

Hon. Mr. Harcourt—Would my hon. friend please read the interruption? He will find that it was to the effect that that revenue would be much larger.

Mr. Meredith—Yes; the interruption, by Mr. Richards, was to the effect that a larger revenue might be expected. But

that was interest; the then Treasurer went on to state that he thought that the timber should be kept as a permanent source of revenue; that the Provincial resources should be husbanded. To show how completely the present Government has reversed that policy, Mr. Meredith continued, he needed only to point out how they had persisted, against the protests of the Opposition, in keeping to themselves the power of placing on the market timber limits worth millions of dollars without consulting the representatives of the people. That course, disposing as it did of the people's property without consulting their representatives in contravention of the principles of democratic government, was an infringement upon the rights and duties of members of the House. Timber to the value of two, three, four or five millions of dollars could be sold off without consulting the people in the persons of their representatives, but on the authority of the Ministers, and all that could be done was to protest. The hon. gentlemen opposite had taunted him and his friends with their want of success; but the people were waking up, were shaking off the shackles of party, arguments were no longer falling upon deaf ears, and the indications were that they would pronounce against wasting the glorious patrimony of the country. The hon. gentlemen might talk of what they had doled out for agriculture here and there; but in 22 years they had taken within a fraction of \$15,000,000 worth of the country's assets and converted them into cash. They asserted that the one asset was as good as the other; they pointed to the asylums, the institutes, to the other buildings which they had erected; but was there no difference between these assets? The timber limits sold twenty years ago were now worth twenty times the amounts they brought then. These buildings were really the representatives of a tax to that amount on the country. How much better it would have been if instead of sacrificing the timber they had borrowed the money and so erected these buildings. There was no point upon which the Government was so worthy of condemnation as upon its management of the timber resources of the Province.

OTHER CAPITAL RESOURCES.

There were other capital resources. The Government had in the past score of years received \$1,800,000 from the Crown lands, \$704,000 from the clergy lands, \$810,000 from the Common School lands; \$135,000 from the Grammar School lands, making in round numbers \$3,500,000 more of the capital resources of the country which the Government had expended. Mr. Meredith quoted again from the budget speech of 1869 to show that then these resources were regarded as a permanent source of revenue, the interest accruing from them to be alone used for revenue purposes. An expenditure of the Crown Lands Department which he would cite as a specimen case of utterly unjustifiable expenditure was the sum of \$844,746, which had been spent since 1872 on the surveying of new townships. Thus about \$40,000 a year had been spent on the favorites of the hon. gentlemen in order to survey numerous townships in the desert, on the majority of which not a settler had up to the present planted his foot. Such an expenditure could not be justified; yet efforts to induce the Government to reduce it had proved unsuccessful. He agreed with the hon. member for West Algoma, Mr. Meredith went on, that the Government could not be too liberal in dealing with the mineral resources of the country; the Government had neglected its duty with regard to the developing of the interests of the country. When the present Government had acquired that western territory, according to the statements they had heard made, strong men had wept and women had hugged their children to their breasts. But under the course of neglect to which that region had been subjected, the strong men would now be more apt to curse the day on which they were added to Ontario, and the women would be more apt to throw snowballs at the hon. gentlemen. The mining interests had been utterly neglected, although to ensure due progress in the country not only should the farming interests be prosperous, but so, too, should be the mining and other interests. By the last report of the Bureau of Mines, it was shown that in 1892 the amount of capital invested in mining was \$5,374,139, and of this \$2,591,344 went in wages. Thus, besides developing the resources of the country, this expenditure benefited the laborer, the merchant and all other branches of the community. And

yet, when this sum expended was scrutinized, it was surprising to find, notwithstanding the enormous iron wealth of the Province, that the bulk of this expenditure went in manufactures of stone, of lime and of similar materials, while not a dollar in 1892 went upon the Province's iron mines. That was a very serious state of things indeed. Were the Government powerless to do anything? They had heard that at the close of last session they were almost prepared to come down and grant a measure of assistance, but the pressure from some quarters was too great and the scheme had been abandoned. The line of argument of the supporters of the Government among the press as to the question of granting bonuses showed that they were afraid that such a measure would weaken their party's position upon protection in Dominion politics, and the argument had been that industries should not be spoon-fed, that they should stand on their own bottom. It was not a correct parallel that the organs had made. They might well, without going back on their free trade principles, have reflected that the Government were part proprietors of the undeveloped mineral wealth of Ontario, that as part owners they had an interest in showing to the world the advantages which Ontario possessed and that they might profitably make an investment therein. That, he thought, was a reasonable way of looking at the matter. As had been pointed out, it was not enough to draw the raw material from the bowels of the earth and send it away to other countries, it was necessary to show that all stages of the process could be performed in the country in which the minerals were found. But the Government had sat with folded hands leaving these great interests to take care of themselves. They had done nothing. He thought the people of Ontario would say that it was in the interests of the whole country that steps should be taken to develop its mineral wealth. He himself would never have consented to a royalty being imposed had it not been on the understanding that the Government would have dealt liberally with the new industry.

Touching on the question of prohibition, Mr. Meredith said he was not going to charge Sir Oliver Mowat with any attempt to deceive or mislead the people in regard to the promise he had made them to put into operation such a measure of prohibition as he should be shown to have power to do if he were then in power, but what he did say was this, that if the Government had any such intention then, meantime, the monstrous iniquity of the license system as at present administered should not be allowed to exist any longer. (Opposition applause.) There was no knowing how long the decision of the courts as to the power of the Province would be delayed. It was just as imperative that the license system should be put on a proper basis as if there was no question of prohibition whatever involved. Mr. Meredith then briefly referred to the "secret ballot." The Government, he said, claimed to be entitled to the confidence of the country. If so, he asked them to go before the people in a frank and honest manner and let the people vote according to a system which would not give them cause to fear that their vote "was not cast in secret."

PROVINCIAL FINANCES.

Now a few words as to where the Province stood in the matter of expenditure. Notwithstanding the very large sums received from the sales of timber from Crown lands and from other land funds which came into the hands of the Government, it was a fact that the income of the Province for ordinary purposes was not equal to its expenditure. Was it not natural, under these circumstances, that the people should anxiously look around them and see where relief was to come from. Moreover, if prohibition comes into force in the Province \$300,000 a year more, now derived from licenses, will be taken from the revenue. He would suggest that for one thing the Legislature should meet in alternate years. Thirteen years ago there were some discussions in the House on this subject, and statements were made then on the Ministerial side to the effect that legislation was so far advanced that it would not be necessary that the House should meet except in alternate years. Aside from the direct expense involved, the bringing of legislators together every year tended to promote unnecessary legislation. Legislation, much of which was of a crude character, was passed through the House one session, only to be amended or revoked next session. Ninety gentlemen assembled together for purposes of legislation had to do something. He thought there was a good deal of truth in the statement that there is too much tinkering with the statute book. He really