, thinks that the time has come when New Brunswick should do something worthy of the high position she occupies in the councils of this country. Has not Ontario got her Tay Canal? Has not Quebec got her Curran bridge? And as for New Brunswick, I think she might have been content with her Caraquet Railway. But, sir, I am inclined to think that this bridge, when properly looked into, will overshadow

EVEN THE CARAQUET RAILWAY.

Now, this is one of those numerous transactions, which have been alluded to, in which the government have allowed themsleves to be seduced, or, shall I say, have seduced members of parliament into equivocal and compromising positions. You will find, if we had a commission of inquiry with power to examine into it, that the history of the subsidy to the Fredericton and St. Marys Bridge Company is only too true an exemplification of the history of a vast number of railway subsidies which we have been granting for the past nine or ten years. Now, what are the facts abou this—facts, mark you, which have not been denied at all or refuted, in reply to my hon. friends,. Now, it maybe that a considerable sum of money has been dropped in the railway, but there is no doubt whatever that when this bridge was intended to be constructed, we are told, and I have the statement here, that it was to cost $375,000; we are told that $75,000 of it were to be provided by the promoters, and that the government were to pay $300,000, not after it was completed and the cost ascertained, but as the work went on, to the tune of at least 80 per cent. Those were the terms of the Order in Council, which I have here. Then, sir, the government came down and gave $30,000 in one lump to the gentlemen who were only to have expended $75,000. More than that, the hon. gentleman wanted to know why it was that these gentlemen, Mr. Temple and Mr. Gibson and the rest of them, desired to build this line. If they will refer to the "Hansard" of 1889, and to page 1620, they will find that a certain conversation took place between myself and the hon. member for York on that subject. The hon. member was very candid. He admitted that all they were going to put into it was $75,000. The hon. gentleman admitted that they were going to get $300,000 from the government at 4 per cent, and he went on to state:

"I am in hopes the profits will be thousands of dollars when we have the Short line built.

"Sir Richard Cartwright—Apart from the Short line, what profit does the hon. gentleman, who is largely concerned in this road, expect to achieve? What is the annual income likely to be got from the tolls?

"Mr. Temple—The cost of keeping up the bridge will not exceed $2,000 a year, and we expect to get $30,000 a year out of it."

Mr. Temple—I wish to say one word with reference to that.

