

expending the money on the municipalities. The Government should be held directly responsible to the people. During his last election campaign he had defied his opponents to point out road expenditures that were not actually required in the public interest. He also defied them to show a road that was not made in a proper manner, and if there was not sufficient work done for the money. He read an article from The Egansville Enterprise, a Conservative paper, commenting most favourably on the Government, and himself as local member for South Renfrew, and all the overseers connected with road-making in that riding. He thought the Opposition would fail to make out a case against the Government in the matter of colonization road expenditure at least.

It being one o'clock the Speaker left the chair.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Mr. DILL spoke of the manner in which colonization roads had been constructed in Muskoka, and showed that in every case they had been made in the public interest irrespective of party considerations. The great majority of these roads were undertaken on petition, and this year one hundred and thirty petitions had been received by the Hon. Commissioner of Crown Lands. If the Government would expend more liberally the country would develop more rapidly. The Government were accused of expending more money in election years than in others. That he was prepared to dispute, as he had made a statement which showed this was not the case. It would be impossible to carry out the suggestion of the hon. member for North Grey (Mr. Creighton) of buying provisions in the locality where the roads were being constructed, because the settlers have very little to sell of such articles as were required by the men. He said the population of Muskoka had increased between 1871 and 1881 to the extent of 20,285, and if it had not been for the expenditure on colonization roads the population would not have been nearly so large as it was to-day. In 1877 the Opposition moved that the expenditure should be decreased, so that if they had their way it would result in retarding the progress of the country.

Mr. SILLS, referring to a remark of the member for North Hastings (Mr. Wood), in reference to the appointment of a Conservative overseer in his riding for the purpose of making him a Reformer, asked if it looked like that when Mr. Aylesworth discharged him in the interest of the Province three years afterwards.

Mr. MEREDITH said they had heard the revised version of the speech of the member for Muskoka. He remembered that on nomination day in Muskoka the hon. member publicly declared that the present system of spending these moneys was unsatisfactory and should be changed. The hon. gentleman was compelled to admit that the system was bad, but because, forsooth, the motion saying so was one of want of confidence he would not support it. An effort was made to make it appear that the Opposition were unfavourable to liberal grants for colonization roads. The Opposition always approved of a liberal expenditure for colonization purposes, but they had always insisted that the money voted by that House should be expended in the public interest and not frittered away and used for political purposes. The hon. member for Muskoka (Mr. Dill) had read a resolution of the House of 1877. Now he would refer to a circular issued in the interest of the Government and of their candidate in Muskoka in which it was declared that Mr. Meredith and his supporters voted for a resolution of Mr. Patterson's in 1877, advocating a reduction of the grant for colonization roads from \$77,000 to \$50,000. That statement was wholly devoid of truth. (Cheers.) Such a resolution was moved, but it was moved in amendment by Mr. Hardy that this House is of opinion that a proper regard for economy and the public interest is now practised in the purchase of supplies. It was only upon that amendment that a vote was taken: no vote was taken on Mr. Patterson's motion, for which it was stated he voted. (Cheers.) It was one thing to vote to reduce the grant, but another thing to vote against the assertion that economy and a proper regard for the public interest was practised. The hon. gentleman himself (Mr. Dill) knew that that was not true. There was in that circular, circulated by members of the Government, a deliberate falsification of the public records in a place where the records were not accessible. (Cheers.)

Hon. Mr. HARDY—How would you have voted?

