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THE DANGER LINE

When will the limit be reached?

This is the question which is forced instantly to mind by the financial statement of the fiscal year 1910, just issued by the provincial government. When will New Brunswick reach the end of that increase in expenditure which has become so noteworthy under the rule of Premier Hazen?

This is not a matter of party politics. It is a matter which demands the earnest consideration of every citizen of the province who is desirous of seeing the financial condition of the province sound and healthy, and of seeing New Brunswick share in the common prosperity of the Dominion.

In 1907, the last year of the former administration's regime, some \$960,000 were spent on accounts chargeable to ordinary revenue. In 1908, the first year of the Hazen rule, the million dollar mark was passed. In 1909 the figures were no less than \$1,355,381. For 1910 the expenditures surpassed even the total of 1909, and jumped up to the alarming sum of \$1,317,876. In other words, under the Hazen method of conducting public affairs, the sum spent on "ordinary account" alone was nearly \$300,000 greater than the sum similarly spent by the Robinson ministry!

New Brunswick is but a small province. Its resources at best are limited. There cannot be great increases in the revenue. There cannot safely be, there must not be, the dangerous increases in the expenditure which have unfortunately come in the past two or three years. Each year of Hazen rule has seen these startling increases in expenditure. If this be the economy which Mr. Hazen promised the people may well pray to be relieved of their burden.

Readers of The Mail will remember clearly the emphasis with which Mr. Hazen and his associates were wont to assert in the days of the former government that the interest charges paid were ruinous. The province, they declared, was being hurried to bankruptcy. If that was the case in 1907 how much worse is the situation today?

In 1907 the amount paid out under the head of "interest" was \$178,000—admittedly a large sum. In 1910, according to the statement of the government itself, the amount paid from the provincial treasury under the head of "interest" was not \$178,000 only; it was not \$200,000 only, but the astounding sum of \$251,000, or about \$73,000 more than was paid under the Robinson government! If the former government was reckless, if it was extravagant, if it was careless in its handling of provincial funds, what is to be said of the ministers who promised economy and carefulness, and yet pile up an "interest" charge of \$251,000? Certainly, the situation is not one to reassure the citizens of the province.

The government's statement gives further reason for the feeling which many men have had that the school book policy must prove another bringer of deficits. In the House last winter Hon. Mr. Flemming himself was compelled to admit that the policy had been administered at a loss. The Auditor General's report for 1910 shows that there has been no improvement. Indeed, the situation is worse. Under the head of "School Books" in 1910 the sum of \$23,157 was spent. The receipts were \$17,162. The difference between the two sides of the account is practically \$5,000. It will be said, of course, that this amount is represented by books on hand or by sums due the government by vendors. A similar story was used for a time last year but a deficit had

ultimately to be admitted. Last year the difference between the two sides of the account was less than the difference shown this year. If there was a deficit under any such circumstances in 1909, the situation in 1910 cannot have been improved but must have been materially worse. Under the present policy the school book business as carried on by the government cannot possibly be other than a source of continual loss to the people. The indirect loss to the people will far more than offset the reductions which have been made in the direct price of a few of the books purchased from vendors.

The item "Executive government" shows a noteworthy increase of expenditure in 1910. The sum spent under this head this year is larger than the sum similarly spent in 1909. It is considerably larger than the sum so spent in the last year of the former administration's life. In that year, 1907, it was some \$34,000, as compared with no less than \$38,908 in 1910. Many persons will recall the manner in which Mr. Hazen and his friends denounced the previous government on the score that the ministers themselves cost the people too much. Indeed, there were times when men even went so far as to insinuate that ministers were stealing from the people. The Mail would not make any such insinuation in reference to Mr. Robinson and his colleagues but if Mr. Robinson and his friends were culpably extravagant when they made the cost of "Executive government" \$34,000, what shall be said of the men who increase that cost by nearly \$5,000?

"Public printing" of course shows an increase in 1910. We say "of course" for so long as the government is susceptible to certain influences just so long will there be increases in the amount spent for provincial printing. Last year something like \$11,000 appeared as the sum spent for "Public Printing," though other large sums were spent for work of the kind and charged under other heads. In 1910 the sum spent under this head was \$14,448. It remains to be learned from further investigation when the public accounts are presented to the House how much additional has been charged for printing under other heads. It also remains to be learned whether or not the \$8,100 Gleaner has bettered its 1909 record for "no tender" trips to the public treasury.

