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believed it was the policy of the Government, so far as it was safe, and so far as it was possible to carry it out, and the Province was the proud possessor of millions upon millions of assets in standing timber. Why, then, did we sell a single limit or a single tree? For two reasons:—First, because it was better to sell them than to let them burn down as settlement took place and railways were built; and, second, because they believed the Province had a duty to perform to its unfortunate classes. Homes had to be provided for the blind, the deaf and dumb, the idiotic and the insane. Supported by the sympathies of the benevolent, large-hearted people of the Province, it was the policy of the Government to take its falling timber, its perishable assets, and convert them into such institutions as that now being erected at Brockville for the care and comfort of the insane, rather than to leave these unfortunate people a burden upon the municipalities to which they belonged.

The proposition of the United States Government to admit our lumber free of duty was something at which both sides of the House and all parties in all sections of the country would rejoice.

Mr. Wood briefly referred to the references in the address to the mineral resources of the Province, to the question of drainage, and to the act for the prevention of cruelty to children. He then proceeded as follows:—

Reference was made in the address to the question of temperance. The granting of the plebiscite on the question was an act strictly in harmony with the spirit of the times, and it was everywhere recognized as an eminently proper thing that upon a great question involving so many far-reaching consequences the people should be permitted to go and express an opinion, every elector being free to do so in the most independent and unmistakable way. The vote having been taken, it could not now be doubted that a large majority of the people were in favor of prohibition. They did not vote for an amendment of the license laws; they did not vote for any half-way measure or local option machinery; they voted for the prohibition of the importation, manufacture

and sale of intoxicating liquor as a beverage in Ontario. When was it desired that this law should take effect? Just as soon as the courts shall determine whether or not the Province had power to enact such a law. The friends of temperance here agreed upon the desirability of having the question of jurisdiction fully and finally settled before any legislation took place, and they had the promise of the Premier that if the decision of the Privy Council should be that the Province had power to pass a prohibitory liquor law he would introduce such a bill at the following session, and farther, that should the Province not have power to pass a prohibitory law he would introduce a bill for such a measure of partial prohibition as the decision of the Privy Council would warrant, providing that such a partial measure would be in the interests of temperance and satisfactory to the temperance people. This statement of the Attorney-General was eminently satisfactory to every delegate in the great temperance convention recently convened in Toronto, and satisfactory as well to every friend of temperance in the country. This great question had now reached a stage far in advance of any it ever occupied before, and the people were now anxiously waiting the decision of the courts.

The decision of the Government to collect the facts bearing upon the remunerating and appointing of certain Provincial officers was something that could not fail to meet with the approval of the House. It was admittedly a debatable question—a question upon which an honest difference of opinion might exist, and doubtless did exist. The system now in operation was by no means a new system. The Government of the day could not claim credit for its introduction. The system was older than the Government, although it was the oldest continuous Government in the world. The system had been continued because of the evident fairness of paying each official in proportion to the work done by him; he to be paid not by the municipalities or by a tax on the general public as some seem to suppose, but by those particular individuals for whom the work was actually done. It might be found very difficult, if not impossible, to adopt any fairer or more equitable system, or one that would bear with greater justice upon the great body of the people. While recognizing the fact that a great responsibility rested upon certain officers, for which they should be reasonably remunerated, the House had also recognized the additional fact that the accumulated fees in certain cases amounted to a larger sum than should be retained by these officers,

and a certain percentage of the total income over a given amount was now returnable to the municipalities and the Province. It might be that in certain cases a still larger percentage ought to be so returned. Personally he held that view, and it could be easily accomplished by proceeding farther upon the principle already in operation. Were this done very little fault would be found with the system of appointing these officers, inasmuch as the people were opposed to the multiplication of elections as well as to the forcing of politics into all municipal contests, to which result the appointment of these officers by Municipal Councils would undoubtedly lead; but the whole question would no doubt be dealt with by an efficient commission, and too much light could not be shed upon it. Exercising the power they possessed as one of the confederated Provinces of the Dominion they were bound to proceed, regardless of race, religion or class, meting out justice, and nothing more than justice, to all. The intelligent and fair-minded people of the Province would have no other policy. For 22 years they had supported the present Government in the carrying out of this great, imperishable principle, and another general election would demonstrate the fact that the principle, and its now famous advocate and exponent, the veteran Premier of the Province, were still enshrined in the hearts of the people of Ontario.

Mr. Wood resumed his seat amid hearty applause.

MR. CONMEE SECONDS.

Mr. Conmee then rose to second the address in reply. He was received with a ripple of applause, and then proceeded with his remarks. He characterized the speech that had been read from the throne on the preceding day as being essentially prudent and moderate, like everything else in connection with the Government. If prudence and moderation were the great things to be aimed at by a Government, he had no hesitation in saying that the Government had hit the mark exceedingly well. If it were good policy to husband the patrimony of the people, and to exercise economy in the expenditure of the revenues and resources of the Province, he thought the Government had succeeded remarkably well. It was possible, however, to carry economy too far. As to whether or not the policy of the Government had been fully as progressive as it should have been there might be differences of opinion; but if the Government had erred at all it had been on the side of too rigid economy. The Ontario mineral exhibit at the World's Fair had been a great surprise to many Americans, and to not a few from this Province. No finer exhibit was to be seen at Chicago than that from Ontario, and he thought the hon. gentleman who had had charge of the Ontario exhibit deserved the thanks of the House for what he had achieved. Much good, he was sure, would result from it. Now, the address contained a reference to some contemplated legislation on the mining question. He had not the slightest idea of the nature of the proposed bill. He hoped it would be a measure of the right kind. He would like to have the drafting of it. (Laughter.) If he had, the first clause would provide that all royalties hereafter imposed on minerals mined in the Province should be abolished, and that all minerals mined in Ontario should be free. Then he would provide that \$500,000 should be set aside from the surplus, at 4 per cent., for the improvement of mining lands, similar to the drainage debenture fund. Then, in his next clause he would provide for the appointment of a Minister of Mines. The minerals of Ontario would never attain that degree of importance which they deserved until some such steps as these were taken. Agriculture undoubtedly was the greatest industry in the Province, but with proper encouragement mining would easily become the second greatest industry of Ontario. It would impel the growth of manufactures, and would thus enable us to retain in the Province those of our people who were now leaving us for the other Provinces and for the United States. No interest, save that of agriculture, directly, could be advanced with more benefit to the entire community. There was a vast area of mining lands in Ontario, full of vast mineral wealth. The development and utilization of this wealth was a matter of the first importance to the people at large. The Attorney-General had done very many things in the past in the way of building up and improving the position of the Province. He had well and faithfully guarded the sovereign rights of the Province, and had won a vast inheritance for us. If, now, in addition to all this, he would create the nucleus of a great mining industry it would be the crowning act of his greatness. Sir Oliver Mowat's task