# THE CAMPAIGN!

## RECEPTION AND OVATION TO

# HON. D. FERGUSON, P. C.

## A Splendid Demonstration.

## PERFECT ARRANGEMENTS

## VERY FINE TORCHLIGHT PROCESSION

## All Parts of the Province Represented by Influential Men

## ADDRESSES OF WELCOME.

## The Minister's Able and Practical Speech,

WEDNESDAY, May 6.

We shall not attempt to describe in detail the Welcome Home to the Hon. Donald Ferguson. Notwithstanding the vernal rain and a late arrival, it is, today, universally admitted to have been the largest and most exthusiastic political demonstration ever given in Prince Edward Island.

The arrangements of the committee were perfect and in the highest degree creditable to the gentlemen who composed it.

Patrick Blake, Esq., President of the Liberal Conservative Association, met the Minister at Point du Chene. Arrived at Summerside, they were met by Richard Hunt and Edward Hackett, Esquires, and many other prominent gentlemen, who extended to the honorable gentleman a hearty welcome home. Mr. Ferguson was accompanied by his two sons, William and Colin, fresh from their scholastic triumphs at McGill University. A considerable delay took place at Summerside, and the train was half an hour late in leaving. At Emerald Junction there was another short delay, during which an address was read and presented by Mr. P. J. Trainor. To this Mr. Ferguson responded appropriately in a few words. It is creditable to Conductor Gillis and driver Armour that, notwithstanding the delays, the train made the passage to Charlottetown in exactly two hours.

It was anticipated that the rain would "spoil the demonstration," and the party accompanying the Minister was agreeably surprised by the report of torpedoes and the hearty cheers by which his arrival was greeted. The station was literally packed, and cheer upon cheer went up when the Minister appeared. After warm handshakings, the Minister wac borne upon the arms of enthusiastic young men present, through the throng to the coach in waiting. The scene upon the street was brilliant with the lights of a hundred and twenty torches carried by young men and boys. Galbraith's band led the long procession of carriages and pedestrians to the Market Hall. The "old flag" was carried aloft in advance by an old soldier Mr. Thomas Wakeling.

The decorations of the hall were appropriate and tasteful. Around the walls hung pictures of Canadian statesmen, past and present, and above these were suspended mottoes in colored letters, skilfully painted by Mr. Afred J. Quirk. These included such patriotic and appropriate, legends as "A United British Empire," "Canada for Canadians," "Branch Railways," "Our Dairy Industry," "Encouragement to Butter and Cheese," etc., and over the platform were the words "SIR CHARLES TUPPER, OUR LEADER."

The hall was densely crowded. The seats, the aisles, every inch of space was occupied by men and women standing and sitting.

Upon the platform were the five Liberal-Conservative candidates—Dr. Jenkins, for Queens West; Mr. Martin, for Queens East; Mr. A. C. MacDonald, for Kings; Mr. Hackett for West Prince and Mr. Hunt for East Prince—Rev. Dr. Curren, Rector of St. Dunstans College; Rev. Ignatus MacDonald, also of St. Dunstan's; Rev. Father Hogan, of Tracadie; Senator MacDonald, Dr. McNeill, of Stanley; Hon. William Campbell, Park Corner; Hon. James Nicholson, of Eldon; Mr. McCready, editor of the Guardian; Mr. McIsaac, editor of the Herald; Mr. McCourt, editor of the Watchman; Mr. W. L. Cotton, editor of THE EXAMINER; Mr. J. T. McIlish, Mr. J. B. Dawson and Mr. Alfred Quirk, President and Secretary of the Young Liberal-Conservative Association; Mr. R. B. Norton, of Norton Brothers, and many others.

Patrick Blake, Esq, presided. Amid hearty cheers he extended to Hon. Mr. Ferguson a cordial Welcome Home and read the following

ADDRESS.

*The Honorable Donald Ferguson, P. C., Senator of the Dominion of Canada:*

SIR,—The Liberal Conservatives of Prince Edward Island extend to you a hearty welcome home, from the delicate and arduous duties devolving upon you at the recent parliamentary session at Ottawa.

Rest assured that we have not failed to note and appreciate the unremitting energy and care which have characterized you as our representative, ever since you obtained a seat in the Canadian Senate.

You have constantly laboured to promote the best interests of the Province, and to secure for it advantages which have been in the past utterly overlooked by the Opposition representatives sent from time to time to the House of Commons.

We heartily congratulate you on the success which has at length crowned your efforts in behalf of better railway facilities for the people of Belfast, Murray Harbor, and other sections of our Province.

We regret that the unpatriotic policy of obstruction, pursued by the Opposition, during the last session of Parliament, has delayed the immediate construction of those most important and necessary public works, and there is just ground for complaint on the part of our people, that this fatuous policy nowhere found more active and persistent champions than from the Grit representatives of this Province.

We are glad, however, that, in the face of this policy of obstruction the Government of Canada has pledged itself to the immediate construction of branch railways in our Province, and that for the future our people have a guarantee that we will receive most liberal treatment in the matter of public works.

