

last year was no criterion by which to judge of last year's operations, as the dues of last year had reference to the business of the year before. In 1874 there had been an impression that the trade had gone as low as it could go; and in consequence many engaged in lumber operations had been encouraged to put men in the woods, and to enlarge their invested capital. The result, as the House knew, was that these men had been disappointed in their expectations. The fact that the recent sale had met with many bidders only showed that speculators were buying up the limits in hopes that trade would revive. If the Government were not perfectly convinced that there was an actual revival of the trade, he thought it was a grave mistake to put this particular paragraph in the Speech, as the result would be to encourage an unproductive investment of capital. Referring to the temperance question, he expressed the opinion that the country ought soon to be called upon to decide on whether the manufacture and traffic in intoxicating liquors should not be entirely prohibited; and if an expression of that view by this House would have any effect upon the Dominion Government, action should be taken in that direction. He thought that it was a mistake to retain the Dunkin Act on the Statute Book in its present shape, as in those counties where it had been passed it was doing more harm than good. It should be amended so that when passed it would amount to an entire prohibition in the municipality passing it. Even advocates of the Act admitted that it did little or nothing in decreasing drunkenness, and supported it only on the ground of its being a prohibitory measure. With regard to the award between Ontario and Quebec, he believed it had been referred to in almost every Speech from the Throne since the inauguration of the Legislature. He remembered that as far back as 1868, when a short delay had occurred in the negotiations which culminated in the award, Mr. Blake, who led the then Opposition in the House, found great fault with the Administration of that day for allowing a suspension of these negotiations for even a few months; but the present Government did not seem to be showing much diligence in the matter, for all they heard of the matter was in the Speech from the Throne from year to year. The seconder of the Address had spoken in favour of doing away with the right of distress in the law of landlord and tenant, and it would seem as if he had foreshadowed an intended change in that direction. He hoped that this was not the case, and that a law which had been on the Statute Book of England for centuries would not be lightly altered. He was quite in accord with the remarks of the hon. member for East Toronto (Mr. Cameron) in regard to the Bill mentioned in the Address providing for the punishment of a certain class. It had been suggested by that hon. gentleman that the Address was rather a barren one—that there was nothing in it to invoke either opposition or admiration; and the Attorney-General had retorted that more legislation was foreshadowed in the present Speech than in the Speech of the last session of the first Parliament. Now, his hon. friend (Mr. Mowat) was mistaken in this respect, because that Speech referred to several measures of particular importance.

Mr. FRASER—My hon. friend himself is mistaken. The Attorney-General referred to the first session of the second Parliament.

Mr. CAMERON—There was not so much congratulation in the Speech of that year.

Mr. MOWAT—I think there was a great deal of congratulation.

Mr. SCOTT then referred to the seventh paragraph, for the existence of which he saw no special reason, because he was under the impression that it was the duty of the House to exercise special care in regard to the assistance of railway enterprises. He found by a return that since 1871 \$2,424,000 had been appropriated for the promotion of railways, exclusive of an annual payment of \$114,000 from the Railway Subsidy Fund. Most of that money came from the eastern and had been expended on the western section of the Province. This was not a fair disposition of the money, but of course no one (unless the localities themselves) was specially to blame for it. When, however, hon. gentlemen opposite took the position that because all this money had been hitherto expended in the west no aid should be granted to other roads, they took an exceedingly narrow and unfair view of the subject. He concluded by urging that the proposed railway between Peterborough and Ottawa was worthy of Government support, inasmuch as it would do more towards increasing the wealth of the country than any road previously built in the Province.

Mr. PARDEE said the hon. gentleman who had just sat down had expressed the opinion that the condition of the timber trade did not warrant the congratulatory words put in the mouth of the Lieutenant-Governor. Now, hon. gentlemen on the other side had not paid much attention to the third paragraph of the Speech, or they would have observed that it simply stated that the local trade had become more active, and that there was not much improvement in the foreign trade. This was perfectly correct, as the lumbermen themselves could testify; and he could not for a moment imagine that his hon. friends opposite were sorry that there had been a revival in this important branch of trade. One would suppose that instead of cavilling over this paragraph, they (the Opposition) would have rejoiced that the lumbermen, in common with other interests, had better prospects than they had a year ago. His hon. friend (Mr. Scott) had also stated that the recent sales were no evidence of the revival of trade; but he (Mr. Pardee) entirely dissented from this view. If this matter were carefully inquired into it would be found that the purchasers were substantial lumbermen, who were not at all given to speculation in this direction. According to the provisions of the Act, the purchasers of the right to cut the timber on the lands recently sold had only five years in which to do it, and no better evidence was needed to prove that the sales were not in any way speculative, but the result of a genuine revival in the lumber business. The hon. member for Renfrew desired some information as to the revenue derived from the woods and forests. The estimates were \$400,000 from timber, and about \$200,000 from the various lands, and the receipts of the Department had already amounted to about \$628,000. Complaints had been made about