Sir Richard Cartwright—The hon. gentleman will excuse me. We will give him a plentiful opportunity as soon as I am done. The point I wished particularly to make was this: It is not what the hon. gentleman has realized out of this, not what has materialized. Even the then astute leader of the House, Sir John Macdonald, expressed doubts whether the hon. gentleman would get all he expected from it. Sir, what did these gentlemen expect to get? They expected that the bridge would cost them at the outside $75,000, that the cost of maintenance would be $2,000, and they would make $30,000. Now, deducting the $12,000 that they were to pay, they expected to get over 20 per cent on an expenditure of $75,000, which was afterwards reduced by the $30,000 I alluded to. Sir, if there ever was a case in which gentlemen played heads I win, tails you lose, it was the case of Mr. Gibson and the hon. member for York. Now, there are a great many questions which arise, and which I think, in another place, ought to be made the subject of an investigation. In the first place, I should like very much to know the value of that bridge, valued by a genuine and independent expert, not in the employ of the government, but some person whom both parties could trust. I have heard—although I do not pretend to say that I will dispute good evidence to the contrary—I have heard that if that bridge was to be built, it could be built for less than $375,000, which was stated by Sir Charles Tupper as the estimated cost of it. I am aware that it is a very easy thing to show an expenditure on paper very considerably in excess. We know that in a great many cases little items can be put in so that the actual cost of a bridge may be a very different thing indeed from the reported cost of a bridge. That may or may not be; but we would desire, in addition to that, to know particularly—and this the Minister of Finance ought to be able to tell us—where these $50,000 bonds come in? Are they ahead of our $300,000 or behind this $300,000? If they are ahead of this $300,000, then I do not concede that, even if the hon. member for York and Mr. Gibson have placed any money in this, they have run any appreciable risk. If they come behind, why, Sir, they are pretty much at the mercy of the Government of which the Minister of Finance is at present the leader. Now, there is another thing we want to know. So far as I understand it, 90 per cent of the capital stock of this company has not been paid in. I do not know in what proportion it is divided between Mr. Gibson, senior, and Mr. Gibson, junior, the hon. member for York and the hon. member for York's son-in-law; but this I do know, that if 90 per cent had not been paid up, it was the duty of the government, it was the duty of the Finance department, it was the duty of the Minister of Justice in particular, if his attention was called to it, to have taken steps, when these bonds accrued, to call in the balance of the 90 per cent, which is apparently uncollected to this date. That appears to me, if it is in the hands of a gentleman of such high standing as Mr. Gibson, to have been their clear duty. Before this matter closes, I would like also to know what steps have been taken on the part of the government to realize the uncollected 90 per cent. Perhaps the hon. member for York, who is, I understand, still a shareholder, can give us this information. But, Sir, that is not, perhaps, the most important point connected with it. Now, I called attention, not once, not twice, but many times over, without reflecting on the hon. member for York, to the very inconvenient position in which that hon. gentleman, as largely concerned in a bridge company of this kind, is placed towards the government. It is not desirable, it is, in my mind, wholly contrary to the independence of parliament act, that any man should hold a seat in this house, from whatever province he comes, who is to all intents and purposes a defaulting debtor to the government; and so far as appears—and I do not hear the hon. member for York deny the charge—so far as appears, if he has not paid up the balance of his subscription, the hon. member for York clearly stands in that position. The truth of the matter is, that as a business transaction this thing is folly, and utterly indefensible. If the former bridge was only going to cost $375,000, was it worth the while of the Government first of all, to advance the loan of $300,000, then to give a gratuity of $30,000. Sir, the government had no business to advance a cent upon it. What sort of security was that? Each one of us as a business man would not advance $330,000 when those who built it were only going to spend $40,000 or $50,000 more. Sir, if there ever was any justification at all for the loan, it was the bounded duty of the government to have built that bridge and to have owned it. For my own part, I will not enter on that side question, because I have not the requisite knowledge to say whether this was a railway bridge which it was really in the interests of the country to construct. That may or may not be. But I do say that if there ever was any justification for a loan, there was an absolute necessity in that case that the government should have built and owned the bridge. I say this, that the position in which, whether by his own course, or whether by default of the government, the hon. member for York was placed, was one that rendered his position in the house fatal to his usefulness from that time. The hon. gentleman was placed in a false position; the hon. gentleman, I repeat, was in the position of a defaulting debtor; the hon. gentleman could not be a free agent, nor can any other hon. member who has been the recipient of large sums from the government, or who has received great favors—because this was a great favor on the showing of the hon. gentleman himself, from the government—even if those favors have not resulted, as the hon. gentleman tells us they have not resulted, in enabling him to make a very large sum of money at an almost infinitesimal risk to himself. What did the hon. gentleman risk? The hon. gentleman and the friends with whom he was connected, risked, or supposed they risked, $40,000 or $50,000 for the sake of making, as they supposed, a return of $16,000 or $18,000 a year. There are a great many business men who would like to take such a chance, who would consider it a great favor when they were advancing $40,000, or $50,000, or $60,000, to find a generous creditor who would lend them $300,000 at 4 per cent. I repeat, and this is a point, at all events, that cannot be contradicted, that all such transactions to which members of this house are parties are fatal to the independence of the members, and ought, if justice were done, to involve their instant withdrawal from this house.

MR. MULOCK.

There is only one point to which I wish to draw the attention of the House. This item of $300,000 is included in the assets of the Dominion. In the Public Accounts, which I hold in my hand, this is put down as a good asset, equal to its face, and it is deducted from the debt of the country on the representation that it is not a liability. That is either a true representation of the value of that asset or it is a false one. I should like to know why the Finance Minister has not done his duty in realizing upon a security which is now six years in arrears for interest. I want the Finance Minister to tell this house, if he does not desire the investments of our public funds to be discredited by this act, because many of our investments consist of securities of a semi-private character like this one, why be allowed six years interest to accumulate. Can the Finance Minister say whether there was a mortgage taken to secure the money or not?

Mr. Foster—I do not know the facts of the case.