We also rejoice at the measure of success which has attended your efforts to increase the pay of the employes of the Island Railway.

As our representative in the Cabinet, you have been most zealous and untiring in promoting everything tending to forward our best interests and we gladly bear testimony to the care and patience with which you have applied yourself to every call made upon you by any of the electorate.

We desire to thank the Government, through you, for the care and attention which it has given to the butter and cheese industry of this Province. This business has now attained a marked development among us, and we are sure that our people highly appreciate the efforts of the Government to better the condition of our farmers.

We feel gratified to know that the cause of progress in Canada is not to receive a set-back, and that the wealth, prosperity and industries of Canada are not to be placed at the mercy of a party whose past and present render it an object of supreme suspicion.

We have the utmost confidence in the present Government, and we shall do all in our power, to the end that, when on the 23rd of June next, the rest of Canada shall have sustained it by a large majority, this Province shall no longer hold the unenviable position of electing representatives to oppose and thwart the good intentions of the Government towards it.

Evils present and future beset our Province, owing to a wasteful, extravagant, administration of our local affairs. Financial ruin and embarrassment are speedily overtaking us. It will tax to the very utmost the energies of our people to recover from the great havoc which grit rule has brought upon our Island home, and we are cheered by the prospect that the general affairs of the Dominion are to continue to be administered by the present able and progressive Government.

P. BLAKE,
President West Queen's Lib.-Con. Ass.
JAS. CLOW,
President East Queen's Lib.-Con. Ass.
J. B. DAWSON,
President Young Lib.-Con. Ass.

In reply Mr. Ferguson spoke until half-past eleven o'clock holding a large proportion of the great audience until the end.

Hon. Mr. Ferguson in coming forward received a great ovation. He said:

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—This is truly one of the proudest moments of my life. The demonstration which I have witnessed this evening is something which was totally unexpected. The reception you have given me to night overwhelms me. I appreciate highly this reception in so far as it relates to myself, but I must at the same time frankly and freely admit that I see in this demonstration in a far higher degree a recognition on the part of the people of Charlottetown and its vicinity of the principles of the Liberal Conservrtive party, of which I am simply, to some extent, an exponent this evening. I recognize in this demonstration before me, and which I have witnessed since I entered the railway station this evening, a repetition of that which is to be seen in almost every city of Canada to-day, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, (hear, hear) a great determination in the breasts of the people of this country to rally around the flag of our great party. (Cheer-) You are kind enough, Sir, in the address which you have read to me, to make some very flattering references to the part I have taken with regard to matters pertaining to the interests of our Province since I have had the honor of a seat in the Senate of Canada, and more particularly since I have had the honor of holding a seat in the Cabinet of the Dominion. (Applause).

WHAT P. E. ISLAND HAS RECEIVED.

You will pardon me if I make some slight reference to, and explanation of these things because they are not altogether so freely admitted by our friends on the other side, as they have been by the President of the Liberal Conservative Association, and the gentlemen who have been instrumental in getting up this address. The very day that I received an offer of a seat in the Government of Sir Mackenzie Bowell, one of the very first things I did was to write a letter to my colleague, the Hon. Mr. Costigan, setting forth the position of the Island with regard to winter communication by the steamer Stanley. I had before that time repeatedly pressed upon the Government of Canada, the necessity of popularising, as it were, that winter service. Away back in the Mackenzie Administration, when that service was inaugurated, a stupid policy was adopted of exacting heavy charges on freight and passengers. I always felt that it was wrong, and the first thing I did as a Minister of the Dominion was to press upon my colleagues the desirability of making the rates for both passengers and freight on that service the same as under the summer service. That demand was conceded and from that time to the present the winter service has been put upon the same rates for passengers and freight as we have had for summer communication with the mainland (Hear.) Again, the two principal towns of the Province had been deprived during the winter season of the morning train which was considered a very great inconvenience. I at once tried to remedy that grievance, and I succeeded with the assistance of Mr. Hunt other and gentlemen in restoring that train, which the public had enjoyed for many years, upon the P. E. I. Railway. We then applied ourselves to the question of closer communication with the mainland during the summer months. In this matter we met with some opposition, some doubts as to the advisability of attempting too much in that direction. But ladies and gentlemen, you know what followed. We succeeded last summer in effecting such changes in the time-table of the Intercolonial Railway, the Point du Chene and Summerside boat and the P. E. I. Railway as brought Prince Edward Island within practically one day of the great centre of the Dominion—the city of Montreal—both going and coming. (Applause).

