

ASSEMBLY NOTES.

THE BUDGET:—The galleries were well filled, the House was deeply attentive, and the Provincial Treasurer made a clear and able speech in presentation of the Budget. There have been during the year but few transactions of large financial importance and there are the best evidences that wise economy has been exercised throughout all the departments of the Government. The revenue remains in a flourishing condition and the surplus has swollen to \$6,665,352. Politics grow hard for Mr. Creighton. That surplus will yet drive him out of public life. It grows faster than the Opposition.

The chief exceptional advantage to the revenue came from the recent sale of timber, which realised \$399,000. Of course the surplus-haters refuse to accept this as an ordinary receipt. But there is a good deal in the position taken by the Treasurer, that if we provide for posterity we may draw on posterity. The proceeds from the timber go into permanent improvements. As the Treasurer hinted, we are doing quite as much for posterity as posterity is doing for us, and it is high testimony to the wisdom and prudence of the Crown Lands Department that the sale was held just at the time that it was and that the result was what it was.

The settlement of Cobourg's indebtedness under the municipal loan fund for \$25,000 in cash, and with St. Catharines for \$4,000 of new debentures, involves a small loss under the demands of the Province, but is, perhaps, as satisfactory a settlement as could have been effected by a harsher policy, and, maybe, troublesome and costly litigation.

The sale of Dominion bonds at 106½, and of annuities at a rate below 4½, are transactions flattering to the Provincial credit.

The surplus of \$556,000 over the ordinary expenditure of the year is as flattering to the Provincial Government.

The estimated receipts for 1887 were \$5,846,924.

The expenditure was \$3,403,233.

The estimated expenditure for 1888 is \$2,988,724.

The estimated receipts for 1883 are \$3,403,233.

This allows for a surplus on the ordinary operations of the year of \$414,509.

The estimated receipts are made up of \$1,196,872 from subsidy, \$279,111 from interest on capital held and debts due by the Dominion, \$40,000 from interest on investments, \$1,399,000 from the Crown Lands Department, \$123,800 from public institutions, \$25,000 from the Education Department, \$35,000 from casual revenue, \$195,000 from licenses, \$66,000 from law stamps, \$5,000 from Algoma taxes, \$24,000 from drainage assessment, \$4,850 from the municipal loan fund, \$3,000 from insurance companies' assessments, and \$6,000 from assessment of counties for removal of lunatics.

It was satisfactory to learn that the estimates for the Agricultural College and Experimental Farm had not been exhausted, and that the creamery at the farm was self-sustaining. It is well that Mr. Carnegie is out of Parliament. He would fret himself to death in the face of such an exhibit. Who shall say but Mr. Stratton has saved him from an untimely exit?

Mr. Ross, by citing a few powerful facts, showed how great are the sacrifices made by the Government in behalf of the Scott Act and how much more heavily the burden of enforcement falls upon the Province than upon the municipalities. For instance, last year the municipalities received for fines under the Scott Act \$94,000. They contributed to the cost of the enforcement of the Act but \$44,000. They have thus a clear surplus from fines of \$50,000. On the same account there was a clear loss to the Provincial Treasury of \$25,000. Then the municipalities lost in license revenue \$135,000, but against this they have the surplus from fines of \$50,000. Their total loss is therefore but \$85,000. The Province, however, loses in license revenue \$124,000 and about \$25,000 on account of enforcement, or a loss to the Province of about \$149,000, against a loss of \$35,000 by the municipalities. In the face of these facts the Federal Government continues to force upon the Provincial authorities the burden of the enforcement of an imperfect Act, and to order the fines imposed under it to be paid over to the municipalities.

The municipalities interested in the projected arbitration between Ontario and Quebec will do well to consider the Treasurer's suggestion that they should appoint associate counsel to watch their interests during the course of the arbitration.

A more painful subject was that briefly touched upon by the Treasurer in reference to the error of \$14,000 which has crept into the Provincial accounts. An exhaustive inquiry has been made into the accounts by experts, and it has been concluded that between 1875 and 1879 there may have been misappropriation to the amount of over \$5,000. The sus-

pected officer was discharged three years ago, and on being badgered into it by Mr. Meredith, Mr. Ross explained that he was now in the employ of the Federal Government.

