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PETER FARRELL & CO

Independent Member Reviews the Record of the Government

HON. MR. BURCHILL ELECTED WITH THE SUPPORT OF A HAZEN MINISTER, SPEAKS HIS MIND

Northumberland Representative Shows Government Spent Last Year \$211,000 More Than it Received--How Ex- penses Are Mounting Up Under Ministry Which Promised Economy--Government Giving Smaller Percentage of Re- venue to Agriculture and Education Than Its Predecessors-- How Money of the People Has Been Wasted.

Hon. Mr. Burchill, of Northumberland, was elected to the Legislature as an independent, giving legislative support to the administration. In the campaign which resulted in his election Mr. Burchill was supported by a member of the Hazen cabinet as against the other candidate nominated.

In the House from time to time Mr. Burchill has spoken on public issues and in the main has hitherto given approval to the course of the government. On Thursday afternoon he took part in the budget debate. His speech appears herewith and will well repay a careful reading by men of all political beliefs.

Mr. Burchill spoke, mark you, not as a supporter of the Opposition, whose attitude he has sometimes criticised. He spoke as an independent who, without party bias, has studied provincial affairs and formed his opinions, the opinions, by the way, of a successful business man well capable of judging.

The Mail makes no comment here upon Mr. Burchill's speech. True, he showed that the government last year spent \$211,000 more than it received; that with a revenue thirty-nine per cent. greater than that enjoyed by the former administration the government is not spending proportionately as much as their predecessors on some, at least, of the public services; that the highway taxes have been greatly increased; that money has been wasted in the Central Railway investigation. These and other facts he brought out but the people of the county will judge of his utterances without comments from this paper being necessary.

In the early part of his speech, Mr. Burchill pointed out that it is the duty of hon. members to familiarize themselves with the accounts and to express themselves freely for the information of their constituents and the people of the province generally.

It has been well said that a good strong opposition is needed in the Legislature equally as much as a strong government. It is not capricious criticism but proposals and suggestions for the good of the province that are needed from an opposition.

He did not stand, he said, as an apologist for the old government, especially as he had not been in the House during the last few years of the old administration. He would merely speak of what had happened during the life of the present administration, and would accord to this government all the credit that may be due for what they had accomplished. The change in the system of book-keeping is an improvement but it is not to be charged against the old government that they were responsible for inaugurating the old system. They had only carried it on after it had become obsolete.

The Provincial Secretary in his budget speech had spent the time very largely in comparing what the old government had done with what this government had done. The old government were turned out for what they had done and WHEN THIS GOVERNMENT GOES TO THE PEOPLE THEY WILL NOT BE JUDGED BY WHAT THE OLD GOVERNMENT DID, BUT WHAT THEY HAVE DONE THEMSELVES.

WHY THERE'S PROSPERITY.

He did not want to discount the statement of the Provincial Secretary that this province is enjoying prosperity. It is evident on all sides that there is increased prosperity; the better conditions in the rural districts show it. BUT HE DISSENTED FROM THE STATEMENT THAT AN INCREASE IN THE REVENUE OF THE PROVINCE IS AN INDICATION OF INCREASED PROSPERITY, THE REVENUE BEING VERY LARGELY FROM THE CROWN LANDS. IF THE CUT OF LUMBER ON THE CROWN LANDS IS NO LARGER THAN FORMERLY AND THE INCREASE IN REVENUE IS DUE TO AN HONEST COLLECTION, AS ARGUED BY THE GOVERNMENT, FROM THE TREASURY BENCHES, IT MEANT THERE HAD BEEN NO INCREASE IN THE

LUMBER BUSINESS AT LEAST.

The prosperity of this country is caused by an increase in the prices obtained for farm produce but is not due to the acts of this administration.

He did not wish to be understood as holding that there should not be any debt increase, but where the revenue of the province is almost stationary there should be thought for the future. The government should not spend more money than is being received on unnecessary improvements. When the present members of the government were on the opposition side of the House they had indulged in criticism regarding how money which had been voted in supply was spent. Now they find fault with the present opposition for following a similar course. In his opinion criticism of the methods of expending money which they themselves had voted in supply is a fair and honorable criticism for the opposition to make and quite in order with the present opposition as well as with the old.

THE OLD GOVERNMENT.

The Provincial Secretary had spoken in a rather boastful way of the number of bridges built under the present administration but it should be remembered that this government has more money at their disposal for this work than the old administration. THE OLD GOVERNMENT WAS AS FULLY IMPRESSED AS THESE MINISTERS WITH THE DEMANDS OF THE VARIOUS CONSTITUENCIES AND WOULD NOT HAVE ALLOWED BRIDGES TO HAVE FALLEN INTO A STATE OF DISREPAIR IF THEY POSSESSED SUFFICIENT REVENUES TO ENABLE THEM TO DO ALL THE DESIRED WORK. As he sat some years ago as a supporter of the old government he knew how hard it had been to get money for the public services of the constituencies. The government would say that they didn't have the money and therefore could not have the work done. The hon. gentleman who had spoken for four or five hours (Mr. Sprout) this session had stated that he supported the government on account of the number of bridges, etc., that had been built in Kings county and he perhaps left the impression that his support might be withdrawn if the government didn't do as much in the future for Kings. In his (Burchill's) opinion there should be some stronger reason than this given by members for supporting a government. The money of the province should be well spent in all the counties, not in one more than in another.