Away back in the early days when our Railway was started, a most invidious and unfair distinction was made against the men on that Railway in the matter of the wages paid them. For some reason not easily understood or explained, a distinction was drawn between the compensation for the services of a P. E. I. Railway employe and the wages paid the men on the Intercolonial Railway. My colleagues, the Senator, our Members for King's County and myself have vigorously applied ourselves to the work of remedying this state of affairs. We worked earnestly long years ago to remedy this grievance, but we were not then in a position to do much, as we had no member in the Cabinet. During last winter and last summer, by one step after another, we succeeded in remedying, to a large extent, that invidious and dishonoring distinction made against the men on the P. E. I. Railway by the Mackenzie administration, and which I am sorry to say our Party had not removed. However, to a large extent this grievance has been taken away, and our Railway men are being practically placed in the same position as the employes on the Intercolonial. And it will be my effort as well as that of my colleagues and friends to remove every anomaly that yet remains so that the P. E. Islander, so long as he performs the same work and does it as well shall receive the same pay as is given to men in the other Provinces. (Hear, hear and cheers).

CLAIMS OF THE PROVINCE.

When I took my seat in the Senate of Canada I addressed myself very soon after being introduced to that honorable body to a discussion of the claims of the Province with regard to public works and steam communication with the Mainland. As my friends who were with me know very well, we assisted each other and consulted with each other, and I made a very elaborate statement in the Senate, being careful that every word should be weighed, and every figure accurate, so that nothing in that statement could be successfully contradicted. After discussing that question on the floor of the Senate, as I did, for an hour or two, I had the pleasure of having Sir Mackenzie Bowell admit to me a few hours afterwards "Ferguson, I cannot say that I ever understood the case of P. E. Island until I heard your speech to-day." (Applause.) And I had the honor of receiving only a short time afterwards a letter from the late lamented Sir John Thompson, in which he congratulated me on the fairness of the statement I made in the interests of the Province of P. E. Island. (Applause.) Up to that time, we had pressed the question of a tunnel between the Island and the Mainland on the Dominion Government. During that speech (to which I have just referred) I discussed it in the light of such information as had been elicited by the public men of the country, with regard to it; and I admitted frankly that the work was of very grave magnitude and of such great importance that it would not be reasonable and fair to ask the Dominion Government to rush blindly into it without very full information, and until more light had been thrown on the feasibility, practicability and cost of the undertaking. And I closed my address on that occasion by pointing out to hon. members of the Senate, and more particularly to members of the Government in that body, that, as years must intervene before the tunnel question could dealt with, as more information was wanted, and as the people of Prince Edward Island had suffered for many years by not having their share of the public works of the country, the matter of some very much needed

BRANCH RAILWAYS IN P. E. ISLAND

could be taken up in the meantime. (Applause.) A year later I became a member of the Government, and then I pressed the matter on the Government as strongly as possible. My hon. friend, Mr. Macdonald, one of the worthy representatives of King's County, addressed the House of Commons on the question in 1895 in a very well prepared and careful speech, in which he presented the claims of the Island in a forcible manner that attracted the ear of the Government, and the members of the House. And as the result of this advocacy on the part of myself and colleagues, we had a delaration made on the floor of the House by the Hon. Mr. Haggart, in which he outlined the different branch railways asked for by the representatives of the Province. I say here in this connection, and it would be very wrong were I to omit the mention of this fact, that my friends Messrs. Hunt, Martin, Hackett and Dr. Jenkins, (hear, hear) feeling the great importance of this work, visited Ottawa themselves in person at that time, and interviewed the members of the Government, and presented strong and well reasoned memorials to the Government, urging that they should take up this work of branch railways in P. E. Island. (Applause.) As a result of these efforts, the Minister of Railways, the Hon. Mr. Haggart, stated in the House that he believed these branches asked for by the people of the Island were no more than the Province was entitled to, and he pledged himself and for the Government that whenever the Government would undertake the voting of any money for aid to Railways in any of the other Provinces, they would deal fairly and justly with P. E. Island. (Applause.) Sir Mackenzie Bowell in his speech in the Senate, when Senators Prowse and Macdonald had presented the case of P. E. Island with regard to these branch railways, also stated that the Government would deal justly with P. E. Island, and would carry out the promise that Mr. Haggart made in the House of Commons. I remember that some time before this, we had pressed this matter of Railways in this Province. My friend, Mr. Martin, had been very strenuous in his advocacy of the Belfast Railway in particular, and I recollect very well that when we did so, we were greeted with a storm of derision on the part of our opponents who said it was a mere ele tion dodge, that it was wrong and immoral to advocate railway branches so near an election as we were thought to be. It was all right they said, to advocate Railways on the floor of Parliament, but it was not right to advocate them throughout the country. The election was not quite so near as these gentlemen thought it was. But in connection with that matter, I may say that in 1890, my friend, Mr. Davies made a speech in the House of Commons, in which he advocated the building of a branch railway from Peake's station to Wood Islands Breakwater. This was in the session of 1890, the last session before the last general election, and the last opportunity that he had in Parliament of advocating a public work for this Province. A little before the campaign of 1891, a meeting was called in Caledonia, which I was invited to attend, together with Mr. Davies. We were both present, and at that meeting the people criticized Mr. Davies' plan for a branch railway. They said we want a branch railway, but a line from Peake's station to Wood Island Breakwater would be of no use to the great southern country. It was too distant from Charlottetown, would not run lengthwise through the country and would be useless. Mr. Davies frankly admitted that the road the people desired namely, from Southport to Murray Harbor tapping the P. E. I Railway near Peake's or Cardigan station would be a preferable route. He admitted that, and pledged himself at that meeting that, if returned, he would advocate the construction of that railway as the people then desired it. I was then, or likely to be, a candidate for Queen's County; and I was asked to pledge myself in the same way, and I did so. I did not forget that pledge, and I took the very first opportunity when I entered the Senate that presented itself of fulfilling the pledge I had made to the people of Caledonia and Belfast, that if I were elected to Parliament I would endeavor as far as I was able to support the construction of that branch railway to that part of the country. (applause.) My friend, Mr. Davies, was successful, and I was defeated. I did not reach the Senate until about three years later; but he spent four years in the House of Commons without ever saying a word, good, bad or indifferent about the Belfast railway. (applause.) And this same gentleman who criticized my friend Mr. Martin and Senator Prowse and others because during the autumn of 1894 and the winter of 1895 they advocated a branch railway to Belfast had advocated a road—not the same exactly but nevertheless a road from Peake's station to Wood Islands Breakwater,—and had solemnly promised the people of Caledonia that if elected to Parliament it would have his support. But this pledge, I believe, he forgot to carry out. It was not gotten up before an election. If it was, it was Mr. Davies who brought it up in 1890. I was pledged in 1891 to advocate it, and I embraced the first opportunity I had of doing so. Last year the Government were pledged at the very first time they undertook to vote aid to Railways to deal fairly and justly with P. E. Island. They were prepared to do that at this last session, and would have done so had they not been prevented by the obstructive tactics of the Opposition in Parliament. I don't intend, at this stage, to discuss this question of obstruction, but a little later I may have something more to say about it. But I want to draw your attention, Sir, to a statement made on this platform, and which I read in the Patriot newspaper today—a statement made by my friend, Mr. Davies, to the effect that these branch railways are only

