

Conservatives—the hon. gentleman has referred to. They enthused, no doubt, and said fine things about their leader. Why should they not? He was the gentleman who was going to put them in power. These hon. gentlemen opposite were all there. What was the balance made up of? I suppose the John Shields' were there, and with them a goodly proportion of those who have had their elbows down deep in the public crib. The men who were getting their timber grants were all there. Public plunder will always make a good deal of enthusiasm. But the hon. gentleman wants to know why Sir John Macdonald would think of doing anything against the Province of Ontario. I can give him a good reason. Any man who has followed Sir John Macdonald's political career and studied his history will have learned that he is inordinately fond of power, and those who have been his colleagues confirm history in this regard.

An hon. gentleman—Hear, hear.
Hon. C. F. FRASER—Hear, hear, the hon. gentleman says. I suppose those who have been his colleagues ought to be the best authority on that subject. It is only so long ago as just prior to Confederation that a then colleague of Sir John Macdonald publicly said that he much mistook Sir John's astuteness if the millions that were to be expended on the Intercolonial Railway would not be made use of to retain himself in power for the next ten years. (Cheers.) Now, Sir, I say Sir John Macdonald's love of power, his strong

APPETITE FOR OFFICE.

not for the love of the mere office or the emoluments which it brings, is so great that he sacrifices the interests of this Province of Ontario for the purpose of remaining in power, and that to some extent explains the attitude he has taken so far as this Province is concerned. (Cheers.) Sir John will do almost anything in engineering or manipulation of public matters to keep in power. He wants power. He loves it. He will keep it to the last hour of the last day, if it is possible.

Mr. MEREDITH—He will keep it.

Hon. C. F. FRASER—Perhaps he will; he has had unbounded opportunities to use the means, and the hon. gentleman comes to his defence with but scant reason. For, if the people of this Province ever come to realize the losses sustained by Dominion interference in the disputed territory, there is no honest man amongst them, be he Conservative or Reformer, Tory or Grit, who will say my expression that it has been a shameless plundering is a whit too strong. (Cheers.) If these limits were put up to public competition then there might be some appearance of disposing of them honestly, but the system which is being pursued goes to show conclusively that the Dominion is being plundered if it be found that the timber does belong to it, and if the timber belongs to this Province that the Province is being plundered. When it can be told that one of these limits bought from the Dominion for \$20,000, was less than six months afterwards put on the Chicago market for \$750,000, it shows the way in which the territory is being plundered. Our son of Ontario thinks that this is a good thing to laugh at. It proves what I said. Sir John Macdonald may do just as he likes, and no fear but that this patriot will be as mum as a babe. (Laughter.) Whatever Sir John does he may do without any apprehension of this dutiful son of Ontario saying a single word of condemnation. Now, passing from this attitude personal to the hon. gentleman and coming to a question we have been discussing during this debate, and about which the hon. gentleman opposite speaks with so much vehemence, so far as

THE FUTURE OF CONFEDERATION

is concerned, I shall but detain the House for a very few moments upon it. The hon. gentleman finds fault with the attitude taken by the Provincial Treasurer, because he says that taking matters as we find them now, that taking circumstances as we have them to-day, that having regard to the claims of the other Provinces upon the Dominion, and having regard to the changed condition of all the Provinces since Confederation, it would be far better for the safety of Confederation that there should be some new basis with regard to our subsidies. In all that I entirely agree with the Provincial Treasurer. I admit there is a great deal of force in what the member for West Toronto (Mr. Clarke) said when he took the ground that in the true interests of the people it would be far better that so far as their local expenditure is concerned the moneys to be used for that purpose should be gotten by direct taxation. I think that the result naturally would be that the people would take a great deal more active interest in the expenditures, and it might have been well if this had been provided for by the fathers of Confederation.

Mr. MEREDITH—There is one of them.

