

spector it was the Minister of Education. But there was this difference between the two cases—and it was in consequence of this difference that the propriety of the action of the Government should be sustained or combated—that the Central Committee charges also affected outside gentlemen who were not the subordinates of the Department. It was argued—and the argument had a great deal of force—that in consequence of this fact it was a case in which the prerogative of the Crown might be exercised in regard to the issue of a Commission. (Hear, hear.) But it was utterly impossible to find a platform on which hon. gentlemen opposite would base their views in regard to constitutional government or unconstitutional practice in regard to the issue of Commissions. The hon. member for South Simcoe, and the Government of which he had been a member, had been responsible for more Commissions than any other member or any other Government in this country. In 1863, when he was Commissioner of Crown Lands in the Government of Mr. Sandfield Macdonald, that Government had issued two Commissions—one a financial or Departmental Commission—appointed to investigate the Foote jobs, as they were called—charges in reference to the stationery and other supplies of a former Government, and which were very fully exposed by that Commission. The same Government had also issued a Commission in reference to the contracts for the erection of the Parliament Buildings at Ottawa, composed of Mr. John Wilson, Mr. Sheard, and a gentleman from Lower Canada. Not only so, but in the Speech from the Throne the Administration of that day, of which the hon. gentleman was a member, had put the following language in the mouth of the then Governor:—

Shortly after the close of the last session of the Legislature I appointed Commissions to enquire into the state of the public buildings at Ottawa, and especially into the expenditure already incurred in respect to them. This investigation has, I regret to say, been unavoidably protracted. A report, however, has been recently received, which will be laid before you, and steps have been taken, based upon that report, with a view to the resumption and speedy completion of the works.

(Hear.) And further on, referring to the Financial and Departmental Commission, the Governor-General was advised to say:—

I have appointed Commissioners to enquire into the state and condition of every branch of the public service (truly a most complete illustration of what may be called "government by commission"), in order to ascertain and remedy the defects of the system now regulating the audit of accounts and the payment of moneys from the public exchequer, and with a view to the retrenchment of expenditure so far as may be found consistent with a due regard to efficiency. I hope that the result of their enquiries will introduce such a system of control and economy as may before long bring the expenditure of the Province within its annual income.

If ever there was a case of Government by Commission it was stated in that Speech. If ever there was a case of the kind for which the hon. member for South Simcoe was clearly responsible it was that one; for he was the Commissioner of Crown Lands in the Government which had so declared. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) Shortly afterwards, in 1865, what was known as the Coalition Government, of which the member for South Simcoe was a member, had issued another Commission—one appointed to inquire into the payments to be made for postal services by railways. If ever there was a matter which was peculiarly within the cognizance of the Post Office Department or the Finance Department, it was that Commission issued to advise hon. gentlemen what were the proper sums to be paid for the carriage of the mails over the railways of the Province. These cases showed that the practice of these hon. gentlemen had not been consistent, for if there were cases in which government by commission was elaborated in this Province it had been by the Government of which the hon. member for South Simcoe had been a distinguished member. (Hear, hear.) He had been a little astonished to find his hon. friend from West Peterboro, in referring to the Commission appointed in the Pacific Scandal charges, had not dealt with that matter from his own point of view or that of his party, but had defended the position he was now taking by saying that that Commission had been appointed against the protests of the whole Reform

party. (Hear, hear.) It was to the glory of the Reform party that such was the case, but had the Conservative party ever issued their protest against that Commission? (Hear, hear.) If ever there had been a gross violation of the Constitution it was in the appointment of that Commission. A Minister of the Crown had been charged, according to the principles and rules of the Constitution, upon a matter which was entirely within the cognizance of Parliament, for the statute law provided that in any matter taking place in Parliament neither the Crown nor the Courts had any jurisdiction; yet the Minister had invaded the law, invaded the prerogative of the Crown, and, in defiance of the privileges of the House of Commons, had issued a Commission for which there had been no precedent in regard to a similar proceeding. (Hear, hear.) If hon. gentlemen wished to show their sincerity, if they desired to prove that they were not inclined to support Government by Commission, let them join with the Reform party in saying that that was a gross violation of the Constitution. (Hear, hear.) Until they had done so their comments upon what was done on this side of the House in that regard would have little weight here or in the country at large. (Loud cheers.)

#### NOTICES OF MOTION.

Mr. Tooley—On Monday next—Order of the House for a return of all students attending the Agricultural College from the commencement of the institution to the present time, such return to give the names of the students in full, together with the residence of their parents or guardians, and their profession, trade, or occupation. Also—To show the present place of residence and occupation of all such students as shall have left the College. Also—The length of time each student has remained in the institution.

Mr. Creighton—On Monday next—Resolution, That in the opinion of this House it would be in the public interest to have the Public Accounts and Departmental Reports printed as soon as possible after the expiration of the years to which they respectively relate, and to have the same circulated immediately upon being printed whether the House shall be in session or not, and that it be an instruction to the Committee on Printing to consider and report on best method of accomplishing this end.

Mr. Kean—On Tuesday next—Order of the House for a return showing the number of timber licenses sold during the year 1877; to whom sold, the price per square mile, and also the amount paid on each license, and the amount in arrears, if any.

Mr. Bell—On Monday next—Enquiry of Ministry—Whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill during the present session for the purpose of amending the present municipal laws, with a view of reducing the number of polling subdivisions, as well as to make the election of school trustees take place at the same time, in the same manner, and by the same returning officers, as the election of municipal councils.

Mr. Broder—On Monday next—Order of the House for a return of all correspondence between George O. Hays and others and the Government, or any of their officials, relating to the discovery of gold on the west half of lot No. 9, in the ninth concession of the township of Marmora; and also in reference to the claims of the discoverers, and to the subsequent purchase and sale of such land.