ELECTION DODGES

and that there is no sincerity in them. That the motion which was submitted to Parliament by the Hon. Mr Haggart. (I am not sure that I am giving his exact words as I had but a hasty glance at the paper) was not a bodafide motion from the fact that it had not obtained the sanction of the Governor General before it was submitted to the House. Now I have seen the letter written by Mr. Davies in which he explains this. He says that Mr. Haggart did not make any reference to the Governer General's assent, and that "Hansard" does contain this statement by Mr. Haggart. Well, Hansard may not contain it, and Mr. Haggart may not have used the exact formula in all respects. I think he did not; for I have only to look at the motion made before it in Hansard—a motion with regard to railway subsidies—and in this as well as in the other there does not appear the statement that Mr. Haggart submitted the motion with the sanction and concurrance of the Governor General. But the fact remains that the official proceedings of the House, the document that is really binding, that forms the record, and determines the constitutionality of it, in this record the very words are used (applause). I am surprised that my friend Mr. Davies should have made so rash a statement on such very imperfect evidence when the records of the proceedings of Parliament were available, and when he could easily have corrected his mistake. And I am also surprised that in this microscopic examination which he gave to every proceeding with regard to the P. E. Island branch railways, he did not cast his eye a little further up on the page of Hansard and discover that the same formula was missing in another motion that Mr. Haggart made as well as in this. I am also greatly astonished that Mr. Davies should be so entirely deficient (as he seems to be) in constitutional knowledge as to imagine for a moment that any sworn minister under the Earl of Aberdeen would venture to go to Parliament with any proposition of this nature without the proper sanction. We know very well that British statesmen stand upon the constitution, and Mr. Haggart would never dare to go to Parliament with any proposition for which he had not the sanction of the Governor-General as well as that of his colleagues. I think Mr. Davies also made the statement that this motion was neglected and the Government passed it over. Why, gentlemen,—the Government pass it over! He might as well tell us the Government did not want to pass the main estimates of 1896-97. They were placed on the order paper on the 21th of January and one item was passed on the 31st of January; and from that day up to the prorogation of Parliament the Government were never able to go into committee on the estimates. They were passed over, not once, but a score of times, for the plain reason, which everyone here knows, that the Opposition caused such obstruction that it was impossible to give that consideration to the business of the country which it deserved and the interests of the Dominion demanded. I notice the statement is made that this proposition to build branch railways in P. E. Island should be received and treated as a bribe to the people. It is strange that Mr. Davies did not look at it in that light in 1890 when he made that speech in favor of branch railways, in the House of Commons. It is singularly strange that it did not dawn on any of his friends that that was an immoral kind of business for public men to be undertaking and carrying on. But, Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, you remember that history repeats itself. In the year 1886, my worthy colleague, the then Premier, now the Chief Justice of this Province, and myself, were sent to England to present the claims of the Province with regard to winter communication; and as a result of the discussions which we had with Sir Charles Tupper and the Earl of Granville on this matter, in the summer of that year (1886) we secured for this Province $20,000 a year for all time, equivalent to half a million of dollars. (Applause.) Of course parliamentary sanction could not be got. The arrangement was made between Mr. Sullivan and myself, acting for the Government of P. E. Island, and the Government of Sir John Macdonald. The arrangement had been made. An order in council was passed. But it could not be carried into law until the sanction of the Parliament of Canada had been obtained for that purpose. During that time an election unfortunately came on, and from one end of P. E. Island to the other we found our Liberal friends denouncing us for offering a bribe to the people, for raising an election dodge, an election cry. The truth is we thought we were two clear years away from an election when we took that matter up. We took it up in 1885, In 1886 we advanced it to a conclusion so far as our dealings with the Government were concerned. The elections, as you know, ladies and gentlemen, were sprung upon the country that year, at the end of the fourth year, and a year earlier than we expected. Our opponents declared, and they got the people from one end of the country to the other to believe, that they were being imposed on, and that we were only raising this matter as an election dodge. I believe the stand Mr. Sullivan and myself took in 1886—representing our colleagues in the government, representing the Conservative Party in the Province—the stand we took in going to England to advocate the claims of the Province—had no small effect, on account of the way it was viewed by our opponents, in causing the Province to go for the Liberal Party at the election of 1887. I believe our act on that occasion, although we acted in the truest and best interests of the Province, owing to the manner in which our opponents treated us owing to the use they made of the advocacy we had presented in England and to the half million dollar arrangement we made, actually resulted in a very large number of people believing we were fooling them and not acting fairly with the people, and ended by the Province recording a vote against us in 1887. You remember, after the elections were over, that arrangement was