Hon. C. F. FRASER—Thanks to the hon. gentleman for reminding me. He spoke about the pigmies which we were, compared with the fathers of Confederation. Here is one of them—the Attorney-General—(great applause)—and he deserves all that the member for London (Mr. Meredith) unintentionally said about him as being a mastermind. (Renewed applause.) He has shown in the controversy about Provincial Rights, he has shown in his conduct on every constitutional question which

has come up, that he is entitled to be designated as one of the master statesmen of Confederation, and more than equal to the man who leads at Ottawa. (Cheers.) But here, of course, we are mere pigmies. No one among us would profess to such ability, and such aptitude, as for instance, the member for West Peterborough (Mr. Carnegie), and I am sure I would not for a moment put myself on the high level of the hon. member for London. He is another Henry Clay. No common clay could he be. (Cheers and laughter.) But to continue I say I have always entertained the conviction that so far as the true financial interests of Ontario were concerned it would have been better for this Province if the arrangement at Confederation had been that all the Provinces should raise the moneys necessary for local purposes by

DIRECT TAXATION.

Then the people would have taken a much greater interest in tracing out how these moneys were expended. There is no doubt whatever when a man comes in contact with the tax collector he asks himself, How much do I pay, and what must I pay it for? And if our moneys had been raised by direct taxation, the whole expenditure would have been very much more closely scrutinized. Those who framed the Confederation scheme, however, had arrived at a different conclusion, and thought it best that the Dominion Government should collect the revenue and give each Province a subsidy. The amount which was thus arrived at was intended to be sufficient for all local purposes, and the understanding was that the Provinces would not require any increase thereafter. Now, I say that if Ontario had stood still, and all the other Provinces with it since Confederation, if there were not a single additional institution, if there were nothing at all added to the cost of civil government by the addition of Departments that did not then exist, the increased cost of every service now, as compared with 1867, would of itself necessitate some readjustment. (Hear, hear.) In other words my point is this, that you cannot buy so much to-day with a dollar as you could in 1867, and the experience the world over is that the purchasing power of the dollar is growing less. Any man who has had any business experience will know that. Well, now, instead of the Province being smaller we have grown in population and added to our public institutions, and the cost of administration has been growing. It follows just as naturally that the amount of money necessary to meet these expenditures in 1867 cannot be sufficient to meet them to-day. We, in the Province of Ontario have managed our affairs

ECONOMICALLY,

and for that we are entitled to credit. (Cheers.) We have been able to manage our affairs far better than any of the other Provinces, and we will be able for many long years to come, without any readjustment, to avoid anything like direct taxation, yet it is just as inevitable as anything can be that as we go on increasing our population the time will in the future come when the Province will have to meet its expenditures by direct taxation, and the burthens we are keeping from the people now will have to be put back on their shoulders. Any man will see that the expenditure will advance with the development of our territory, and that the time will come when it will have to be met by taxation, as come it has already in other Provinces. Now, let us discuss this reasonably. We all have a common interest in what is best, after all, for the Province of Ontario. Is it better that the other Provinces shall be getting from year to year from the Dominion Government financial assistance, without regard to what Ontario's rights are, or is it better for all the Provinces wisely to come together again—not to break up Confederation, not to break the bond that binds the Provinces of this great Dominion, but to make it more lasting and more certain to continue in peace by making just and reasonable readjustment of the financial basis if that be needful. (Hear, hear.) I have heard different conclusions to-day as to how much we lost by the scheme of the Dominion Act of last session, but what we are certain to lose if, instead of the three-fifths of what goes to the other Provinces we pay the whole five-fifths is a more serious consideration. Hon. gentlemen opposite will not remonstrate when the other Provinces go to the Dominion authorities from time to time and get better terms, but they are quite ready to insist that the Province of Ontario must purchase

PEACE AT ANY PRICE.

I say that if at that Ottawa the policy is to be that none of the Provinces shall get any money the people of Ontario are prepared to accept it. But instead of that being the policy hon. gentlemen opposite know—we all know—that the other Provinces have been getting financial assistance, not in the shape of annual subsidies but in lump sums, and under various guises; and we who have charge of Ontario affairs would be recreant to our trust if in the face of what we see going on, and what is absolutely certain to occur again, we made no sign, and did not indicate that Ontario would not continue submitting to these raids by the other Provinces. (Cheers.) I say again, let there be any needful re-adjustment, and when such a re-adjustment does take place, let it be understood as an absolute and final settlement. That is the attitude

of the Province of Ontario. We do not care to get one dollar of subsidy more than we are getting, but we do care a great deal that the other Provinces shall get these indirect and unwarranted grants, and that Ontario shall be the milk cow for the whole concern. A readjustment is the very best thing that can possibly take place for the Provinces and for the safety of Confederation. As it is now, Quebec, for example, goes to the Dominion authorities and gets two or three millions to replenish its diminished treasury. That can be repeated, and if the other Provinces do likewise then the day may come when the people of Ontario will refuse to let such a state of affairs go on, and will insist on one of two things, either that there shall be a readjustment of the financial basis which will do justice to them, or that indirect subsidies to other Provinces shall stop. That is the attitude we take. (Cheers.)