Mr. MEREDITH—We would have voted against it. (Laughter from Government benches.) It might be a small thing in the view of hon. gentlemen for members of the Government and their candidate to circulate statements in a riding that were absolutely false, and they might laugh over it, for it answered their purposes. (Hear, hear.) He observed that the member for Muskoka was

opposed to the proposition that the municipalities should have the expending of the money for purposes of these roads. In Nova Scotia, where the original system was the same as that pursued here, they had abandoned that system, and now the moneys were handed over to the municipalities. It was idle to say that these settlers, for whose benefit these roads were built, were not going to be more careful with regard to expenditure and get more out of it than these road bosses. (Hear, hear.) It was quite clear that these moneys were being used for political purposes, as was shown by the increase in the expenditure in Muskoka during the Muskoka general election from \$17,000, the sum voted by the House, to nearly \$35,000. (Cheers.) When Mr. Lyons was unseated the judges reported, "And we further certify that corrupt practices did extensively prevail at that election," and he ventured to say that no expenditure was more corrupt than the money spent on account of colonization roads. (Cheers.) No one could go through the public accounts without seeing a great looseness in the conduct of these matters. If the hon. gentleman, the Commissioner of Crown Lands, was really desirous of having an honest investigation he would make him a proposition. Let him consent to the appointment of a committee of five, who during the summer would proceed to the spot where witnesses could be examined and the roads and bridges inspected, and then they would see if there was no foundation for the charges. (Cheers.)

Hon. Mr. PARDEE—Why didn't you make this proposition earlier in the session?

Mr. MEREDITH asked if the hon. gentleman meant that he would have consented to it at the beginning of the session. It was just as easy to assent to it now. (Hear, hear.) It was an utter farce to suppose that there would be any proper investigation in the Public Accounts Committee. He did not attribute personal misconduct to the Commissioner of Crown Lands, but the hon. gentleman knew that these moneys were used for political purposes, and he ventured to say that the hon. gentleman would resist any such investigation as he proposed. (Cheers.)

Hon. G. W. ROSS said the session had gone along smoothly so far. There had been a meeting of the Public Accounts Committee nearly every day, and gentlemen opposite had taken advantage of the opportunities to enquire fully into all matters of expenditure, yet they were now introducing this trumpety resolution in the House. He could easily understand the object of the hon. gentleman in introducing this resolution. The leader of the Opposition was afraid that the great Conservative party were being minimized in the eyes of the people by the success which had attended the expenditure of money by the Government in colonization roads. They appeared utterly oblivious of the fact that chiefly by means of colonization road expenditures, the population of Muskoka had increased from seven thousand to twenty-seven thousand. He wished by this resolution to gain favour with the people by making out that the great Conservative party were not adverse to a liberal expenditure on colonization roads. He read an extract from a speech made by a member on the opposite side of the House, stating that the expenditure on colonization roads had been too great, and said the leader of the Opposition had not questioned the statement. The hon. gentleman had not shown that the Government had not developed the country by their expenditure on colonization roads. Had he travelled through the country he would have admitted that the money had been well spent. The lands there are not very fertile, and unless inducements had been offered to the settlers in the way of assistance in building roads the settlement of the country would have been slow, besides affording the settlers the advantages of egress and ingress. The construction of the roads afforded them employment at a time when they most needed it.

He asked hon. gentlemen opposite if they were transferred to the Treasury benches if they would employ Reformers as overseers. He would venture to say that there would be a meeting of Council to deal with every application, and that every applicant would be required to sign the thirty-nine articles of the Conservative platform which were drawn up some time ago, and which were being revised day in and day out, and unless an applicant was prepared to do this he could not get a single culvert to construct between Nipissing and Gravenhurst. That was the policy of their friends at Ottawa, and the hon. gentleman had not censured them. Everybody knew it was the rule for political parties to appoint their friends and they made no bones about it. Other things being equal, they believed they had the right to appoint their friends, and it was nobody's business so long as they did their work conscientiously and efficiently. Referring to the charge made against the overseer who had dealt with Mr. Wilson, he said if the officer had done what the member for North Hastings (Mr. Wood) said he had he should not have done it, but if the charge was a substantial one, he asked why the