the meagreness of the Address and the fact that it referred to many matters of the past. Now, nothing was calculated to do more harm to this country than to claim that measures passed in this House were of such little consequence as to need no reference to them. (Hear, hear.) Let that principle be once established and we would find the legislation of the Province carried on in an extremely careless manner. Although measures passed here may not possess the same importance as those passed at Ottawa, he appealed to the House to say whether the majority of their Acts did not come more directly home to the people than those which emanated from the capital. (Cheers.) Some objection had been raised to the distribution of the statutes. This question was discussed when the subject of consolidation of the statutes was under consideration, and if he remembered aright the opinion was pretty general in favour of their distribution among the magistrates. His hon. friend opposite (Mr. Cameron) had declared that many of the magistrates were unable to read and write. Now there might be exceptional cases of that kind, but the great body of our magistrates were sound and intelligent men. (Hear, hear.) No better evidence of this was needed than the manner in which the laws had been administered by them. The remarks of the hon. member for East York (Mr. Lane) with regard to the law of distress had called forth some little criticism. That hon. gentleman, it should be explained, did not say it was the intention of the Government to abolish the law of distress—he merely pointed out the difference between the collection of an ordinary debt and one for rent. The Government would shortly introduce a Bill on this subject which he prophesied would receive the support of a large majority of the House and give great satisfaction to the country. (Cheers.)

Mr. LAUDER said it was a difficult matter to discuss the policy of the Government on an Address, which was usually framed with the object of concealing as much as possible. The Government seemed to have no measures or general policy to submit—they were Reformers without anything to reform. He complained that the House did not receive full information of what the Government had done during the year. This was a grievance to which a Reformer might properly turn his attention. This House was framed on the municipal and not on the old Parliamentary plan; there was not a similar legislative body which was called a Parliament. It consisted of a single Chamber, presided over by a gentleman called the Speaker; and a Committee of six was appointed to carry on the business during the year. But this Committee could legislate all the year—pass resolutions in the interests of the people, create commissions to settle disputes, etc.—and keep the whole business secret. This was ridiculous and absurd, and he had no sympathy with the method of carrying out the deliberations of this Assembly. He was anxious to know what action was taken in connection with the school investigation, but that information could only be obtained from the minutes of the Council. He contended that the Orders in Council should be made public, and protested against the Executive of six claiming full control on all matters connected with the House. There was great necessity for a check upon the Executive; if the present system of secrecy continued the confidence of the people in the Ontario Legislature would be completely destroyed. Adverting to the school system, he expressed the fear that it was becoming so complicated that few people in the rural districts would be able to understand it.

Mr. HODGINS said it seemed to be the policy of hon. gentlemen opposite, and especially of the hon. member for Simcoe (Mr. Macdougall) to belittle as much as possible the work of the Assembly, which they were fond of calling a large Common Council. The hon. gentleman who had just spoken read the Constitution wrongly, or he would never have ventured the assertion that this body was not clothed with Parliamentary powers. So far as the Assembly had jurisdiction over the people of this Province it was paramount. They had the power to determine how real and personal property should be held, and power to establish courts for the trial of criminal and civil cases, and yet the hon. gentleman said this was not a Parliamentary but a municipal power!

Mr. LAUDER—No, no; I did not say that.

Mr. HODGINS—That is the way the hon. gentleman answers when he is cornered. Instead of holding bravely to a proposition made on the floor of the House, he withdraws the statement. (Laughter.) The House had also the right to determine what should be the franchise of those who elect members of the Dominion House of Commons, and he could not understand the policy of the hon. members opposite in belittling the functions of the Assembly. When the hon. gentleman (Mr. Lauder) spoke in that manner, he belittled the courts which were instituted by the Legislature.

An HON. MEMBER—He belittles himself too.

Mr. HODGINS said it might be that the line of conduct pursued by hon. members opposite indicated that the policy of the great Conservative party would be to belittle the jurisdiction of this House, and devote all their energies to securing a majority in the Upper House. (Cheers.) It was the interest as well as the duty of every hon. member to protest against the policy and views urged by hon. gentlemen opposite. (Loud cheers.)

The paragraph was then carried.

On paragraph six,

Mr. MACDOUGALL (Simcoe) said they could guess with tolerable accuracy the particular railroad which the Government had undertaken to censure by this paragraph. The hon. Commissioner of Crown Lands made a remark in his speech which bore out the inference he (Mr. Macdougall) had drawn. If it were true that there were \$5,000,000 in the public treasury, it seemed to him that the Peterborough and Ottawa Railway, which would prove a valuable improvement, should have the same assistance which had been granted to roads in other sections of the country. They must do justice above all things, and the people in that eastern portion of the Province should be aided with regard to railways as well as those in the west. The Government should not regard the expression of the opinion of the people of Toronto by the recent vote as the expression of public opinion.