The speech of Mr. H. E. Clarke, who undertook Mr. Creighton's hunt for the surplus, cannot be called an oratorical or critical success. Mr. Clarke is amiable. He seems anxious to be fair. He is rarely bitter in his personal references.

The fact is, Mr. Clarke would make a magnificent Senator, but he fails to win distinction as a responsible legislator.

Mr. Creighton holds his lead as the chief financial critic of the Opposition. The race for second place is between Mr. Craig and Mr. Clancy. Mr. Clarke cannot be admitted to stand better than a good third.

Mr. Clarke fulminated against increase of expenditure and against the sale of Dominion bonds. He deplored the disappearance of the timber and hinted at the wisdom of measures to re-clothe the forests. He argued that the Government were creating a Provincial debt at the rate of \$250,000 a year and generally skinned and maltreated the surplus with a vigor that even Mr. Creighton could not surpass. In fact his whole argument was a repudiation of the surplus. He seemed satisfied with the general policy of the Government, and were it a fact that the surplus has disappeared he would probably be found admitting that it had disappeared in the interest of the people. Mr. Craig made much the same kind of a speech as Mr. Clarke, but he spoke in better form and pursued a more connected and logical argument than his colleague. Mr. Smith and Mr. Phelps made good speeches in support of the Treasurer and then the debate collapsed. The Opposition were waiting for Mr. Hardy or Mr. Mowat and the Liberals for Mr. Meredith or Mr. Creighton. But the leaders would not. Efforts to induce Mr. Clancy to speak were unavailing. The end came. It was a complete discomfiture for the Opposition and the Liberals laughed long and loud as the House went into supply. But it is expected the Opposition will renew the debate in supply; in fact it is believed they have resolved on an aggressive campaign against the surplus, and will break out into financial ill-humors at intervals all through the session.

BREVITIES:—Among the visitors to the chamber were Mr. William McCrauey, ex-M.P. for Halton.

Mr. James McMullen, M. P. for North Wellington.

Mr. D. McKay, High schoolmaster at Walkerton.

Mr. J. M. Ferris, ex-M.P.P. for East Northumberland, who was cordially welcomed by many old friends, as also was Mr. A. Pattullo, of The Woodstock Sentinel-Review.

Hon. A. S. Hardy will go to Brantford today to attend the funeral of the late John H. Stratford.

Hon. C. F. Fraser is at Brockville attending the funeral of his niece, a child of Mrs. Shields, the Minister's sister.

Capt. Douglas, R.N.R., and his niece, Mrs. Kennedy Douglas, of London, England, occupied seats on the floor of the House during the debate.

A deputation from Simcoe and Muskoka are in the city in behalf of a project to form a new county with Orillia as the county town. They had a consultation with Mr. Drury last night, and arranged a plan of campaign. They will interview the Attorney-General this afternoon.

It is said the House will continue in Committee of Supply for most of the week and that the debate on the inter-Provincial resolutions will not come on before Tuesday next.

AFTER A CANDIDATE:—Advices from Prince Edward County say Mr. J. S. McCuaig has issued his address to the electors and is in the field as a candidate for the Commons. Mr. McCuaig is a chronic seeker after nominations. It is not thought, however, that the Tory convention will adopt him, nor is Mr. Robert R. Clapp, who opposed Dr. Platt at the last election, likely to secure re-nomination. It is believed Mr. W. Poote, Mayor of Picton, or Mr. A. H. Saylor, a mill-owner, will be the Tory candidate. A desperate effort is to be made to defeat Dr. Platt, but his friends do not think it will be any more successful than the many previous efforts of the same kind.

THE SPEAKER'S GUESTS:—The invited guests at the Speaker's dinner last night were Major Delamere and the following members of the Legislature:—Messrs. Gaspard, Picaud, Tho-

Murray, J. R. Stratton, T. M. Nairn, J. H. Metcalfe, William Kerns, John Dryden, Chas. Drury, A. B. Ingram, John Blythe, Thos. Ballantyne, Joseph Parker, W. P. Hudson, Daniel Hilliard, C. C. Field, J. S. Cruess, Robt. Fell, Dr. Meacham and William Morgan.

