

could not be regarded as finished until he had done this. By doing it he would add another bright page to his already brilliant record, of which his followers were so justly proud. (Applause.) The complaint made by the Opposition was that the Government was extravagant. They had sold too much timber, had spent Sandfield Macdonald's surplus and had not now as big a one as they claimed. He thought, on the other hand, that the Government could afford to spend more money still. It was easy for the Opposition to find fault. It was not so easy to name particular faults, and to name at the same time the remedy. Ontario was a wide field. In it there was a great diversity of interests and opinions. The Government had to take everything into account in its treatment of the Province. If the Government was deserving of condemnation it was not because they had been extravagant, but far the reverse; not because they had spent so much of their surplus, but because they had spent so little of it. The record of the Government seemed to him to be almost clear of ground for reasonable attack from its opponents. Certainly they had made no attempt to formulate a better policy or to provide remedies for the evils they claimed to exist. Touching on the prohibition question, Mr. Conmee referred to the great differences of opinion existing

on the subject. On this particular point he thought the Patrons of Industry showed some inconsistency in advocating on the one hand temperance and on the other hand the election of county officials. The letters from The Globe correspondents who travelled through Kansas and Iowa investigating the question of prohibition had, he said, shown that the prohibition law was not well carried out there, but that it was in fact in some cases nothing but a farce. He would be exceedingly sorry to see here the same state of affairs as existed there under a prohibitory law. The evil of the state of things existing in these States he considered to be mainly due to the fact that the officials appointed to carry out the law of the State were elected by the communities in which they resided, and were often in absolute opposition to the laws of the State. The result could not fail to be disastrous so far as the enforcement of the law was concerned. He thought, therefore, he had ample grounds for suggesting to the Patrons that these two points in their programme were entirely inconsistent with each other. Mr. Conmee, continuing, said he would like for a moment to refer to the hon. member for Muskoka, who he was sorry to say was not in his place. Mr. Marter had during the recess made some very wild statements. Perhaps the worst was that in which he represented the surplus claimed by the Government to be a myth. He trusted the hon. gentleman would not fail to bring up his charges in the House. If they were true, he was half inclined to think that his friend the Provincial Auditor would have to be sent to join these other martyrs who were convicted of conspiracy at Ottawa. If he failed to substantiate his charges, then Mr. Marter's reputation for veracity would certainly suffer most severely. Mr. Conmee concluded his able speech by touching on the impending general election, and predicting that the veteran statesman who had so often led his followers to victory in the past would shortly do so again. He then resumed his seat amid cheers.

MR. MEREDITH'S SPEECH.

Mr. Meredith was greeted with applause on rising. His first words were to express his surprise that he had not heard the gentlemen moving and seconding the reply in their remarks make some reference to the contents of the speech from the throne. There was the declaration in that speech that the Government proposed to deal with the question of representation, a matter of the utmost importance to the people of Ontario, and yet not one word had he heard either of these gentlemen say upon this topic. There had not been a word about the promised establishment of courts of conciliation. (Laughter.) They had both dealt in generalities, endeavoring to square their interests with those of the sections throughout the country which became noisy, and had said nothing further to enlighten the hon. members upon the measures which were to be introduced. That was a feature of their speeches which the people of the country would do well to mark. By ordinary custom the mover and seconder of the address were supposed to voice the sentiments of the day, and as being somewhat in the confidence of the Government to enlighten the House as to the lines upon which the measures promised were to be carried out. He congratulated the hon. member for West Algoma on the success with which he had shown the two sides of the shield with regard to the temperance question.

The mover of the reply had risen and declared that the Government was pledged to prohibition, and then the seconder had got up and had placed before the House evidence calculated to show that prohibition was a farce, that it was impracticable. (Applause.) He had lifted the veil of secrecy and had exposed the tactics of the party opposite. (Applause.) Those gentlemen hoped, as of old, to yoke together the honest temperance people, whose support they would get, and the licensed victuallers whose money they would get. The seconder of the reply had exposed the hypocrisy of the hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House. The hon. gentlemen, however, had discussed one or two matters of general interest. He coincided with what the mover had said regarding the Canadian successes at the World's Columbian Exposition. He united with him in deploring the widespread agricultural depression. It was necessary, however, to judge by comparison with the condition of the farmers of other countries, and judged by that standard they might well be proud of the position of the farmers of Ontario. But it was not by the efforts of this or of any other Government that these triumphs, this fortunate state of things, had been effected; it was due to the intelligence, to the industry, to the skill of the farmers of Ontario themselves. It was not owing to the sums which the Government had doled out to the Agricultural College, and to this and to that, but to the efforts of the farmers themselves that all was due. And why should credit be taken because of the expenditure of these sums? These were the moneys of the farmers themselves, they came from their taxes, they were raised from their heritage. Again he asserted, it was not this Government or any Government that must be thanked for the fact that Ontario is in so happy a condition, but it is the intelligence and skill of the farmers.

He hoped, Mr. Meredith went on, to hear from the Attorney-General some information as to the nature of the measure to be brought in regarding the representation of the country in the Legislature; but the Government had had two serious blows dealt it lately; there had sprung up in the country a spirit of unrest, and several new organizations had made their appearance, and the Government was too anxious to appease each, all and every interest which was making itself felt. It was nearing a general election, and was in much the same position as indicated in the old rhyme, "When the devil was sick the devil a saint would be." They were as conciliatory as possible; but if the people of Ontario were foolish enough to trust them once more and to return them to power it would again be a case of "When the devil was well the devil a saint was he." The hon. gentlemen had talked somewhat upon what had been done by the Government in regard to the timber and mineral wealth of the Province, and he would say something upon those topics.

THE TIMBER ASSETS OF THE PROVINCE.

The Attorney-General, Mr. Meredith went on, had said that the timber resources of the country were some \$50,000,000 or \$60,000,000 in value, and on the strength of that asserted that there was nothing in the contention raised by the Opposition that the Government should be economical and careful. On what did he base his statement as to the resources of Ontario? On statements which were no proof; and he made these assertions and estimates in the face of the fact that he had declined when asked to do so by the Opposition to give to a commission the task of forming a careful estimate of the natural wealth of the Province. Could this valuation of his then be relied upon as correct? He would say that the point upon which he and his friends would make their campaign was the maladministration by the Government of its timber resources. To show how the Government had conducted this portion of the Provincial business he would read an extract from the budget speech of 1869. The immediately preceding part of the speech had been devoted to a discussion of what the Province had to rely upon, and the doctrine had been laid down that the Crown lands, the Common School and Grammar School lands, and other public assets should be treated as capital, and the income from them utilized for purposes of government. The then Treasurer had pointed out that in the Crown timber the Province had an immense asset, available not only for present but for future generations, whereas the Crown lands had almost all passed away. The value of the Crown timber was then increasing, and timber could always be converted into cash. The then Treasurer had referred to the destruction of the Michigan forests, and had then estimated the yearly revenue from the Crown timber as \$300,000. He had then, after an interruption, gone on to say—