

like the surplus, and every subsequent effort to get him before the committee had failed. The province had been in the habit of expending large amounts of money upon educational institutions, with the result that provision for the higher educational wants of the people had been made for the next quarter of a century. Before another dollar was spent upon the high school or university systems provision should be made by which the people could derive greater benefit from the public schools. Whatever good might come from the Ontario Agricultural college, it was sprinkled so thinly over the country as to be scarcely perceptible to the naked eye. Some scheme should be devised by the minister of agriculture whereby information upon agricultural subjects could be imparted to the people at various points throughout the province. Mr. Davis had said that the burdens from the people were being removed by the government. Could he mention any particular burden that had been removed. They were imposing new burdens by creating new forms of taxation to meet the increased expenditure. Mr. Whitney concluded by paying a warm tribute to the leader of the opposition, who, he said, had been blazing the pathway through the woods for the government to follow in the way of reforms, for the attorney-general remained fast in the trammels of an ancient Conservatism. When direct taxation came down upon the province with its hand the people would appreciate the efforts that had been made in their behalf.

MR. BALFOUR.

Mr. Balfour, who spoke with his old-time vigor and earnestness, said that the members of the opposition had been in the habit of attacking the government's sources of revenue. What would have been the result if no timber sales had taken place? The Conservative party of the Dominion had inaugurated the N. P., with the professed object of encouraging the industries of the country. If there had been no timber sales one of the greatest industries—the lumber industry—would have languished. It had been said that the stumpage dues were too low, but if the amount were increased this important industry would be seriously hampered. The Dominion government had sold 5,000 square miles of timber in 1884 at \$5 a mile, and had disposed of timber on Hunter's Island for \$7,500, for which a few months later \$650,000 was offered.

The government had been accused of taking money away from the municipalities by means of license fees, but the fact was that, instead of the municipalities being taxed more than they were, the license holders were called upon to pay more for the privileges they held. The legislation initiated by the government on the liquor question had given a great impetus to temperance work and thought. He replied to the accusation that the expenditure had unduly increased, and showed how nearly all the

expenditures had been directly in the interests of the people, and if they had not been incurred the municipalities themselves would have had to tax their people directly. The expenditure for public works was also adding to the capital account of the province, and was larger this year because of the new buildings in which they were assembled. He referred to the many necessary and important branches that had been added to civil government, including the health board, agriculture, etc. In securing a largely increased revenue from the timber reserves, there were also increased expenses for fire and forest ranging. And in the matter of public school expenditure the cost of inspection was only increased owing to the growth of the schools; and in this respect, again, the expenditure was one that would otherwise have to be borne by the municipalities.

With regard to the expenditure for colonization roads he was satisfied that the government would not have been doing its duty either to the province or to the northern districts if they did not make a fair outlay for opening up the new districts and affording facilities to settlers for reaching the markets. When the hon. member for Kent said that the settlers were leaving that portion of the country he had not shown much faith in the census returns nor a regard for the strict facts of the case. He then gave figures to show that in the Algoma district the population had increased 60 per cent. during the past twenty years, and also completely refuting Mr. Clancy's statement that townships had not been opened up for settlement. There had been no less than 55 townships surveyed and opened up by the crown lands department, outside of many others.

Another matter dealt with by the non-member for Kent was the cost of maintenance of the public institutions, particularly the asylums. He had made statements that the officials of the asylums were paid for living in their own houses and were in the receipt of perquisites that had never been sanctioned by the house. What were the facts of the case? Since the last session of the legislature the government had appointed a commissioner to investigate these charges, and he reported that the cost of maintenance for the officials per capita in question was about \$1.84 per week, or only about ten cents per meal. The commissioner had further inquired into the expenses of 66 similar institutions in the United States, and had ascertained that the cost in Ontario was much less than in the United States. The fact of the matter was that under the present system the province was able to secure the services of capable men at a less cost than could be obtained under a straight salary system. Mr. Balfour then gave an array of figures proving that the cost per capita of the inmates of the various asylums was lower, with a higher standard of efficiency, than in the United States. Taking nine representative institutions in the States, the average cost per capita was \$3.31, as compared with \$2.68 in Ontario.

Referring to the liabilities of the province, he said that in the matter of annuities the liabilities had not been increased \$1. They could be paid up tomorrow if necessary. One sale of timber, such as that which recently took place, would pay up all our liabilities under that head.

Mr. Balfour concluded an able and forcible speech at 5.30 by a refutation of Mr. Whitney's statement that information had been withheld in the public accounts committee, and with an explanation of the government's position on the manhood suffrage question.

MR. E. F. CLARKE.

Mr. Clarke, member for Toronto, followed and claimed that the public accounts did not present a satisfactory showing, because it was quite evident that in order to avoid an indebtedness the government had been compelled to draw on the timber resources of the province. In their extremity the government had disposed during the last twelve months of an asset in timber which was increasing in value much more rapidly than the asset into which it had been converted. This expedient had been resorted to in order that the government might keep up its boasted surplus. There was no particular credit due to the government for the recent sale of timber except that they had apparently got the full value of what they had disposed of. The house could not go into ecstasies over the surplus when it remembered the means that had been resorted to to maintain it. The government had no right to convert one set of assets into another that a financial showing favorable to them might be made. The ordinary revenues of the province were not sufficient to meet the ordinary expenditures. The expenditures exceeded the revenues by three-quarters of a million, and the difference was made up by sales of the public domain. It was most unfair for the government supporters to go to the country and talk about the surplus. While this surplus had been spoken of in the country the province had been steadily creating a debt that was steadily increasing in magnitude. These liabilities, while not presently payable, must be paid sooner or later, and the postponement of the evil day was an evidence not of financial strength but of financial weakness, and a disability to meet the obligations when they become due.

We on this side of the house, said Mr. Clarke, are as proud of this province and its magnificent resources as any supporter of the government could be, but they were anxious to see those resources husbanded. Constant inroads on the resources were being made by the government, and he repeated the well-worn charge of the surplus being a myth. They were not attacking the sources of the revenue of the province, but they were not satisfied that the expenditures were as carefully handled as they might be. The government could not shirk its responsibility for the debt it had created. He complained that the expenditure on the parliament buildings had been excessive, as it was originally intended that only three-quarters of a million should be spent on the buildings. Mr. Clarke, however, was magnanimous enough to compliment Hon. Mr. Fraser very highly on his careful supervision of the work of construction. He was sure all the