

time to discuss. With regard to the office of Minister of Education, the occasion was well known under which the position was made vacant. He would like to say that in both professional and public life he had met no more estimable man than Mr. Crooks. He had met no one more devoted in the discharge of his public duties than Mr. Crooks. He had enjoyed during his administration the confidence of both sides of the House. The hon. gentleman from West Middlesex who had been appointed as his successor, was appointed in view of the fact that he had all of his life been engaged in educational work. He had been a successful teacher for many years, a successful county school inspector, and a successful Inspector of Model Schools. He had manifested ability in all these positions, and had also been a valuable member of the Central Committee, whose office it was to advise the Minister of Education from time to time. The Chief Superintendent of Education under the old system had had to do exclusively with the Public, Separate, and High Schools, and as the Minister of Education had some additional matters to attend to, they had thought that it was important to place in that Department one who was thoroughly familiar with educational matters, and his hon. friend had stood very high in the minds of all persons engaged in educational work in this country. He was the President of the society composed of school inspectors and trustees of the Province when he received the appointment. There were in the House members who would have discharged the duties of this office extremely well. Mr. Ross had not been consulted without the knowledge of everyone whose name had been mentioned in connection with the office. He believed the appointment of Mr. Ross was regarded by the country as a very wise appointment, and one from which the country would derive considerable advantage. He would say a word or two with regard to the policy of the Department. In the main, it would be the policy as hitherto carried out. There was one subject which had created a great deal of popular interest—the question of whether there should be more than one series of new Readers sanctioned for the schools. The former Minister of Education had been in favour of more than one set of Readers, but there was no popular sentiment on the subject, and no party differences with regard to it, till after the plan of having more than one set of Readers had received for a time the sanction of the Government. The practice of having more sets of Readers than one was one which prevailed in England and the United States, and the Central Committee which examined the various books, with the exception of a single individual, were of the opinion that more than one set of books should be sanctioned. The question was as between two or three sets. Under these circumstances the acting Minister of Education did not see his way to reverse all that, and had he done so they would have had the members of the Opposition crying out against monopoly and centralization. His hon. friend the Minister of Education, before he became Minister, had publicly expressed the opinion that it would be extremely desirable to have but one set of Readers. He was of that opinion still. It was extremely probable that that course would be taken on that point. (Applause).

Mr. MEREDITH replying stated that Mr. Ferris had been mentioned for the Treasurership and he supposed the change had been made for the reason that the hon. gentleman only carried his constituency by a small majority. The reasons given for the appointment of the new Minister of Education had not been fully stated. The present Minister of Education at his nomination at Glencoe, when taking leave of his Dominion House constituency, said though he was laying down the banner of Reform there he would take it up in the Local House, which just now was looked upon as the key-stone of power at Ottawa. Afterwards the Minister of Education had announced that there were conditions on which he took the portfolio and one of which was that there should be only one set of Readers. He (Mr. Meredith) also found fault with the fact that five of the six Ministers were lawyers, and one of them was a lawyer made by Act of Parliament.

Mr. MOWAT stated that though five of the six Ministers were lawyers it must be remembered that one of them had not practised law.

Mr. ROSS (West Middlesex) explained that the statement by Mr. Meredith on his alleged conditions was from a newspaper report, and he was quite satisfied that there were no hard and fast conditions at all. He did not think it necessary to obtain conditions, and had not done so. He explained the circumstances under which the Supreme Court had been allowed to permit him to practise as a solicitor.

Mr. FRASER, answering a query by Mr. Morris about the duration of the Governments in old Canada and the Dominion, said since 1841 there had been 13 Administrations in the 43 years as follows:—Baldwin, 1841; Draper, 1844; Baldwin-Lafontaine, 1848; Hincks-Morin, 1851; Macdonald-Cartier, 1854; Brown-Dorion, 1858; Cartier-Macdonald, 1858; Macdonald-Sicotte, 1861; Macdonald-Cartier, 1863; Tache, 1864; Macdonald, 1867; Mackenzie, 1873; Macdonald, 1878.

The subject then dropped.

#### THE ALGOMA COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. MEREDITH asked the questions stand-

ing in his name regarding the Algoma Commissioners.