hon. gentleman had never asked for an investigation before the Public Accounts Committee. It was a matter in which, unless brought to the attention of the Government they could not interfere. They were not to suppose that these men were going to disfranchise themselves simply because they were appointed overseers on a road or because they had a contract for a week or two to build a bridge. Appointees of the Ottawa Government, such as postmasters, occupying subordinate positions, were not supposed to give up the right of franchise. So far as he was concerned, he thought that a man who held a permanent appointment ought to keep out of political entanglements, but a man who was employed only for a short time should not be expected to sacrifice his political influence. With reference to Mr. Aylesworth, he had a perfect right to canvass, because by his own evidence it was shown that he was not paid by the Government for the time he was in Madoc, and that he was only engaged by the day. In order to substantiate the charge that the money on colonization roads was expended for political purposes it would have to be shown that it was expended corruptly, and that the roads were diverted from the course which they should properly take. Public buildings were erected in London and elsewhere, but gentlemen opposite would not say that was done for a political purpose, but simply because these roads were controlled by political opponents they brought charges of corruption without being able to substantiate them.

Mr. CARNEGIE said the facts fully bore out the statements of the member for North Hastings. Although Mr. Aylesworth was said to be paid by the day, the accounts for 1884 showed he received \$2,309—(applause.)—which at \$7 a day was for more days than there were in the year. There was the case, too, of Mr. Boyd, who, in the celebrated Algoma election, had gone up and down the side lines paying \$50 and \$100 to every Tom, Dick, and Harry. How is it that there were such over-expenditures in the colonization accounts? There was an over-expenditure of \$36,000 in 1884 and \$12,000 in 1883. In the Commissioner's reports from 1880 to 1884 there were items amounting to \$28,000, none of which had any names or roads entered against them. In these sums were included \$10,000 of the over-expenditure of 1882 and \$12,000 of 1883. Did not these facts show that the system of expenditure was radically wrong? The expenditure in Manitoulin island for these two years was put down in the public accounts as \$5,000 and in the Commissioner's report as \$14,000. What guide then were the public accounts for investigating matters? He called attention to the returns made of applications for grants on colonization roads in 1883 and said that most of them had been mutilated. The Government were indignant about these inquiries, because they knew that if it were not for the colonization road fund they would not now be in power. (Cheers.)

Hon. A. S. HARDY asked who were the active agents of the Tory party in Muskoka in the campaign of 1883. The hon. gentleman ought to have stated whom the men were that the candidate was with, and talked with for hours—but not about politics, for he knew a trick worth two of that, as he himself admitted. It appeared to him of colossal importance—if he might use the expression—for a man, whose skirts were reeking with corruption and filth by companionship with such men, to pretend to lecture people here about honest, decent, and respectable people in the employ of the Government, who were doing good work for the Province. He proceeded to review the insinuations against the colonization road inspectors, and showed that though the member for West Peterborough had been on the Public Accounts Committee two years, where he had had an opportunity of making the charge and examining on oath, he had failed to do so. Again, it was said that Mr. Aylesworth was in the employ of the Government, and yet took an active part in politics. Well, he would apply the same argument to the hon. member for North Hastings. He had in his hands the public accounts of the Dominion, and he found the hon. gentleman's name as a valuator on the Trent Murray Canal. He was not going to make any insinuations against the hon. gentleman, and he would admit that very likely he was an able and efficient valuator, but in whose company do they find the hon. gentleman as an employee of the Dominion Government? That of a man who had a most unenviable notoriety in the political history of this country (Mr. Wilkinon.) Had the member for North Hastings sunk his politics during the time he was in the employ of the Dominion Government? The fact that he was here contradicted that, and even so he might apply the same argument to the hon. member for West Peterborough. Did he sink his politics while he was in the employ of the Dominion Government? He reviewed the arguments of the member regarding alleged discrepancies in the public accounts, and showed that there was no discrepancy at all. Regarding the complaint of Mr. Carnegie that he could not get an opportunity to examine the accounts or witnesses, he showed that the Treasurer had given up his whole session to the work of the committee, and