The government had contended that this year's surplus was somewhere in the vicinity of \$6,000 and that the public debt had only been increased by \$180,000. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE GOVERNMENT HAD SPENT LAST YEAR \$211,000 MORE THAN IT RECEIVED. It has been the custom in the province to charge certain expenditures to capital account. Capital is something which a man puts into his business with the hope of getting some return thereon. The expenditures in this province on such works as permanent bridges, railways, etc., are charged to capital account. It should not be so charged because the government gets no returns on its investment and there is no distinction between revenue and capital account since there is no return to the province on either.

On comparing the receipts of the province in 1907 with those in 1910, he found that there has been an increase of \$276,394, or about 39 per cent. On a comparison of the increase in revenue from the several sources, it would be noticed that the principal increases had been in Dominion subsidies and territorial revenue. For the increase from all the other sources, the government could not rightly claim credit on the ground of a better administration of the provincial affairs. THERE HAD BEEN A GREAT INCREASE IN THE EXPENDITURES OF 1910 OVER

ER THOSE OF 1907. IN 1910 WHEN THE GOVERNMENT HAD AN INCREASED REVENUE OF 39 PER CENT. OVER 1907, IT HAD ONLY APPROPRIATED 14 PER CENT. MORE FOR AGRICULTURE. The amounts spent on Contingencies in 1910 was only \$1,955 less than in 1907 according to the Auditor General's report. It used to be charged against the late administration that such items as printing, etc., were not included under the one head of Contingencies, but were scattered through out the report, but here, in this report of 1910, the Contingencies in the Administration of Justice are not under the general head of Contingencies but are charged up to Administration of Justice, so that really the only saving in 1907 over 1907 is something over \$1,500.

ON EDUCATION, THIS GOVERNMENT HAD SPENT BUT 20 PER CENT. AS COMPARED WITH AN INCREASE IN REVENUE OF 39 PER CENT.

On Fish, Forest and Game Protection, the government had spent \$9,290 over the amount expended in 1907. He would like to say that he had been informed that the department only allows the Game Wardens one day out of each week to look after the protection of the game in their districts. IF THIS IS SO, THE MONEY IS SIMPLY THROWN AWAY because a man who is employed only one day in the week will not give very serious attention to the work. In some districts with which he was acquainted, it would take a man many days to simply travel through them.

The interest charges have been considerably increased under this government. The Immigration Department casts more.

The Central Coal & Railway investigation had cost the province in 1910 \$2,965 and in 1909 \$2,909.55 and considerable more money has been spent since November last up to the opening of the House, so that in all about \$6,000 had been spent in this time upon this investigation. THE COUNTRY HAD RECEIVED NO BENEFIT FROM IT. WHATEVER, AND IT HAD NOT EVEN PROVIDED THE GOVERNMENT WITH POLITICAL CAPITAL. The people had thought that the object of the investigation was to bring about the refund of the money which had been said to have been improperly taken from the road, but this had never been done.

The Public Works Department spent \$98,022 more in 1910 than in 1907. It was claimed that the country received the benefit in better roads, bridges and other public works. He was of the opinion that the roads in his county were really somewhat better improved but it must be borne in mind that THE PEOPLE ARE PAYING MUCH MORE FOR THEIR ROADS NOW THAN IN 1907. One gentleman had told him that his tax was now \$30 whereas it had only been \$10 two years ago.

With regard to the bridges in Northumberland county, he said that they had been mostly constructed by day's work and not by contract, and he understood that this had been the case in most of the other counties as well. The present government when in opposition, had strenuously objected to the day's work system as opposed to contract.

He wanted to draw attention to what is known as controllable expenditures. It had been argued by the government, when in opposition, that all work under this head should be given out to tender. It did not appear that the government had followed out this practice. PRINTING IS A CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURE AND IN 1907 HAD COST \$13,697, WHICH HAD BEEN TERMED EXTRAORDINARY. WHAT DID HE FIND IN 1907? THE EXPENDITURE FOR PRINTING HAD JUMPED TO \$14,448, AND THAT IS NOT INCLUDING THE PRINTING OF THE JUDICATURE ACT, WHICH HAD COST \$1,275.

Mr. Flemming--The gentleman might consider the difference in the cost of paper and labor between then and now.

(Continued on page three)

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