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party. At all events, they had made full use of their powers to promote temperance sentiment, and the charges made by his hon. friend were totally unfounded.

MR. ROSS' ENERGETIC SPEECH.

Hon. G. W. Ross said the hon. member was not fair in charging the Government with playing with the temperance question. Scarcely a session had passed without some increased legislation being given in the interests of this movement. Within the last ten or fifteen years the whole license system of this Province was changed. At whose request? At the request of the liquor interest? Not at all, but in response to the representations of the temperance element. Legislation had been passed of a wise and beneficial character, and the Government had the confidence of the temperance people of this Province. That was the cause of this new-found zeal. The fact that the hon. gentleman had spent a week in trying to elect a brewer to the House of Commons was not a very good evidence of the genuineness of his desire in this direction. (Applause.) If he had espoused the cause of temperance candidates for Parliament, then there would be some evidence of his sincerity. Then the hon. gentleman had charged the Government with plotting the defeat of the Scott Act, but he must have completely forgotten the record. What was done by this Province? In Nova Scotia and New Brunswick the Dominion Government was allowed to enforce this act, while in Ontario the act was taken up and the fullest machinery was provided for the carrying out of its regulations. The old license commissioners were retained, special officers were appointed and a vote of from $10,000 to $20,000 was taken yearly to promote its efficiency. Looking at this question from the standpoint of a temperance man, he believed that no Government had ever done more for the cause of temperance than the Ontario Government. In adopting this temperance legislation, it had almost taken its life in its hands by opposing the power of the liquor traffic. It was in the face of all this they were told they should go the whole length of prohibition, in order that the hon. member might adopt some scheme for attaining power.

The motion was adopted without further discussion.

Mr. Meredith moved for a return of copies of all correspondence with the Attorney-General or his department on the subject of the fusion of the several divisions of the High Court of Justice and of changes in the practice of the said court, and in the provisions for holding sittings for the trial of actions, and otherwise with regard to the distribution of the business of the courts with a view to the more speedy despatch of such business. He said there was now a great waste of judicial power and a congested state of business in Toronto retarding the early disposition of business much to the inconvenience of suitors. He did not agree with the statements of some that the present judicial staff was not sufficient. He thought it was sufficient if the work was properly distributed. There should be a consolidation of the circuits. The profession was unanimous that the time had arrived for a fusion of the several divisions of the High Court of Justice, but there were difficulties in the way. The present salary of the judges was wholly inadequate. He knew of one judge whose house rent alone took one-fourth of his salary, and if it were not for his private means he could not live upon his salary in a style fitting the dignity of a judge. The Legislature sought to insist on a fusion and this would lead to an increase of salary from Ottawa. Then Toronto should have a court sitting all the time to try cases without a jury, just as in Buffalo and other places no larger than Toronto. This was the only way to obviate delay. As it is at present, suitors from the east and from the west ends of the Province have to come all the way to Toronto, losing at least three days. He proposed a centre in the west and another centre in the east where a judge should sit once a month. If the Attorney-General would make these changes he would find that they would meet with the approval of the profession and be in the interests of the suitor.

Mr. Mowat said that ever since he came into office he had endeavored to effect a fusion of the courts. His bill to that effect in 1873 received no support from the bench or from the bar. The reforms inaugurated in 1873 worked well and prepared the way for the fusion accomplished under the judicature more than ten years later. More fusion was needed, and he was in communication with several judges regarding it. As for the consolidation of the circuits, Mr. Meredith was wrong in saying the profession was unanimous in desiring it. He had a communication from a prominent lawyer who was strongly opposed to it. There was no actual correspondence with the judges. His idea was that after collecting the views of the judges he should wait on them personally and no doubt they would be able fo remove many of the anomalies. It was most unreasonable to expect a consolidation to increase the salaries. The Dominion Government would not be influenced by any such consideration. The Dominion Government was favorable to an increase of salaries, but there were difficulties in the way because of the condition of affairs in other Provinces. He would go in heartily for complete fusion and a removal of all anomalies and a prompt despatch of business. He was most anxious to prevent delay. He hoped and expected to be able to get such a revision of the rules by the judges themselves as to remove these difficulties. His object could be accomplished without legislation. He preferred the other course to any changes by means of legislation.

Mr. Whitney regretted that the Attorney-General had not alluded to Mr. Meredith's suggestion regarding the sitting of the Divisional Courts at two points, one east and one west of Toronto. The atmosphere of Toronto seemed to choke off any suggestion of decentralisation. But it would come.

Mr. Meredith said that this matter could be dealt with only by legislation. One of the curses of legal procedure was the number of appeals practicable, rendering litigation ruinously expensive. Some thought a strong Divisional Court and the abolition of the Court of Appeal would remedy this. He thought it was a mistake to give out the idea that the Legislature had handed over the control of the courts to the judges.

Mr. Mowat said that such a suggestion as holding an eastern and western Divisional Court had not been made before, but it might be considered. There was a great deal to be said in its favor. The suggestion regarding the number of appeals was also a good one. The motion was then adopted.

Mr. Meredith moved for copies of all correspondence with reference to the appointment of commissioners to open this House at its present session or otherwise in regard to the opening of the House by some other than his Honor the Lieutenant-Governor. He said that his object was to get at the arguments which the Attorney-General had stated he addressed to the authorities at Ottawa regarding the power of the Lieutenant-Governor to appoint commissioners to open the House. The question was a serious one and involved some cases now before the courts as to how far the power of the Lieutenant-Governor extends. It was anomalous that the Lieutenant-Governor should have the power to appoint a commission for such a purpose. If he had, then it would be within the power of the Lieutenant-Governor practically to create a Governor of the Province, a thing which was never contemplated at Confederation.

Mr. Mowat said that the telegram he sent to Ottawa necessarily contained only some of the reasons, briefly stated, why he thought the Lieutenant-Governor could appoint a commissioner for such purpose. He had prepared a paper setting out his views more fully and would present it to the House.