Mr. Mulock—It is most extraordinary that, with a security six years in arrears, the Finance Minister should tell us to-day that he does not know the facts of the case. Can any better proof of his inability to grapple with transactions of finance be advanced? A sum of $300,000 of the public money was advanced, and six years of arrears of interest accumulated, to which the hon. gentleman's attention was called by the Anditor General on more than one occasion, and to-day the hon. gentleman tells the house that the loan is absolutely safe. I should like to know on what evidence he bases that opinion, when the hon. gentleman has just told the house that he does not know whether there is any security or not. The Minister of Finance should explain why he has not proceeded to collect the debt now due. It is his duty, and it was his duty in 1892 when the Auditor General called attention to the matter, and it was his duty from that year ever since till 1895, to collect that debt. Let the hon. gentleman tell the country why he did not collect it. I submit, as the representative of the section of the people who pay for these investments, and whose money has been invested, that the time has arrived when the country should not be called upon to buy seats by such lavish expenditure, and at such demoralization of public morality.

Mr. Foster. What do you mean by buying seats?

Mr. Mulock. I mean to say this: That the Finance Minister, if he were a faithful steward of the public funds, would have realized upon the security and collected the interest due to the country, instead of stating to the house that he knows nothing about it, and opening a special account and representing that this was a good asset, and doing that on the eve of applying to these gentlemen for political support to enable him to get a seat in this house. That is what I mean.

Mr. Foster. The hon. gentleman made an insinuation. This insinuation was not a manly one—it was one of the nature that he frequently makes. When I asked him courteously to explain what he meant by saying that this was a transaction for the purpose of buying a seat, he made a turn around and came back in a little subdued and milder form, not in the same language, but his intimation was that the transaction was carried out for the sake of buying a seat for the Finance Minister.

Mr. Mulock. Why do you not collect the interest?

Mr. Foster. The hon. gentleman is now asking a question which any hon. member has a right to ask. When the hon. gentleman insinuates that this inaction was for the purpose of buying a seat for the Finance Minister, he is making a statement in an unmanly way, a statement which no gentleman should make, a statement which he cannot prove.

Mr. Mulock—Why did you not collect the interest?

Mr. Foster—There are certain questions that an hon. gentleman can ask, and if the hon. gentleman would wait at that question and go no further, he would be, in my opinion, all right. When he goes further, and insinuates, what he will not state in his seat and on his responsibility as a member of this house——

Mr. Mulock—Yes, I would state it on my responsibility. I do not shirk from stating it on my responsibility.

Mr. Foster—Now, then, after this little breeze has passed, I will answer the hon. gentleman with reference to the bridge. The bridge was a public undertaking and a grant of money was passed by parliament, after discussion in parliament, to the company who undertook to build the bridge. That money is at the rate of 4 per cent. It is secured upon the bridge structure itself.

Sir Richard Cartwright—Whereabouts does the $50,000 come in? Does it come in before or after the $300,000?

Mr. Foster—That I do not know, but I imagine that the government has the first lien. The tolls to be collected were relied upon, I suppose, to pay the interest, and to pay as well a return to the gentlemen who formed the company and put a large amount of money into it. A part of the interest has been paid and a part has not been paid. Now, I am asked: Why don't I collect the interest? There was but one way I suppose in which you could do that. You could foreclose, and take the bridge structure.

Mr. Mulock—There is another way. That is not the only way. I wish to put the Finance Minister a question on this point. He tries to explain why he has not collected the interest, and he says that the only source from which he could collect it was foreclosure. Now the hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright) has pointed out that there are $180,000 of subscribed capital uncollected, and if the hon. Minister allows years to go by, what becomes of the liability of this $180,000 of security?

Mr. McMullen's motion for the papers was carried.

CARTWRIGHT'S REVIEW.

Of Foster's Budget Speech and the Financial Mismanagement of the Government.

In the Dominion House of Commons, Sir Richard Cartwright followed Hon. G. E. Foster in the budget debate, and among other things, said:

I think every hon. gentleman who has had a seat in this house for a period of three years and upwards must have been very much struck by an extraordinary and unprecedented omission in the speech of the hon. gentleman. For the first time, certainly for the first time since he has been in the house and occupied his present position—I may say for the last sixteen years—a speech has been made on the budget and it has contained no laudation of the National Policy whatever. The poor fetish has been laid on the shelf, with none so low as to pay it reverence now. And I do not wonder at at. Like some other things with which the hon. gentleman is acquainted, it has served its term; it has been the ladder by which the hon. gentleman and certain other parties have climbed to preferment, and now, I suppose, it is going be ignominously kicked down. Another very curious thing in the hon. gentleman's speech; heretofore, ever since Sir Leonard Tilley came to the rescue of Sir John Macdonald, the doctrine has been that the people get rich by paying taxes. But now there is a new departure. A change has come over the spirit of the hon. gentleman's dream, and he takes great credit for making people rich by taking the taxes off them, and there is a vast deal more to be said for his later than his former doctrine.

