

be derived from the reports in question. These reports could not afford light upon some portions of the estimates, and when they had searched other portions it might be considered whether delay should take place or not. The first portion of the estimates were those with regard to which the reports would afford no assistance whatever. The hon. member had referred to the practice in Legislatures to which he had belonged, of discussing the estimates in the latter part of the session; but unless there had been a change since the time he (Mr. Mowat) had been a member of that body, it had been one of the grievances which had been loudly complained of, that the estimates were discussed at so late a period in the session. The present Government had effected a great reform in that particular (hear, hear), and they now proposed to go on with the work in the early part of the session, in order to give the full time and opportunity for information. If there was to be a discussion upon some portions of the estimates, it was no reason why the other portions should not now be gone on with.

The motion was carried.

The House went into Committee, Mr Hodgins in the chair.

The following items passed:—

Lieutenant Governor's office.....\$ 1,900
Executive Council and Attorney.

General's Department..... 12,870
Treasury Department..... 17,100

On item \$19,857 for Secretary and Registrar's Department,

Mr. LAUDER complained that the statistics of births, marriages, and deaths embodied in the Registrar's report last year were utterly unreliable, and the expenditure in connection with obtaining them was a waste of the public money. Those statistics were never referred to by the Assurance Companies, and unless they were more correct in the present year's report, it would be a useless document.

Mr. WOOD said the returns had been unsatisfactory, and the Government had prepared a Bill in which several important amendments would be made in the manner of collecting the statistics. The transferring book would be abolished and district registrars would no longer be employed, whereby a saving of \$3,725 would be effected.

Mr. LAUDER also complained that registration had not been enforced.

Mr. WOOD said that the new Bill was framed for the purpose of carrying out and enforcing the law providing for registration.

The item was passed on a division.

On item \$18,872, for Department of Public Works,

Mr. MACDOUGALL said that if the Government had desired to keep abreast of the progressive movements of the times they would have submitted to the House some scheme for placing the Civil Service on a legal footing, and not have left the services in the present position, with the patronage in the hands of the Government. They should have submitted some scheme for placing the service on a similar footing to that in England. In view of the fact that almost no public works were under construction, and no sales being made in the Crown Lands Department, the House had a right to expect that a reduction would have been made in the number of clerks employed, though not a reduction in salaries.

Mr. MOWAT said the member for South Simcoe frequently made assertions in regard to subjects about which he knew nothing. The Government was responsible for the management of its Departments, and the majority of the House had confidence in the Government. He averred that no unnecessary clerks were employed. The business of the country was increasing, and it was no argument that a Government was extravagant because it expended now more than a previous Government expended. The Government rested their action upon the ground that what they proposed was right, but they sometimes reminded hon. gentlemen opposite that they were complaining of what their own friends had done. The honourable member for South Simcoe took every opportunity to depreciate his own Province, and could not speak of it except as a small Province. The question of the Civil Service was an important one, and the Act passed at Ottawa on the subject had never been carried out.

Mr. MACDOUGALL said the present Government had belied their professions as

economists and reformers. The Opposition had a right to information, but the Government asked them to vote supplies in advance of the proper information. He denied that he depreciated his native Province, and alleged that the Government had jeopardized half the territory of Ontario by referring the boundary question to arbitration.

Mr FRASER pointed out that the Civil Service Bills in Ottawa and in Washington, to which the hon. gentleman pointed so often, had proved failures. When Mr. Sandfield Macdonald started to arrange the salaries for Ontario his object was to keep everything down to the lowest notch, and some of his own friends complained that he was too economical. The civil servants were not over well paid for their services. In his Department he knew no man's political leanings. The only two increases proposed in that Department were due to the merits of the men concerned. The hon. member for South Simcoe pretended to have a great regard for economy, but when he was a member of the Government he deliberately consented to what he knew to be wrong, and had declared to be equivalent to throwing eight millions into the sea. But he was a practical politician who was in office and intended to remain there. (Cheers.) An increase in the departmental expenditure was a necessity as the area and population of the Province increased, but that did not prove want of economy. Hon. gentlemen should point out any items which could be lessened. An economy which did not take efficiency into account was unwise. The Government were prepared to give the fullest information which any fair-minded man could desire.

Mr. MACDOUGALL (Simcoe) said that the Opposition had complained that they had not the information which was usually submitted to the House at the beginning of the session in the larger Parliament of the Dominion. He contended that he had done his part in regard to the extra expenditure of \$8,000,000 on the Intercolonial Railway, which would have been prevented if the leading members of the Opposition in the House of Commons, and the newspapers supporting them, had sustained him and Mr. Tilley and the minority in that Government in reference to that question. In justice to the majority of the Government, however, he would say that he believed that Imperial considerations had a great deal to do with their decision in favour of the longer route.

After some remarks by Mr. Patterson (Essex), which were inaudible in the reporters' gallery,

Mr. LAUDER said that in 1870 Sandfield Macdonald had asked about \$12,000 for salaries and contingencies on a volume of business amounting to \$407,000, while the present Government were asking \$13,540 on a volume of business amounting to about \$150,000. The hon. Commissioner had asked them to point out items, but the Public Accounts Committee had not yet organized, and they didn't know what his items were. He (Mr. Lauder) went on to point out that for furniture, carpets, &c., for the Central Prison, the sum of \$1,043 30 had been charged.

It being six o'clock the House rose.

After recess,

The House again went into Committee of supply.

Mr. FRASER, referring to the item for Public Works Department, said that the member for East Grey thoroughly understood there was not one single additional officer than was on the staff when the Sandfield Macdonald Government left office. The estimates for 1872 prepared by Mr. Sandfield Macdonald were for \$18,957 as against \$18,872 for 1876. The actual work of the Department had largely increased, and included drainage, slides, locks, dams, public buildings, and registry offices and gaols. The expenditure on the Central Prison had been investigated by the Public Accounts Committee and found unobjectionable.

Mr. CAMERON asked if the expenditure for water and gas works for the Hamilton Asylum was included in the general appropriation of last year.

Mr. FRASER replied that he was not sure whether the appropriation would entirely cover that work until all the accounts were received.

Mr. CAMERON doubted the authority of the Commissioner to proceed with such