CARRIED OUT TO THE LETTER,

and twenty thousand dollars a year has been paid to P. E. Island ever since on account of the arrangement made then. (Applause.) The Honorable Mr. Peters, finds that but as a drop in the bucket of his extravagance. He has not even got the common gratitude to say on any occasion that he is indebted to Sullivan and Ferguson for that twenty thousand dollars a year, which he knows so well how to spend. (laughter and cheers)

As a result of our efforts in 1886 the steamer Stanley was built. It was due to the vigorous protest which we made at that time. It was due to the earnest efforts which we had put forth that the Dominion Government addressed itself so manfully to this question, and it is a credit to the Dominion Government which has done so much to remove the grievances of which the people of this province have so long and justly complained. (applause.)

A FEW WORDS ON THE TUNNEL.

Now, gentlemen, I want to say a few words on the subject of the tunnel before I undertake to discuss some questions of great concern and importance which may be in your minds on the present occasion. I understand that my friend Mr. Davies stated the other evening that the Liberal Conservative party had gone to the country in 1891 pledging that, if they were successful, they would build the tunnel between the Island and the mainland. My friend must have a very short memory. If he merely recalled what took place during the election of 1891 he would find that a man, for whom he has a high respect and veneration, the Honorable Wilfred Laurier, and Mr. Davies himself made very much stronger promises than Sir John McDonald or his supporters. In a meeting held in this hall on the 11th of February, 1891, Mr. Davies made a speech, and owing to the limited time at his disposal he said: 'I am just going to take up two planks in the platform of the Liberal party—the construction of the tunnel and unrestricted reciprocity with the United States." These were two planks in the Liberal policy on that occasion—the construction of the tunnel and unrestricted reciprocity with the United States. I would ask you, gentlemen, where are these two great planks in the platform of the Liberal party to-day? Mr. Davies said: . . . "I will show you that the Government are not in sympathy with the tunnel project. They will not go one dollar over $1,650.00. We have the promise of the Government that they will incur an expense of $1650.00 and that they will not go one cent over that. That is all the Government are willing to pay. I believe the Liberal party are coming into power on the 5th of March next, and I wrote Mr. Laurier and told him I was in full accord with the project and asked him if he was ready to approve it, and received this reply:

"'I am in favor of the tunnel providing the surveyors show the scheme is reasonable and practicable.

'W. LAURIER.'"

He was not satisfied with this; but at the same time he wrote a letter to the editor of the Guardian, who had written asking for an expression of his opinion. In it he says:

"I have your favor of the 2nd of February, inst. I hardly would have thought that an expression of opinion as to the construction of a tunnel be ween the Island of Prince Edward and the mainland should be required of me. Every man who has given any attention to the condition of things and the necessities involved by the entering of the Island into confederation must admit that such a tunnel must be constructed if the thing is reasonably practicable. The first requisite is to have an accurate survey and reliable estimates. I am only sorry that these were not obtained long ago."

W. LAURIER.

Mr. Davies forgot to tell the people of this speech of his in 1891 on the tunnel question. He forgot to tell the people of this telegram. He entirely forgot that Mr. Laurier had written that letter to the editor of the Guardian pledging himself to the construction of the tunnel, if at all reasonable and practicable. What were the expressions of opinion on the question on that occasion? The Patriot newspaper says:

"We have the Honorable Mr. Laurier's telegram signed by himself. It is clear and without equivocation. It is stronger than anything from Sir John. Again on the 17th of February the Patriot says:

"If the Conservative party are in earnes on the question, and Sir John McDonald' Government are in sympathy with them, as they allege, let us have a statement to that effect over Sir John's signature, at least equally binding as that of the Honorable Mr. Laurier."

