

which they had retained the confidence of the people of the Province. He proposed that in the interests of agriculture a Minister of Agriculture should be appointed in addition to the present Ministers, and he believed such a step was not only necessary for the efficiency of the public service, but was a measure of true economy. (Applause.)

Mr. MEREDITH said he could not congratulate the hon. Attorney-General upon being over-modest while he was sounding so highly the praises of himself and colleagues, and he could understand why the handsome face of the Commissioner of Public Works was covered with a blush when allusion was made to his being overworked. He claimed that it was unfair to compare the work of the Province at the present time to that which fell to the lot of the men who came into power immediately after Confederation, and who had to organise and get into operation many things which subsequent Ministers found awaiting them. The hon. Attorney-General talked of overwork on the part of himself and colleagues, but of course the mass of work done in all the departments fell to the lot of the permanent officials and not to the heads of departments. Hon. gentlemen opposite had said, when occasion suited them, that the work of the Dominion could be done by

FEWER CABINET MINISTERS THAN EXISTED, and had pointed to the fact that the United States Cabinet contained but seven Ministers. Yet here were hon. gentlemen now asking the House to give them leave to appoint another Minister, and thus bring the number of their Cabinet up to a level with that which they had considered large enough to run the affairs of the whole Dominion. He would not question or deny a word of what the hon. the Attorney-General had said with regard to the importance of the agricultural industry or to the propriety of a Minister being allowed to devote the whole of his time to it. He would only enter his protest against the proposed increase of public expenditure by the cost of additional Minister and his accompany staff. He thought that if there was one more than another calculated to bring trouble upon the people of this country it was that there were being over-governed. They had their House of Commons, and their Dominion Senate

their Legislatures in every Province, and the expense of keeping up all these was enormous. Yet the Government was preparing to increase this cost by the addition of another Minister. Let them profit by the example of Quebec, a Province which hon. gentlemen on the Government side of the House were fond of calling reckless and extravagant. Quebec was reducing its Ministers, while Ontario proposed increasing her's. If the members of the Government were overworked it was not because of the excess of duties belonging properly to the various departments, but because they had taken to themselves, for the purpose of self-aggrandisement in the eyes of the public, duties which belonged to the people, and which had been formerly performed by them. (Applause.)

Hon. C. F. FRASER said there was little left in the argument of the hon. member for London if "the bran were knocked out of it." (Laughter.) The Hon. gentleman objected to the expense of the proposed Minister of Agriculture "and his staff." But there would be no additional staff required. The staff at present attached to the Bureau of Industries and its chief, Mr. Blue, would be turned over to the new Minister, and there would not necessarily be any addition to the expenditure of the Province involved in the appointment of a Minister of Agriculture unless it might be in providing him with a room. So the only additional expenditure would be the Minister's salary—\$4,000 per annum. As to the reduction of the number of Ministers in Quebec Province, there were, he believed, at least eight heads of departments there, and the reduction which Mr. Mercier proposed, when leader of the Opposition, to make, had not been made since he had become Premier, so, he felt assured, would the talk of the hon. gentleman, the leader of the Opposition in this House, concerning the excess in the number of heads of departments cease in the remote contingency of the hon. gentleman's ever occupying the position of head of the Government. (Applause.) As to the charge that Ministers were increasing their work by their grasping policy and by taking to themselves duties and powers that had belonged and should belong to the public, it was very well to throw out such a charge on a public platform as the hon. gentleman had done when nobody was by who could reply to them, or to throw it out now as vaguely as the hon. gentleman did. What did he mean? If the hon. gentleman would make a specific charge, he would undertake to reply to him. (Applause.)

The bill then passed.

INDUSTRIAL FARM.

Hon. Mr. HARDY moved the second reading of the bill affecting industrial farms and houses of industry. Carried.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

The House then went into Committee of Supply, Mr. Harecourt in the chair, and passed the following items:—For colonisation roads \$101,600, divided as follows:—North division, \$21,700; west division, \$15,900; east division, \$38,000; general purposes, \$26,000. For Crown lands, \$101,900, an increase of \$3,000 over last year's estimate. The House adjourned at six o'clock.

COMMITTEE WORK.

The following bills will be considered by the Municipal Committee on the dates and at the hours severally below mentioned:—

Bill No. 66—"To amend the General Road Companies Act" (re toll roads), Thursday, the 1st March, at 10.30 a.m.

Bill No. 72—Respecting ditches and water-courses (as applied to railways), Tuesday, the 6th March, at 10.30 a.m.

RAILWAY COMMITTEE.

The Railway Committee met yesterday and reported the following bills:—

To further amend the Acts respecting the Port Arthur, Duluth & Western Railway Company.

To incorporate the Peterborough & Chemong Lake Railway Company.

To incorporate the Ottawa, Arnprior & Renfrew Railway Company.

Respecting a certain agreement made between the Town of Lindsay, the Midland Railway Company of Canada and the G. T. R. Company of Canada.

Respecting a certain railway debenture debt of the Township of Thorah.

DAIRY COMMITTEE.