Mr. CREIGHTON—It is toned down in some skillful sentences from the position the Provincial Treasurer took.

Hon. C. F. FRASER—I am taking precisely the attitude he took. He explained the demands made by other Provinces from year to year; he stated that while they were getting these sums Ontario was getting nothing. I am showing that, taking the basis of 1867, the increased cost of the public maintenance since 1867 warrants it being said that what sufficed for the Provinces then will not carry them on in 1885, nor in 1895, and that in the future means will have to be secured in some other way than the present; that Ontario can meet its own expenditures now, with the aid of the present subsidy, but that as the other Provinces will insist upon making irregular demands at Ottawa then everybody who has an interest in this Province ought, without reference to politics, to have the courage to take the attitude that there must be no acceding to these demands unless upon some common basis of fair play between all the Provinces. I have no doubt that inasmuch as Ontario is the first Province, inasmuch as she contributes more largely to the revenues of the Dominion than any other, it will always be open to say that she pays more than she receives. Other Provinces had no right to get a re-arrangement through the Act of last session as on the basis of the population of 1881.

Mr. MEREDITH—Does not Mr. Blake want a re-arrangement for Manitoba every five years?

Hon. C. F. FRASER—I am not prepared to say that Manitoba should not be exceptionally treated, but let us know what these expenses are to be. I say under the provisions of the Act of 1884 better terms were given to some of the Provinces than were warranted by the Act of Confederation. And that leads me to say a word or two with reference to the Act of 1884. The hon. member for North Grey (Mr. Creighton) spent a good fifteen or twenty minutes in proving, as he thought he did, that we were entitled to no credit whatever for anything done by the Dominion authorities in reference to that Act, that we had made no representations with respect to the Act of 1873, and hon. friends behind him almost split their desks applauding him, and after saying no credit whatever is to be given to us he turns around, and in just as deliberate a manner says that we were the instruments morally and entirely responsible for the interpretation that had been put upon the Act of 1873—(laughter)—that it was our fault that the people of Ontario had been plundered by the construction that had been put upon that Act. (Applause.) I did not know we were so potent or so powerful that we could make the chief of Ontario's son do a wrong against the Province of Ontario against the dear old man's wish, but members opposite do not seem to realize that the responsibility for that outrage, that the responsibility for that robbery if there was a robbery, rests upon the shoulders of those who rule affairs at Ottawa and control a majority of that Parliament (Hear, hear.) Now, a good deal has been said in this debate about the

OVER-EXPENDITURE

this year. A very little comforts these hon. gentlemen opposite. (Laughter.) They have been endeavouring to get something by which they might arouse the people, and for the first time they think they have found something which will warrant them in making a cry. One would fancy there had never been an over-expenditure before at all. The Provincial Treasurer may exercise the greatest care and deliberation, he may put his whole mind upon keeping within the estimates and still be unsuccessful. Take the affairs of any Province, nay of any municipality, or of a city like Toronto, and they cannot be managed without certain items of over-expenditure. (Cheers.) It is perfect fudge for people who have any knowledge of public affairs to pretend to say that there should not be an over-expenditure in certain items. There always will be. I do not care who happens to be in power, they will always find what I have been saying about an over-expenditure to be true. Last year was a year of depression; bad for the Dominion; bad for business. Every one knows that last year was as bad as 1878, which was another very bad year, and the one in which the N. P. was promised as a rectifier of trade. (Laughter.) Now, a comparison of our finances last year and those in 1878 will show that in that year we had a large over-expenditure also. We had \$150,000 of an over-expenditure that year.

Mr. CARNEGIE—What for?