

pudiating their own signatures, which they had solemnly attached to a document and submitted *en masse* to the Government; and he challenged hon. gentlemen to find anything in the history of this country or of England to equal it. (Cheers.) It did no credit to the sagacity, the astuteness, or the honour of the gentleman who had just undertaken the task of leading their party. He would not follow the hon. member for Peterboro through all the stale subjects which he had dragged into his speech, but he desired to point out that if there ever was a rebuke administered to the cry about the Premier's descent from the bench it had been administered by the hon. member for East Toronto, who had descended from a Chief Justiceship and a Lieut. Governorship, and had been hailed as the new leader of the Opposition, but was only a private member.

Mr. MORRIS said he found that the debates in this House were somewhat personal, which he regretted. At the first meeting that he had attended in East Toronto, in St. Lawrence Hall, he had stated that he was not a candidate for the leadership, as it was a question to be settled by the members of this House in Opposition. (Opposition cheers.)

Mr. HARDY said the hon. gentleman's friends had stated that he was to be their leader. The same hon. gentleman had condemned the action of the House with regard to the indemnity, and by implication condemned his own friends, and particularly his predecessor, the former leader of the Opposition, who had favoured it. (Hear, hear.) With respect to the contention of the hon. member for Peterborough, that the House would cease to exist on the 2nd of February next, he argued that the House was not properly constituted until all the writs issued at the last general elections were returned, including that of Algoma. The hon. member for Peterborough had taken the ground that the House was complete on the 2nd of February; but the only direct precedent they had was that of the Parliament of Quebec, as far back as 1820, during the time of Sir Peregrine Maitland. The Parliament was called together before the writ for Gaspé had been returned, and the House, on that account, refused to transact any business. He contended that the writ for Algoma not being returned on the 2nd of February, 1875, the House was not then complete, and consequently the present House would not be defunct four years from that date. His hon. friend had also referred to the re-arrangement of the constituencies, and designated it as a great crime. The organ of his hon. friends opposite had advocated legislative union, and hon. members in the House had proposed to abolish their own constituencies when they proposed to limit the number of members. He challenged hon. members opposite to go to the people upon that subject. It was the good old Tory doctrine of restricting the rights of the people. He advised those hon. gentlemen who were going to weed out constituencies to begin at home and abolish their own. He denied the statement that the people of Ontario were the most governed in the world. The State of New York had a House of 128 members, and a Senate of 32, making a total representation of 160, with a population of 4,382,000. Pennsylvania had a House of 191 members, a Senate of 50, and a total of 241, with a population of 3,500,000. Missouri had a House of 143 members, and a Senate of 34, in all 177, with a population of 1,721,000, almost the same as that of Ontario. Massachusetts had a House of 240 members, and a Senate of 41, with a population of 1,600,000, less than that of Ontario. He instanced other States whose representation was in a similar proportion, and said that the more democratic of the States had the larger number of representatives. These statistics showed the absurdity of the statement that Ontario was the most governed country in the world. He apprehended that if hon. gentlemen opposite went before the country with the cry of reduction in the number of members they would be very glad to recant the promulgation of that opinion. (Hear, hear.) Hon. gentlemen opposite were going to distribute the surplus. He predicted that in two years there would not be a remnant left of the policy which had been propounded by the late leader of the Opposition if his hon. friend from London continued in the leadership. This cry for the distribution of the surplus was entirely contrary to

the policy that had been promulgated by gentlemen opposite for many years past. The only general charge that had been made against the Government was that the annual expenditure had increased. It was impossible that a new country could keep its expenditure at a stationary figure. What had been the record of the Government of Sir John Macdonald on that point? In nineteen years of administration the increase had been about twenty millions of dollars, or about a million dollars a year. He asked hon. gentlemen to put their hand on one improper increase and it could be attended to. He read a number of statistics of cities and counties to show that their expenses had almost doubled in six years, and argued that expenses of civic, county, and Provincial Government alike must of necessity increase as the country grows and develops. It was true the Government could effect reductions—in the administration of justice, for instance. The expense of that had increased from 1871 to 1877 \$97,000, while the number of prisoners had increased from 6,000 to 13,000. If they were going to reduce this expenditure, they must do it in one of two ways: they must cease to prosecute offenders or throw them upon the counties. Would the people of this country submit to that? (Hear, hear.) The expense of asylums and public institutions had increased \$255,000, and the number of patients had increased from 616 to 2,941. In education the increase in the expenditure was \$198,000. Would hon. gentlemen reduce these expenditures by throwing them directly upon the people? While the Government were endeavouring to relieve the local burdens of the people, hon. gentlemen opposite desired to increase those burdens. When they objected to any expenditure it was their duty to show how they proposed to reduce it, and then the House would be prepared to discuss it in a reasonable and intelligent manner. (Hear, hear.) If hon. gentlemen opposite ended the session as they had begun it, it would end in the House not knowing to what party they belonged or what creed they believed in. (Cheers.)

Mr. MEREDITH said every one would acknowledge the ability of the Provincial Secretary in debate, but that hon. gentleman had chosen to make a personal attack upon him. He called upon any member of the House to say whether during the seven years he (Mr. Meredith) had occupied a seat in this House he had personally attacked any member. (Opposition cheers.) He was willing to let his personal character stand against that of the hon. member in the country, or among the members of the House. But he could expect no better treatment from a party which had gained power in Ottawa by stealing private letters. (Opposition cheers, and "Oh, oh.") With regard to the indemnity, he was prepared to accept his full responsibility for the increase. But who was it that made a speech, when the doors were closed, in favour of the increase, but did not say a word when the doors were open—who but the member for South Brant? (Opposition cheers.)

Mr. HARDY—I did not speak either in secret or in open session on the subject of the indemnity. I said no word one way or the other, and my hon. friend is entirely wrong.

Mr. MEREDITH—I appeal to hon. members who heard the hon. gentleman make that statement. (Opposition cheers.)

Mr. HARDY—I have to say that what the hon. gentleman states is incorrect, without foundation, untrue.

Mr. MEREDITH—I again assert—

Mr. HARDY—The hon. gentleman has no right to assert; his statement is not true.

Mr. SPEAKER said an hon. member should accept a denial of another hon. member.

Mr. MEREDITH said according to the rules of courtesy he would accept it. But he would challenge the hon. member for South Brant to deny that he made a motion to strike out the indemnity altogether for the purpose of making a little political capital. (Opposition cheers.)

Mr. HARDY said he did move to strike out the item.

Mr. MEREDITH said that now, if hon. gentlemen were in earnest in what they had talked to the country, they had a plain, obvious course to take, and that was to vote for this resolution. The members of the