Before this debate is through, I intend to prove that the actual taxation taken out of the pockets of the people is $60,000,000 a year, as against $20,000,000 per year which goes into the treasury. The hon. gentleman boasts that he lessened the sugar duties. Well, if he did, it is not because of any good will of his or his colleagues to the people of Canada, but at the dictation of Mr. McKinley, and because the American government had abolished them altogether.

And now, first of all, I desire to ascertain what is our real position. What is the deficit? The hon. gentleman admitted, under stress of circumstances, that the deficit amounted, he thought, to about four millions and a half. That is to say, sir, if things go well, if the hon. gentleman gets as much in the next two months as he did in the same months in 1894, if he does not spend as much in the next two months as he himself estimated he would be likely to spend, why then, possibly—particularly if he gets a little money out of his new taxation—then possibly the deficit may not exceed $4,500,000. Well, sir, that is a possibility. I do not know whether he will succeed in anticipating a little revenue; I do not know whether he will succeed in putting off a few payments until next year; but what I do know the hon. gentleman admits, even without any additional estimates, which he has not yet given us, that the hon. gentlman's estimates are $922,000 more than the sum actually expended in 1893-4. We all know that we wound up the year 1893-4 with a deficit of $1,210,000, and we know that the failure in revenue down to the 1st of May, which the hon. gentleman did not give, amounts to $2,898,788, while our expenditure up to May 1st exceeded our expenditure for the last year by $705,413. Now, sir, these figures—and that is as good as the hon. gentleman's hypothesis—show that there is to-day an actual, ascertained deficit of $4,754,520. However, sir, I am not very greatly concerned about that; whether the deficit be $4,500,000, as he says, or whether it be four millions and three-quarters, as the public returns would seem to indicate it is, or whether it may be one or two or three hundred thousand dollars, more or less, by the 1st of July, is not a matter of very great moment. It is sufficient for us to know, by the hon. gentleman's own admission—and he certainly did not exaggerate—the deficit amounts to four and one-half millions.

The general result is that we have a deficit ranging from $4,500,000 to $5,000,000; that our cash in hand is barely adequate to meet our current needs, and hardly that, remembering, as I pointed out the other night that, over and above further bills payable, we have in addition some $40,000 borrowed from the people of Canada, for which we ought to keep a respectable reserve. It is very clear that instead of having $9,000,000 of ascertained liabilities, and a number of items scattered here and there, which are to be paid within the next half dozen years, our ascertained liabilities are something like $20,000,000, not including those statutory charges to which I have alluded, and which would amount to very nearly a million dollars a year more added to our fixed charges for many years. The hon. gentleman has talked largely and loudly of the increased deposits, but not a word out of the hon. gentleman's mouth, not a whisper from the hon. gentleman's lips about the vastly-increased indebtedness of Canada, as compared with the period between 1873 and 1878. The hon. gentleman has now and heretofore wholly ignored that most important fact, what is the present indebtedness? Mind you, by the indebtedness of Canada I do not mean barely and solely the indebtedness owed by Canada in her federal capacity. I mean our federal debt; I mean our provincial debt; I mean our municipal debt; I mean our private debt due abroad; I mean also the sum due by us for railway bonds and obligations. Now, I have been at some pains to find out as correctly as I could—the statistics do not allow of my doing it altogether—what that amounts to, and I venture to say to the house that if you take into account railway bonds and stocks as well, that the total present indebtedness of Canada, the collective indebtedness to parties abroad, must be somewhere in the neighborhood of $800,000,000 or $1,000,000,000, and the annual amount of interest $25,000,000 or $30,000,000 a year.

WASTED MONEY.