Mr. MOWAT said the date of the appointment of George R. Pattullo and George Burden was the 12th of June. They were appointed by commission under an Order in Council, and went to Algoma in the interests of the Province in the various questions constantly arising between Manitoba and Ontario. He might observe that Mr. Pattullo prepared one of the best pamphlets on the disputed territory ever written, and it was under his superintendence that a collection was made of the products of the country which had been exhibited at Toronto, Guelph, London, and other fairs. The salary at which Capt. Burden was appointed was \$1,600 besides expenses.

Mr. MEREDITH—What does expenses include—board and travelling expenses?

Mr. MOWAT stated that it would include those items. That was a temporary arrangement. Mr. Pattullo received \$5 a day and expenses. They had received some sums on account, but he did not know just the amount. In a sense the employment of these persons existed still, as they were now preparing their report. The severe illness of Mr. Pattullo had delayed the presentation of the report.

#### ALGOMA POLLING PLACES.

Mr. MEREDITH asked the questions standing in his name in reference to certain polling places in Algoma.

Mr. MOWAT—No poll was opened at Algoma Mills, the reason for which is this—

Mr. MEREDITH—I did not ask the reason.

Mr. MOWAT—But I want to state the reason. The election in Algoma took place on the 28th September, and the deputy returning-officer left Owen Sound for the purpose of going to Algoma Mills two days before at 4 o'clock in the morning, which was in ample time to arrive at Algoma Mills for the election. He left by the steamer *Bedchre*, and expected to arrive on the 27th. However a storm arose, and not only that but other steamers were compelled to shelter and stay over till Friday. He did not arrive in time, but there was not one voter prevented from voting on that account, as they all went on a train to Serpent River, the next polling place.

Mr. MEREDITH—Does the hon. member know that of his own knowledge?

Mr. MOWAT stated that he knew nothing of what he had stated of his own knowledge in the legal sense. He had, however, made all the enquiries he could, and he was giving the best information which it was possible to obtain. With regard to Nepigon Bay—there was a poll opened at Nepigon Village, and he was told that the village was only three miles from the bay. The poll was always held at the village, and he had no doubt that that was the place intended, so that his answer would be that there was a poll opened and held there. The third place mentioned was Batchewaning. There was a poll held in the Batchewaning district. There were formerly mills at the place which had been burned down, and all the people had left that part. A poll had been held at Mamaisse Mines.

Mr. MEREDITH—How far is that from Batchewaning?

Mr. HARDY—In the Batchewaning district—about eight miles.

Mr. MEREDITH—Thirty miles.

Mr. MOWAT said that various statements had been made as to the distance, and for his part he could not say how far it was. The reason for fixing the polling place there was the population was there. The member for London asked whether polls were omitted to be held at any other places named in the proclamation, and in reply he had to state that polls were not held at Rainy River and Fort Frances. The report of the returning-officer shows that the person entrusted with the ballot boxes for Rat Portage, Rainy River, and Fort Frances left Port Arthur seven days before the day of the election. On arriving at Rat Portage he found that the regular steamer had left before the arrival of the train, and he immediately endeavoured to get a tug to take him to the places, but he was unable to do so. He got, however, a boat, and started at 11 o'clock on the 23rd September, but a storm sprang up.

Mr. MEREDITH—Another storm.

Mr. MOWAT—There was no doubt of there being a storm. There was perfect good faith in the matter, and the man spared no pains or expense to get to his destination in time, and but for the storm he would have got to his destination considerably earlier than the date fixed. A vessel came along, and he got to Rainy River at two o'clock on polling day, but the people had gone to their homes. It worked against the Government candidate, for at Rainy River then there were only 23 voters resident, and of these twenty would have voted for Mr. Lyon.

Mr. MEREDITH—How could you tell that?

Mr. MOWAT—I know how my hon. friend will vote every time a question arises in the House, and it was perfectly well known how the voters would vote. He stated this in order to show that there could have been no object on the part of the man in wilfully causing delay. Those were the only two places where no polls were held. Mr. Meredith asked for his opinion whether the omission to hold polls was sufficient to void the election. He held that if the vote in a place at which polls were not held was sufficient to affect the result, the judges would probably say that the omission was fatal to the election, but he did not think under the circumstances that the error did in any way void the election. On the remaining question, he re-