Sir John McDonald also wrote a letter I will read the letter, so that I may not be charged with keeping anything back. I daresay it has been presented to you before:

MY DEAR HOWLAN,—

In response to your pressing request with respect to the tunnel across the Straits, I desire to repeat that under the present circumstances the Cabinet are not in a position to deal with that question. If, as I believe, the country will continue to give us their confidence, the ministry will, under my guidance, take the matter up without delay. I understand that Sir Douglas Fox is of opinion that the scheme is a feasible one. The chief thing still unknown is the cost of construction. I fully appreciate the nature and extent of the obligation incurred by the Dominion to maintain continuous connection between the Island and the mainland. We have tried to carry this out by the Stanley, but of course she cannot fight against the elements; so if the cost comes within a reasonable amount, such as Parliament feels itself justified in incurring, I shall be prepared to submit the question for their favorable consideration.

I am,
Sincerely yours,
JOHN A. MCDONALD.

Here we find that Sir John McDonald and Mr. Laurier had placed themselves on record in, to some extent, the same way in 1891. But we were told, and told on every platform in Queen's County, that Sir John's letter was so vaguely written that it amounted to nothing at all, while Mr. Laurier's was a square and definite promise that the tunnel would be constructed. Now, you would at least expect that the Liberal Party, through their representatives from this Province, and through their Leader in the House of Commons, would have taken at least some interest in that question from that time forward. They were pledged more strongly than we were, to take up that question. But we find, instead of doing that, that Mr. Davies especially commenced to throw difficulties in the way from the very time he gained his election. In order to prove the statement I am making to you I will read some extracts from a speech made by him in the House of Commons in the years 1892 and 1894. You may remember that, immediately after the last election, the Government of Sir John McDonald undertook to have borings of the Strait made under the direction of Sir Douglas Fox. The contract was let to a Mr. Palmer, who made a considerable number of borings, but who failed to fulfil his contract. He got into a number of difficulties, financial and otherwise, which prevented him from carrying on the work.

The Government, in the following year, made a contract with the gentlemen who owned the diamond drill used by Mr. Palmer; but these men, though they labored hard and spent a large amount of money, were not successful in boring any holes. The next year they were still allowed to go on. They were to be paid for the work actually done, and were not to receive any money unless they made a certain number of borings. They completely failed in boring one hole. They spent $44,000. They never earned a cent, and never received a cent. The Government felt those men had made such strenuous efforts that they were entitled to fair consideration, but, having failed, they received nothing. The next year they made a contract with another company, after having called tenders from nine companies owning diamond drills. They made a contract with a company who engaged to work a certain period of time for $6,000, for, after the experience already acquired by the others, no company could be found to enter into a contract on the same basis. After working eighty-two days, they received $6,000. They worked all this time and sunk four holes very successfully. A few still remain to be sunk in the very exposed and deepest part of the strait, where the difficulties to be contended with in making the borings would be very great. While the Government was doing this they were continuously accused by the Opposition of doing nothing in the matter. I find no fault with that. It is the work of an Opposition to pick flaws. But I do find fault with the representatives from this Province who showed their unfaithfulness to this tunnel question altogether.

Sir Douglas Fox made a very elaborate report. He reported that a small tunnel which would admit cars such as would be possible to use on the railway, not such cars as are used now, but cars suitable for connection with the tunnel could be constructed for five and a quarter millions, that a tunnel which would accommodate cars such as are used on the Intercolonial would cost nine millions, and a still larger one would cost eleven millions.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, whenever I saw that report I made up my mind at once that it was a question of having a small tunnel or none at all. I knew that these engineers' estimates always have to have a margin allowed for contingencies, and I felt that we might talk about a five million tunnel, but when it came to a nine, ten or eleven million dollar tunnel, with such reasonable additions as have to be made for contingencies, we would be advocating a work which would not be reasonable for the people of P. E. Island to expect from the Government, and I had partly made up my mind that it was worth our while to press for the small tunnel because if we got it we would have a very reasonable system of communication.

What did we find Mr. Davies doing in the House of Commons. In 1892, almost as soon as this report came out, he said: "I believe nothing short of the largest tunnel will be of any particular benefit to the people. I do not think the small tunnel would be worth considering. If the cost of the tunnel is too much," he said, "in Heaven's name let us know it. I don't want to urge, year after year, a scheme which is impracticable. Will not the Government say it is impracticable and drop the matter forever."

Again in 1894 Mr. Davies discussed it in this way: "I think two or three things are pretty well established. A tunnel to be of any service at all would require an expenditure of fifteen or twenty millions at least" (Here he was doubling the largest estimates of Sir Douglas Fox.) I do not think that any practical person outside of a few who seem to be tunnel mad, are prepared to advise the Government to go into the construction of a small toy tunnel which several men contend could be constructed at the cost of one half the sum I have mentioned, but when constructed would be of very little use.

