

Mr. Wood (Brant), explained to the house that the hon. member for York (Mr. Smith) was prevented by illness from attending and continuing the debate on the budget, as was expected. Proceeding, he complimented the opposition for the diligence and thoughtful consideration they had given to the affairs of the province. They were in a position to say to their constituents that the reason why they had not been able to find greater fault and a better policy than one of mere complaint was because the treasurer of the province had managed the finances ably, efficiently and well. He also believed that the fullest scope should be given to the opposition to investigate matters in the public accounts committee, but it was unreasonable that after 21 meetings last session of that committee members should express dissatisfaction that they had not time to inquire into the questions and accounts desired. He reminded the opposition that while they had eight members that committee only half that number had attended the investigations.

The hon. members opposite had on several occasions remarked that the surplus was not talked of any more; that it was concealed somewhere and they could not find it. Well, if they would take the public accounts book for 1892 and turn to page 54 they would find there a surplus amounting to no less a sum than \$4,827,640.

The hon. members also said that liabilities were now admitted that were formerly denied. He was not aware that either the present treasurer or his predecessors had denied the existence of our railway liabilities, nor had any speaker on the government side of the house made such denial. He quoted from the financial statement of Hon. A. M. Ross showing that the liability was then admitted. He also reminded members opposite that one of their own financial critics, the late H. E. Clarke, had in 1888 endorsed the wisdom of requiring posterity to bear some of the expense of permanent improvements of the character of those in question. It was an easy thing to find fault and raise objections, but these objections would come with more force and effect if they were backed up by practical suggestions as to what they themselves would do if they occupied the treasury benches. A constant cry was raised that the municipalities were being robbed. This was one of the most unreasonable and illogical arguments brought against the government. Look, he said, at the record and see in how many ways the government had aided the municipalities, lessening their taxes and lightening their burdens in a great variety of ways. Splendid public buildings had been erected, macadamized roads had been made and iron bridges built. Large grants had been given to maintain the insane and dependent class of the community, colonization roads had been opened up, and education in its various branches had been greatly encouraged and assisted. And yet, in spite of a knowledge of all this, hon. members opposite persisted in saying that the government was robbing the municipalities! Much of this talk was based on the fact that about \$300,000 annually was received from liquor licenses, but no part of this sum was taken from the municipality, and hon. members did not for a moment deny the right and desirability of a license fee being exacted so long as the traffic was permitted. The large expenditure in aid of the unfortunate, the sick and the insane made it necessary that a revenue should be obtained, and he thought it only fair that some part of the liquor license fund should be devoted to such a purpose. The hon. members complained of the large expenditure, but he was sure the people of this wealthy province of Ontario would never consent to a less expenditure for such public works as colonization roads and the proper and humane care of those who were a charge to the community. He defended the expenditure for education and agriculture, and concluded with a eulogistic reference to the care and watchfulness of the premier, Sir Oliver Mowat.

## MR. CAMPBELL OF ALGOMA.

Mr. Campbell (Algoma) said that it was a peculiar method of bookkeeping that had been adopted by the government with the object of making the people believe they had a surplus between five and six million dollars, when as a matter of fact the actual surplus did not exceed \$2,000,000. By this method it could almost be shown that the Dominion government itself had a surplus. He challenged the statement of Mr. Wood that the policy

## THE BUDGET DEBATE ENDED.

Tuesday, April 18.

Just as soon as the opening formalities were disposed of in the house to-day the debate upon the budget was resumed, and it continued with unflagging interest until almost 11 o'clock at night. Good speeches were made, and every conceivable argument in support of the contentions of the speakers on both sides of the questions at issue was advanced in many different ways, and buttressed by as many different forms of illustration. The discussion centred upon the questions as to whether the government really has the surplus that it claims, and whether it has acted wisely in dealing with the timber resources of the province. The opposition, though adopting the negative view, did not deem it judicious or desirable to take the sense of the house upon the general policy of the administration, or any portion of it, and the debate ended tamely enough by the house formally going into committee of supply.

The bills introduced and read a first time were as follows:—

Mr. McMahon—Respecting foremen; to amend the municipal act.

Mr. Stratton—To amend the agricultural and arts act.

Mr. Tait—To amend the consolidated assessment act of 1892; to amend the municipal act.

Mr. McCleary—To amend the municipal act.

Mr. Hardy—To establish the Algonquin National park.