

prevailed, and that it was producing enormous evils, which it was their duty to mitigate if they could not abolish. The establishment of this institution was one means to that end, and as such he asked for it the support of the House.

Mr. PRINCE said he did not know that the question as to whether the present Government was strong or not was pertinent to the matter before the House. He agreed with the honourable Treasurer that an habitual drunkard was a lunatic, and ought to be treated as such. If members would view the subject similarly they would surely see no objection in the measure introduced. Being a lunatic for the time being, the drunkard ought to be confined until relieved. He believed in keeping down the liquor traffic as thoroughly as possible instead of erecting institutions which were not desired. The Government, of course, were strong, and might carry the Bill; but when they appealed to the country at the close of the present Parliament, it was possible that they would not come back to the House so strong as they were now.

Mr. RYKERT said the Government had not made out a case sufficient to justify such a large expenditure, and he opposed the measure chiefly on the ground of economy. The honourable gentlemen on the Treasury benches were rushing the country into direct taxation. He also opposed the Bill on the ground that the country did not want an inebriate asylum. While having the highest respect for the Inspector of Prisons, he could not agree with him in the conclusion he had arrived at in seeking a remedy for inebriates. It had been shown that ninety-five per cent. of the persons who entered such institutions did so voluntarily, and that 1,500 out of 5,000 had been reclaimed; but what evidence had we that these 1,500 were reclaimed, other than their own words? Such institutions should be connected with our prisons, so that the poor class of drunkards should have relief. It would be far more charitable if that class could have the benefit of such institutions, instead of grinding out of the poor inebriates all that could be got, and letting them go to drunkards' graves. The Inspector, however, did not recommend that; it was the gentlemanly class of drunkards that it was sought to relieve. He could not adopt any such measure as that before the House.

Mr. MACDONALD said he would have to support the amendment. He was in favour of trying the experiment of an inebriate asylum, and had the other evening voted against the amendment of the hon. member for North Renfrew, and in favour of the amendment of the hon. member for East Toronto. He thought that charitable asylums, such as the Deaf and Dumb Asylum at Belleville, and the Asylum for the Blind at Brantford, were a glory to the land. But no proof had been given to show that the founding of these Deaf and Dumb Asylums had produced the reclamation of drunkards, and he thought that until such was proved there should be merely an experiment made by renting a building or adopting the asylum at Orillia. If such institutions would cause the reclamation of drunkards they should be established, and no one would grudge a proper expenditure for the purpose. But considering the present state of the finances, and the circumstance that the expenses of the proposed institution would be very great, he was opposed to the Bill.

Mr. McCALL objected to the expenditure which the erection of this building and its maintenance would entail. There was every probability of a prohibitory liquor law being passed soon, and then there would be no necessity for the asylum. He acknowledged that the object was a good one, but there were considerations which prevented him from supporting the Bill.

Dr. CLARKE (Norfolk) said that in 1867 a very large and influential meeting was held in this city to consider the principle of the very question before the House; and the clergy and other gentlemen of the highest standing present took part in the debate. Resolutions were passed unanimously in favour of the erection of an inebriate asylum; and amongst all the propositions which were contained in the Speech from the Throne at the opening of the House this session, none was regarded with more favour than that one which recommended the erection of such an institution. The stock-in-trade of honourable gentlemen who opposed the measure was made up simply of two objections—one was the expense of the asylum, and the other, a very unworthy one, put forth by the member for Lincoln, that it was designed only for gentlemanly drunkards. The fallacy of such arguments was easily seen. If the building should cease to be used for the purpose intended at a future time, it could be econo-

mised in some way for the public benefit. The reports from England and other countries went to prove that inebriate asylums were not necessarily places in which public monies were sunk; on the contrary, they were self-sustaining; and if the gentlemanly class of drunkards was to enter the institution surely they would sustain it. It was unfair to push the argument about the exclusive character of the asylum to such an extreme, when it was so clearly manifest that it was intended for the use of all classes. It was for the benefit of all persons who had lost control over their appetites for strong liquor, not merely for those whose pockets were lined with gold. Surely it was worth trying to save men from becoming criminals, and reclaiming men who in their normal condition would care for their wives and families. In the interest of humanity the institution was needed. No measure that could be brought before the House would meet with so large a share of public approval as the one under consideration—an institution which would prove a blessing to many unfortunates, and be fostered under the wing of the Government.

Mr. MERIDITH supported the Bill, and thought a distinction should be made between ordinary and criminal drunkards, and that different provisions should be made for each class.

Mr. BETHUNE referred to the advocacy by the hon. member for Lincoln of the establishment of inebriate asylums in connection with all the gaols in the Province, and observed that the hon. member appeared to have changed his opinion since he last spoke upon the subject. Then he objected to the Bill because it was experimental, but now he was not only willing that we should have one asylum, but that we should have 40. The hon. gentleman pretended to look after the finances of the country; yet he found fault with the Government because they had not been sufficiently extravagant and wasteful in this matter by establishing 30 or 40 asylums. The hon. gentleman had also questioned the report of the Inspector of Prisons, who had means of obtaining information which no other gentleman in the House had; but he (Mr. Bethune) maintained that the experience of every gentleman in the House, and the experience of every day life, proved the accuracy of what was contained in the report of that official. The hon. gentleman had also made reference to buncombe motions which emanated from that side of the House; but the hon. gentleman himself made frequent use of buncombe motions. He came down to the House every day with the hope that buncombe would do something for him. He had also alluded to the delay of the Government, but he (Mr. Bethune) hurled back the accusations of hon. gentlemen opposite. They, with their buncombe motions, had wasted the time of the House. He had been a good deal struck with the objections offered to the Bill under discussion, but he found they mainly came from one source. He related a discussion which took place in one of the [neighbouring] townships, in which one man stated indignantly that if he got drunk again he would be placed in the asylum. Another objection to the Bill, and of a similar character, was offered in the lobby by an indignant constituent to his representative. His main argument was that within a month after the measure had been placed on the statute book his wife

would take steps for placing him within the asylum. (Laughter.) It was from such quarters as these that the objections to the Bill came. He held that it was an act of wisdom on the part of the Government, their deciding to establish an asylum to which persons with no criminal tendency might then be sent. They could be sent to those asylums without so much disgrace as if they were sent to a common gaol. He also contended that the proposition to erect a building of the size intended was a good one, and in five years they would be able to judge accurately of the working of the establishment. It seemed to him that it was better economy to select a building of such a size, and if the building should cease to be used for this purpose, he had no doubt it would be used for other purposes to which the Government could apply it.

Mr. DEACON was in favour of any course which would tend to alleviate the evils arising from habitual drunkenness, but he believed that the cost of this asylum would be far too great in comparison with the advantages to be derived from it. He had no faith in the reclamation of habitual drunkards, and instanced several cases in his own experience of persons who had been in asylums of this kind, and who had afterwards died from the effects of intemperance. He believed the Government would in two or three years wish that the motion of the hon.