This attitude of Mr. Davies was an indication of his hostility to the tunnel scheme. His view was hostile to the smaller tunnel, whose cost would be reasonable, and it was asking for an expenditure which the people of P. E. Island would not feel justified in pressing on the Dominion Government, at all events with the information we had at this time in regard to the question. I have made this statement somewhat fully, because we will hear a good many statements on this question during the coming campaign that will be calculated to mislead the people with regard to the tunnel scheme.

Before leaving this question of public works for the province, I wish to say that I do not deem that the people of P. E. Island are going to be deprived, or have any right to be debarred from presenting, either during the pendency of an election or at any other time, their claims for public improvements such as the people of other parts are not slow in pressing on the attention of the Government. I do not see any reason why we should be, and I feel that the Dominion of Canada have a right, where public works are needed in a province, to take them up and consider them either before, during or after an election just as at any other time. I believe, for my part, that a number of

USEFUL BRANCHES

added to our railway system would do a good deal to remedy that complaint which we hear so much of from the other provinces, that our railway is not paying. At the present time our railway runs through the centre of the Island. We have good harbors on our coasts and good facilities for shipping, and the railway is not in a position to compete with sailing craft, as it would be if there were feeders running out to the coast. Another addition of 100 or 120 miles of railway to the railway mileage of our province could be made without at all increasing the working expenses of our road in anything like the proportion required for the miles already in existence. Some of these branches could be operated without any additional hands and without an additional engine. Take, for instance, the Stanley branch. The engine that runs to Cape Traverse beside at Emerald for the greater part of almost every day in the year. This engine could be run on the proposed branch without entailing the expense of a simple additional hand on an additional engine; and there would only need to be considered the cost of the few tons of coal per year to run that engine. It is the same with some of the other branches. A train to Rustico could be run out from Charlottetown without very much increase of expenditure, and the same with the Elmira branch and some others. But I feel that while these all are important that great section of the country south of the Hillsborough is still more to be considered, for for when our Railway was built it tapped every political district in the Island except Belfast and Murray Harbor, and while these people have contributed their share to the building of the P. E. Island Railway, together with all the other great railways, they have not participated in the benefits in any way. Thus their claim is particularly strong in this matter of railway construction. (Cheers).

My friend, Mr. Davies, in speaking from this platform made a strong point because there were a large number of branches proposed, and said this reduced it to an absurdity. Has he forgotten that he declared on the floor of the House of Commons that the Island was entitled to two millions on public works; and yet all these branches are only estimated to cost a little over one million. If he believes his own figures to be true how then can he consider the matter to be a farce? (applause)

To show the weakness of the argument of the hon. gentleman, I have only to mention the fact that the very first thing he did was to saddle the Government with the expense of building a bridge across the Hillsborough River; and the man, who, in the advocacy of this question put this forward, are not trying to help the railway and are not working in the interests of the people. He is reported as saying that if the bridge was pledged he would give his support, and not without it, or something to that effect. Well, gentlemen, all I have to say in regard to that is that I do not think there is a rational or sensible man in the east riding of Queen's, or anywhere else, who will say that the chances of a bridge are going to be lessened by building a branch railway to Murray Harbor. I believe and believe strongly that if the railway is constructed it will be an important factor in pushing forward the construction of the bridge at an early date to a successful conclusion. Nor do I believe or agree with the man who will say that the Railway to Belfast and Murray Harbor is going to be no benefit at all without the bridge. (Cheers).

There are gentlemen in this meeting who know very well that the railway came to the city of St. John from the American side for twenty or thirty years before a bridge was built. Did the people hesitate about going on with the railway, and say "we will not build the railway until we get a bridge?" (Cheers.) No, they got their railway, and the railway and other things forced the construction of the bridge on the government and it was built. So it would be in the present case. (Applause.) We have a

DISTINCT ISSUE IN THIS ELECTION.

The Premier of this Province, the Hon. Mr. Peters, in delivering his budget speech, a week or two ago, having announced his usual deficit, and a pretty big one, too notwithstanding his old story. It is not so bad after all as it is not so big as the deficit he incurred in the year 1893, in which he was running his election, when he had a deficit of $119,000. Notwithstanding the taxes, he still announces a deficit of over $30,000 for the past year. But he wound up with hope. Mr. Laurier, he says, is likly to get into power, and when he does there will be an increase in the Provincial subsidies, and when when Mr. Laurier came in there would be plenty of money to keep his machine running.

I would say to the people of P. E. Island who are interested in the public welfare, make your choice whether you will secure useful public works, or whether you will support a party whose every object is to get a large amount of money distributed among the provinces for increased Provincial subsidies, and which, as I said before, some of them know so well how to spend.