One item of the expenditure which merits some attention is the one which tells of a payment of nearly \$3,000 on account of the "N. B. Railway Investigation." In 1909 the expenditure showed a payment of \$2,909 on this account and at the last session of the legislature the Auditor General when questioned stated that the account had not been closed—in other words, all the bills incurred in connection with this investigation had not been paid. It will be interesting to learn whether or not the account has yet been closed or whether, like the brook famed in poetry, it goes on forever. The investigation, it will be recollected, was the one carried on by friends of the government with a view to making capital against Hon. Mr. Pugsley and other members of the former cabinet. The commissioners and their counsel, Mr. H. A. Powell, have been well paid from the public treasury; their report was tabled in the House two sessions back and from that day to this the government has taken no action whatever upon it. Thousands of dollars of the people's money have been paid out—and more may yet be paid—for the investigation and the people of the province have reaped not one cent of benefit. The report is merely part of the government archives.

In 1910 the government spent several thousand dollars more for "Agriculture" than did the old government in 1907. But Premier Hazen and his medical colleague who presides over the Department of Agriculture equalized matters by cutting down the grants to "Exhibitions," grants which are largely devoted to the encouragement of agricultural fairs. If the amount spent for "Agriculture" and "Exhibitions" in 1907 is compared with the amount similarly spent in 1910 it will be found that there is a difference of but a few hundred dollars. Premier Hazen is finding it a difficult matter to fool all the people all the time.

"Contingencies" are creeping upwards under this economical government. The maintenance of the Provincial Hospital is a heavier charge than in former days. "Administration"

ANOTHER BIG CRUISER OF THE BRISTOL TYPE

In regard to the following it should be borne in mind that the cruisers to be built for the Canadian navy are of the Bristol type. The naval correspondence of The New York Herald recently wrote a series of articles on the German navy, based on first-hand information, that attracted a great deal of attention.

New York, Dec. 25.—The New York Herald has the following from London:

"The commissioning of the cruiser Bristol at Devonport marks the completion of the class of five medium-sized cruisers of the protected type which were authorized in the naval program of 1908-9. It is noteworthy that these vessels should be joining the fleet at a time when attention is being directed to the cruiser policy of the Admiralty in view of the forthcoming navy estimates, and therefore, a brief review of the situation in regard to cruisers should be opportune at the present moment.

A SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT.

"With the entry of the Bristol into service, Great Britain may be said to be reaping the first fruits of the revival of naval opinion in favor of the small cruiser, which took place just over three years ago. For some time previous to that date the attention of the naval world had been concentrated upon the building of armored cruisers of large displacement and power, culminating in the production of the Invincible, and her sisters, and, following the British example in this respect, all the great powers except Germany, had ceased to build any protected cruisers for about five years.

"Then it was that the Admiralty, having established a lead in battleships of the Dreadnought class, turned their attention to the equipment of the fleet with a new type of cruiser for service with destroyers, and another type for scouting work and the protection of commerce. It was, of course, never intended that the Invincibles, although described as cruisers, should be employed upon work of this nature. The main reason why they were built was to form a fast wing to the battleship fleet, ready at any time to overtake the rearmost ships of a retreating enemy and hold on to them until the rest of the ships could arrive and bring about a decisive action.

ADVANTAGES OF THE BRISTOLS

"The first type decided upon by the Admiralty is represented by the Boadicea class, three of which are now in commission as parent ships in the first and second destroyer flotilla. The Boadicea is of 3,360 tons, her armament consists of 6 4-inch guns, and she carries 450 tons of coal. In each of these particulars she is superior to the 8 scouts which were launched in 1904-5. The second design adopted

is that of the 5 Bristols, which are of 4,800 tons displacement, and carry 2 6-inch and 10 4-inch guns in their armament—an advance, it will be seen, upon that of the Boadicea, which was considered insufficient for effective reconnaissance work. The Bristols have also much better seakeeping qualities than the Boadicea, and they carry 800 tons of fuel.

"In announcing the construction of the Bristol class, the Secretary of the Admiralty stated that they were to replace the cruisers of the Edgar type, which had become worn out. It was also well known that they were designed as an answer to the cruisers Germany was steadily building in accordance with her navy law, which provided for the laying down of two each year. These cruisers have gradually advanced in size, but the last to be completed, the Koln and Augsburg, have a displacement of 4,280 tons, and an armament of 12 guns of 4.1-inch calibre, while their engines are of 20,000 horsepower, compared with 22,000 of the Bristol's machinery. They are therefore, not so large or powerful as the British cruisers, especially if compared with the second batch, known as the Dartmouth class, of 5,250 tons, which will follow the 5 Bristols into commission before long.