HOME RULE:—Mr. Clancy is asking if Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Parnell have acknowledged the receipt of the Anti-Coercion Resolutions passed during last session of the Legislature.

LICENSES:—According to the license report laid on the table by the Provincial Secretary, there were issued last year 1,496 ordinary tavern licenses, 72 beer and wine, 367 shop, 22 wholesale, six tavern vessel licenses, six beer and wine vessel licenses, and 26 six months' licenses, a total of 2,000 of all kinds. There were 27 extensions, 245 transfers and 34 removals. There has been a decrease in the number of licenses issued, comparing 1886 with the preceding year, of 650 tavern, 150 shop, 4 wholesale and six vessel, or 820 in all; and comparing 1887 with 1886 of 1,018 taverns and 158 shops, making a total of 1,176. The Provincial revenue from licenses and fines was for 1884, \$93,225; for 1885, \$192,867; for 1886, \$165,285, and for 1887, \$215,455. The payments to the municipalities were \$153,716, as against \$231,433 the year before. The fines collected during the year amounted to \$12,033, as compared with \$18,717 in 1885, and \$18,826 30 in 1886. This sum does not include the fines collected in districts in which the Canada Temperance Act is in force. The number of persons committed for drunkenness during the year 1887 exceeds the number committed in 1886 by 535. Analysing the returns gives the following result:—Taking first those counties in which the Canada Temperance Act is in force, it is found that in Dufferin, Lincoln and Renfrew the same number were committed each year. In Elgin, Halton, Huron, Kent, Lambton, Leeds and Grenville, Norfolk, Northumberland and Durham, Oxford, Peterboro' and Simcoe, the commitments for 1887 were less than in 1886. In Brant, Bruce, Carleton, Frontenac, Lanark, Lennox and Addington, Middlesex, Stormont, Dundas and Gleagarry, Victoria and Wellington the commitments in 1887 exceeded those of 1886. Of those counties and districts in which the License Act is in force—Algoma, Essex, Grey, Haldimand, Hastings, Nipissing, Thunder Bay, Waterloo and York—had a greater number of commitments for drunkenness in 1887 than in 1886, while Peel, Perth, Prescott and Russell, Prince Edward, Wentworth and Welland had a less number. To summarise:—Of the Scott Act counties 3 had the same number of commitments in 1887 as in 1886; 10 had a greater number in 1887, and 11 a less. Of the counties and districts under the License Act 9 had a greater number in 1887 and 6 had less. Of the 10 counties under the Scott Act having a greater number of commitments in 1887 than in 1886, Brant, Carleton, Frontenac and Middlesex, the county gaols therein receive prisoners committed from the cities of Brantford, Ottawa, Kingston and London, in which the License Act is in force.

MR. ROSS AS AN OPTIMIST:—A general purpose dissident says the statistics of school population as presented in the Minister of Education's report, and the famous speech of Hon. G. W. Ross at the Board of Trade's banquet to Mr. Chamberlain, ought to be submitted to the Board of Reconciliation.

MUNICIPAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS:—Mr. Nairn has introduced a bill closely on the lines of that of Mr. Wood, of Brant. He proposes that a week before the municipal nominations the treasurer shall make out a statement of the receipts and expenditures for the year and of the general financial condition of the municipality, and that it shall be kept in the office of the municipal clerk. Any ratepayer will be at liberty to inspect it or to make extracts from it, but no person shall be allowed to monopolise it for more than an hour. Under this clause the clerk becomes a sort of official time-keeper for the municipality. It is also provided that the statement shall be open for inspection on nomination day, and the treasurer is made liable to a fine of \$100 if he fails to make out a statement or wilfully misrepresents the financial condition. Then if the Council so decide they may order the statement to be distributed throughout the municipality.

INQUESTS ON PRISONERS:—Mr. Stewart, of Dufferin, has a bill to provide that when a prisoner dies in gaol the gaoler shall notify the