To-day we are called upon to pay the interest, and the ten or twelve million dollars a year which we have to pay through the medium of the government is only a part at any rate of the total sum of interest which Canada has to pay. Sir, had we got value for our money, had that money been invested in works which were really useful and which really added to the productive powers of Canada, the case would not have been so bad. It would have been possible for us to have borrowed $800,000,000 or $1,000.000,000, if you will, and we should have been able to pay the interest largely out of the enhanced values arising from those works. But it is only too well known to anyone who knows anything of Canada that an enormous amount of the money that was borrowed has been wasted, aye, worse than wasted, for a very considerable part of it has gone to corrupt the people of Canada. Simultaneously with the borrowing of these enormous sums of money, on which we have to pay interest, there was a great fall in the income of our agriculturists. Scarcely a single farm product, except perhaps cheese, brings anything like as good a price today as it did in 1878. Many of them bear scarcely half the value in the market that they did then. My computation is that the loss in the income of our agriculturists today is fully $20,000,000 a year as compared with their income of a few years ago. I will not go back even so far as 1878. Why, Sir, every man knows that wheat of the very best quality, not to speak of barley or other grains, has to be sold in our markets for scarcely half the price which was freely obtained fifteen or sixteen years ago, and while that may be not entirely the fault of hon. gentlemen opposite, still it must be borne in mind that while on all occasions they are ready to take credit to themselves for every cheapness, no matter how obtained, in manufactured articles, they refuse, wholly and entirely, to be responsible for any reduction in the price of grain. Let them be just, Sir, and if they claim to be the authors of this increased cheapness of other commodities, let them stand before agricultural audiences and admit, as they are in honor bound to do, that they are equally responsible for the enormous fall in the prices of agricultural products.

Taking a general view of the condition of the country Sir Richard said they had reached a period of stand-still, for which the only possible immediate relief was reciprocity with the United States, the opportunity for which might be lost through the dishonesty, treachery and trickery of the men in office. He would not conceal from the house "that a considerable custom tariff must be exacted for some time to come, but it must be fairly and honestly framed for the purpose of bringing into the treasury and not at the dictation of the Manufacturers' Association, whose faithful servant and mouth-piece the Minister of Finance was, and who divided the plunder with the government unjustly obtained from the people." He believed that at last the following frauds were pretty well exploded: The home market fraud, the desire for economy fraud, the sham loyalty fraud, the desire for reciprocity fraud, the general prosperity fraud, the reduction in prices by reason of light prices fraud.

He concluded by moving the following amendment:

That the estimates for the fiscal year 1894-95, amount to the sum of $38,517,152 independent of any further supplementary estimates which may be brought down.

That the said sum of $38,517,152 is in excess of the amount expended in 1893-94 by the sum of $922,127.

That the deficit for the year 1893-94, amounted to $1,210,322.

That the deficit for the present year is estimated by the Minister of Finance at $4,500,000.

That from statements made by ministers of the crown in this house, it appears that our obligation for railway subsidies and for public works now in progress, will involve a further outlay of $20,000,000, as follows: For railway subsidies now voted, $8,729,000; for the St. Lawrence canal, $6,000,000; for the Trent Valley canals, $5,000,000, for Intercolonial railway and minor works, $1,000,000; total, $20,729,000, the interest on which sum together with the subsidy provided by statute, to be paid on account of a fast Atlantic service, will entail an addition to our already heavy annual fixed charges of $1,400,000.

That inasmuch as enormous sums of money are exacted from the people of Canada which are not paid into the treasury, and inasmuch as the burthens of the people are thereby greater and unnecessarily increased, and it is of the utmost importance to the well-being of the community that not only should the present extravagant expenditure be diminished, but that the said burthen should be reduced as largely and speedily as possible, it is expedient that in making provision to restore the equilibrium between revenue and expenditure, as recommended in the speech from the throne, the existing tariff be so modified that it may be made a tariff for revenue only.

Lower Prince William.

APRIL 29.—Miss Della Smith has gone to the city to learn dressmaking.

Mrs. L. Wheeler has returned home from visiting friends at Douglas.

Thos. O'Brien, jr., left to-day for the city where he will accept a position in the Aberdeen mills.

D. S. Worden, who has been spending the winter in Fredericton, was in the village last week on business.

Chas. Courser has sold his farm to F. B. Burden. He will move to Fairville, St. John, where he has purchased a farm. Mr. and Mrs. Courser and family will leave on Wednesday for their future home much to the regret of their many friends in this village.

J. C. Mott, M. D., went to St. John last week.

Miss Georgie Mott will leave for St. John by steamer Aberdeen on Wednesday.

Work has been commenced on the Agricultural Hall. J. W. Smith has the work in charge.

A necktie social will be held at J. W. Smith's on Wednesday evening.

Henry Adams, temperance lecturer, of St. John, recently passed through this village.

A young man in Maine, who had prolonged his call on his ladylove rather later than usual, was surprised when a window in an upper story was raised as he left the house and the voice of the mistress of the mansion called out: Leave an extra quart this morning please.