The committee on the dairying industry met yesterday morning and decided to send out by mail a set of questions relating principally to the adulteration of milk; also copies of the bill drafted by the dairymen for presentation to the Dominion Parliament.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

The Public Accounts Committee met yesterday, Mr. Clarke (Wellington) in the chair. Mr. H. C. Sproule, Provincial Auditor, was examined with regard to the deficiency in the public accounts, made known by the Provincial Treasurer in his recent Budget speech. He was questioned chiefly by Mr. Meredith, and gave a good deal of evidence, describing the departmental system of bookkeeping and auditing. The examination was not concluded when the committee rose.

PRIVATE BILLS.

A bill for the incorporation of Markdale as a town was considered by the Private Bills Committee yesterday. William Brown, J.P., Wm. Lucas, W. J. Macfarland, C. W. Rutledge, G. M. Haskett and W. A. Brown appeared in support of the bill; Patrick McCullough represented the opposition. Mr. Brown and Mr. McCulloch addressed the committee, petitions and affidavits were read, and the fact developed that the disputed point was the population of the proposed town, which is somewhere between 750 and 1,000. The motion for incorporation was defeated on a tie vote. The committee decided in favor of incorporating Markdale as a village and extending its limits, and the bill is to be re-drafted with that view. The committee reported bills respecting St. Patrick's Asylum, Ottawa, Town of Bowmanville, the Town of Parkdale and the trustees of the Toronto General Burying Grounds.

ASSEMBLY NOTES.

THE NEW PORTFOLIO:—The most important measure yet of the session got its second reading yesterday after a discussion of less than an hour's duration. The bill creating the new portfolio of Minister of Agriculture was supported by Mr. Mowat in a speech which put the case very clearly. First, the importance of the agricultural interest is the warrant for the appointment of a Minister to look after it and nothing else; second, the business of all the other departments has increased to such an extent that it can no longer be annexed to any of them. The latter position was supported by statistics showing a surprising increase in the volume of correspondence of the various departments.

Mr. Meredith did not offer any amendment to the motion, but said that at a late stage he would move an amendment expressing his disapproval of any increase in the number of Ministers.

The debate was closed by a speech from Mr. Fraser, who described Mr. Meredith's position very neatly when he said that all his objections were really pointed at an increased expenditure of \$4,000—the new Minister's salary—because the appointment did not mean the creation of a new staff.

APPOINTMENT OF QUEEN'S COUNSEL:—Correspondence relating to the appointment of Queen's Counsel by the Federal and Provincial Governments has been printed and distributed.

In the latter part of 1835 the Secretary of State for Canada wrote several times to the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario asking for a list of the Queen's Counsel in Ontario appointed before Confederation. The reply of the Lieutenant-Governor contains these words:—

You do not ask for a list of those appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor, and it is presumed, therefore, that you intend to ignore these and to treat as ultra vires the Ontario Statutes (passed in 1873) under which the Provincial commissions were granted. My Government respectfully protest against this course as misleading to their lordships of the Judicial Committee, as unjust to Provincial Queen's Counsel and as proceeding on an erroneous conception of the B. N. A. Act, which involves other matters of great moment to the Provinces.

Then follows a lengthy argument in support of the right of the Provinces to make the appointments referred to. The Secretary of State replied, apparently relying entirely on the case of Lenoir v. Ritchie, in which the point came up for decision. Here the matter rests, unless, as has been suggested, the Provincial Government take measures to have the matter settled by a decision of the Privy Council. The following opinion has been obtained from Messrs. Horace Davey and R. B. Haldane, two eminent English lawyers:—

1. We feel some doubt as to the power of the Lieutenant-Governor of any Province, other than Ontario or Quebec, to create Queen's Counsel with or without the incidental privilege of pre-audience. But with regard to Ontario and Quebec, we think, having regard to Section 134, that the Lieutenant-Governors of the Provinces can create Queen's Counsel for the purposes of the Provincial Courts. Whether the Lieutenant-Governors can regulate the precedence of the members of the Provincial Bars inter se is in our opinion one of some difficulty. On the whole, we think not.

2. We are of opinion that the appointment of Queen's Counsel is not a mere dignity or honor, but it is the appointment to an office. We are therefore of opinion that a Provincial Legislature has power to authorise the Lieutenant-Governor to make appointment of Queen's Counsel for the purposes of the Provincial Courts. We rely mainly on the 4th head of Section 92, which, in our opinion, did not receive sufficient attention in the case of Lenoir v. Ritchie. We also think that the Legislature can regulate the precedence of the members of the Bar in the Provincial Courts as part of the organisation of Provincial Courts, and, therefore, within the 14th head of Section 92. We do not feel pressed by the argument of the judges in Lenoir v. Ritchie that such an Act would be an interference with the prerogative of the Crown. Assuming that to be so, it is a necessary implication from the language of the Act (which would be unmeaning without it) and would, therefore, bind the Crown. We think that the Ontario Statutes of Chapters 3 and 4 of 1873 are valid.

A SEAPORT FOR ONTARIO:—The claims of the Nipissing and James' Bay railway were presented to the Attorney-General yesterday by deputations representing the following bodies:—Hamilton Board of Trade, W. H. Gilland, president; J. W. Minto, vice-president; W. F. Findlay; Toronto Board of Trade, D. R. Wilkie, Robert Jaffray; Toronto City Council, Mayor Clarke, Ald. Haldam, Drayton, Gibbs, Hewitt, Carlyle (St. Andrew's). The company was represented by