As I said before, the people of this Island are giving great attention to this matter, and the people who are crying out against branch railways take just the other side of the question as Mr. Peters presented it. The one party says we go for the building of useful branch railways. The other party says we want to increase Provincial subsidies for all the provinces; and I want you to remember that when P. E. Island gets one dollar, forty-five dollars go somewhere else. But, when you get the claims of the Island to public works considered and entertained, it is so much to P. E. Island, without necessarily one dollar going anywhere else. (applause)

My friend, Mr. Davies, did not forget to tell you that during the last hours of the last session of Parliament four and one-half million dollars was proposed to be voted for railway subsidies, and that this was submitted with the sanction of the Governor-General. Although the formula was missing in this case, as well as in the other, he did not have the slightest doubt about this—did not doubt it for one moment—and its enormity he tried to impress upon your minds. The fact is that not one dollar of that money is a new vote at all. It was only a proposition to ratify something that had already been voted—amounts that had been previously voted and had lapsed, or were about to lapse, and which it was necessary for Parliament to retain. There was not submitted during the last session one dollar of an expenditure for new railways, except for the Province of P. E. Island.

I have seen some discussion over another feature of this matter; that is the appropriation which it was proposed to make of $250,000 for the purpose of constructing two of these branches during the present summer. In that connection I am in a position to read a letter from the Honorable Mr. Haggart in answer to a letter of mine:

MY DEAR FERGUSON,—

In reply to your letter respecting the branch railways in P. E. Island I beg to remind you that on Saturday last I moved that on Tuesday then following the House should go into committee of the whole upon the resolution regarding these railways, which under the instructions of the Government I had previously placed on the order paper. As you are aware the deliberate and systematic obstruction of the Opposition rendered it out of the question to proceed further with this resolution, and made it entirely useless to bring down, as had been determined, a sum of $250,000 towards the constructing during this year, of the Belfast and Elmira branches. The Opposition, therefore, have by their unwarrantable conduct been able to thwart for the moment the policy of the Government as to those branches. The Government, however, will be prepared to take the matter up at the next session and submit the whole proposition above referred to for the sanction of Parliament.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
JOHN HAGGART.

(Applause.) To authorize the construction of these short branches one quarter of the amount necessary for their construction was to be voted in the first fiscal year and to go on year after year paying about an equal amount until these branches were constructed. As a member of the Government I come before you explaining its views and policies, and without any desire or without being fairly open to the charge in any way of bringing in this matter as an election cry. It was brought up years and years ago, and worked up when there was not an election imminent. I distinctly repeat this assertion that these branches are not raised or advocated as an election cry. They were pressed by our representatives year after year until the Government finally adopted them as its policy. Speaking for that Government, I pledge to you it is the policy of the Government to build these branches. (Applause.)

MANITOBA SCHOOL QUESTION.

We have, in this contest, a question unfortunately forced upon us which is calculated to disturb the public mind to a considerable degree all over this Dominion. It is most regrettable that this question should have been forced on the people of Canada. I have no hesitation in saying, and I think I am not speaking too strongly when I say that a crime has been committed against the people of Canada by forcing this question of Manitoba schools into Dominion politics. The people of the Red River district entered the confederation in 1870 with a solemn treaty and compact by which their rights in the matter of education were to be preserved to them. The solemn compact entered into in 1870 between the Parliament of Canada and the Red River settlers was intended, as the Hon. Mr. McDougall said, to be on the same lines, but more comprehensive, than the compact made in 1865, concerning Ontario and Quebc. The very men who had arranged these terms of union with Canada were, in many cases, the men who met in the Legislature of Manitoba and passing the first Manitoba School Act. That Act provided that there should be Catholic and Protestant schools, specifically carrying out the conditions of the union. In all the years which intervened from 1870 to 1890 the compact was faithfully preserved. The school laws of the province were maintained up to the year 1890, a short time after the Liberal party of Manitoba got hold of the reins of power. Mr. Norquay, the Conservative Leader, resigned in 1888, and the administration that followed him was not a strong one. Greenway and Martin were vigorously fighting to drive them from power. The Provincial Secretary, the Hon. Mr. Burke, went back for election, and was opposed by Dr. Francis, a gentleman in the interests of the Liberal party. The French people were getting disaffected to the Harrison administration, but feared that if the Liberals obtained power their schools and language would be taken from them. On this account, Mr. Martin and Mr. Greenway were not receiving favor in the constituency and stood a poor chance of electing their candidate. It was on that occasion that the Hon. Mr. Fisher, now a member of the Manitoba Legislature, and at that time the President of the Liberal party in Manitoba, Mr. Joseph Martin, and some other gentlemen went down to this St. Francis Xavier district, and speaking on the platform in the presence of Mr. Burke the Conservative candidate, Mr. Martin, solemnly pledged Mr. Greenway and the Liberal Party to retain for the people their schools if they would but support the Liberal candidate. It was on these pledges that the people gave Dr. Francis their support, and his election led to the fall of the Harrison administration. This is proved by the affidavits of Mr. Burke, the Conservative candidate, it is proved by the affidavit of Dr. Francis, the Liberal candidate, and by the affidavit of Mr. Alphonse Martin, all of whom have left the Liberal Party on this question. But they have made their affidavits that Mr. Jo