ANSWER TO CRITICS

"Turning to the larger question of the relative position of Great Britain in this class of vessels, critics of the Admiralty policy sometimes seek to prove that our supply is deficient on the ground that, owing to the size of our mercantile marine, which includes more than a third of the world's steam and sailing vessels, we therefore require a proportionately large number of cruisers for its protection. But the material point is not concerned so much with what commerce the navy has to protect as with the dangers which that commerce has to be protected from, and therefore in fixing our numbers it is necessary to take into account the strength of other powers.

"In 1914, as I pointed out in The Herald in October, Great Britain will have, exclusive of any ships the colonies may build, fifty-eight protected cruisers of a total displacement of 324,115 tons, as compared with thirty-nine for Germany of 137,151 tons. The German total, however, will include a larger proportion of modern vessels, for, eliminating all over fifteen years, the figures would be Great Britain twenty-six and Germany thirty. In the last named total are included the four ships to be laid down within the next two years.

From these figures it will be seen that while the British preponderance in 1914 will be considerable, it is essential that new ships should be provided for the replacement of those which must be struck off the list in the years immediately following."

tion of Justice" comes higher than of old. The Factory Inspector costs the people more than did Mr. John McMulkin, the man who was legislated out of office on the pretext that he was too old. It costs the people something to have a Public Utilities Commission, though no one has yet seen any fruits of the commission's labors. These are days of increased cost for the people of New Brunswick in many things beside the increase of highway taxes.

In 1910 "Stumpage Collection" cost the people more than twice as much as it did in 1907. In this connection Hazen partisans will say that the "Territorial Revenue" has been increased because of the vigilance and the exceptional honesty which is shown in its collection. As a matter of fact, the increase is chiefly due to the blameworthy policy of the government in decreasing the size of the log which may be cut on Crown Lands. This policy is resulting in temporary gain to the provincial treasury but it persisted in it means

the rapid depletion of the forest wealth of the province and perhaps the wiping out of the chief source of New Brunswick's revenue.

On paper the government shows a surplus of some \$6,000. Last year a similar surplus of \$4,000 was shown. Investigation then brought to light two facts. One was that the apparent surplus was created by the barefaced transfer of a current bridge account to a "special" account which was charged up as part of the bonded debt. The second fact was that instead of a pretended surplus of \$4,000, there was an actual deficit of nearly \$170,000.

It is impossible to say with the information at present available just how serious the condition of provincial affairs really is. It is clear, however, that there has been wasteful expenditure of the people's money, reckless outlays which have brought the total spending up to a figure hitherto almost unthought of in regard to New Brunswick and dangerous to the future of the province.

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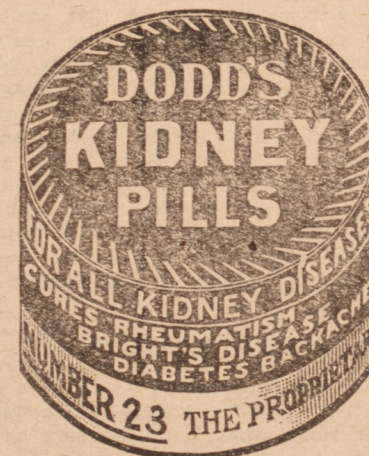
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UNIQUE TONIGHT.

Delighted crowds at the Unique last night witnessed the great western feature "A Silent Message," by Esenay. Also a splendid Biograph photo play, "A Plain Song," was shown besides two sparkling comedies. Tomorrow afternoon and evening a great Biograph Indian feature, "Song of the Wildwood Flute."

GAVE A SUPPER.

Lt. Col. McLean, M. P., held one of the series of teas in the Orange Hall, Cole's Island, on the evening of the 22nd inst. There was a large number present. After tea the Colonel delivered a stirring address on the current topics of the day. Mr. James Stewart was chairman. The sum of \$65.75 was realized for the Baptist church.

Hon. W. C. H. Grimmer, Surveyor General, is here on departmental business.

Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Atkinson and Master Paul Atkinson, of Sackville, are the guests of Mr. and Mrs. M. Atkinson, Charlotte St.