

Province's credit, and the annuities and railway certificates, amounting to \$2,249,759 20, against it, or a deficit of \$749,160. Mr. Marter then contended that the Blake Government was not by any means bound to start into the expenditure on railways which the Government represented as entailed on them by the Sandfield Macdonald Government. Comparing the expenditure on public buildings, the Sandfield Macdonald Government in two years spent \$943,697, or an average of \$235,924, while the Reform Government has spent in public buildings \$5,634,507, or an average of \$281,728, not much greater than the average of the Sandfield Macdonald Government. As for the claim that there were no extras in the building of the Parliament buildings, the cost at first was to be \$500,000, then it rose to \$750,000, then to \$1,050,000, then to \$1,250,000, and now is \$1,300,000, with expenses for furniture, etc., that will bring the expense up to over \$1,400,000. Mr. Marter then took up the question of extravagance, and cited various increases. In civil government the increases have been from \$114,000 to \$241,621, or 150 per cent. In sessional clerks and pages the rise has been from \$2,870 to \$11,430. Mr. Hardy thought the bridge-building items small, but he could assure the House that many men had been bought over to the Government by these expenditures, and that the people of the back townships were sick of the extravagance of the administration of the fund. He held that timber berths had been forced on the market, as shown by the fact that some had not been cut for ten years. There could be saving in many ways, in reducing the number of Ministers and their retinues, in reducing the salaries of officials, in abolishing perquisites, in cutting down Crown land agents who got \$500 a year for locating two or three persons in the year, in reforming the business management of the Central Prison and in the Department of Education, in favoring Public Schools as opposed to High Schools and Collegiate Institutes. He thought he had proved his points, that there was no surplus, that the Government had been extravagant, and that great savings could be effected.

MR. CONMEE.

At 9.15 o'clock Mr. Conmee rose. He twitted Mr. Marter with not having made any attempt to substantiate certain of his statements made during recess. He also noted that the hon. gentleman had failed to grapple with any of the financial problems that presented themselves for consideration in a budget debate. Now this was the occasion when he should have made good some of his charges. Notably he should have made good his charges in a speech in Peel, where, according to The Empire's report, he had charged that if the balance sheet of a business concern was drawn on the same principle as that of Ontario was drawn by the Provincial Treasurer, the man who drew the balance sheet would be held criminally liable. Now the hon. gentleman had not made any attempt to substantiate this very serious charge that last year's financial statement was fraudulent. He should have made the statement to-night if it was true.

Mr. Marter—So it is.

Mr. Conmee—Then why did the hon. gentleman not say so? He had not challenged a single item in the statement.

Mr. Marter, amid cries of "Order," said he had challenged the whole \$7,000,000 claimed as assets.

Mr. Conmee said that was merely a dispute between Mr. Marter and the Treasurer, and this was not the way Mr. Marter put it in Peel. Mr. Conmee proceeded to read extracts from Mr. Marter's speech on the occasion in question. He said it contained no fewer than twelve absolutely false and groundless statements, which he defied the hon. member to substantiate. He could have a committee of the House, witnesses or anything else he pleased, but he defied him to prove these assertions. Mr. Marter rose in reply to Mr. Conmee's pointed challenge, and for a few moments there was some very heavy cross-firing between the two hon. members, amid cries of order from various other members. Mr. Conmee's voice was heard above the rest challenging Mr. Marter to say whether or not certain of his statements in Peel were correct, and Mr. Marter at last, amid some laughter, asked the Speaker to direct Mr. Conmee not to address his remarks so pointedly to himself (Mr. Marter). Mr. Conmee, proceeding, enumerated the twelve statements which he alleged to be false, and then said in very emphatic terms that Mr. Marter had to substantiate these statements or to be recognized as a falsifier. There was no midway. He must do the one thing or submit to the other. He had made his position for himself. Mr. Conmee admitted that his words were strong, but not so strong, he urged, as the charge of criminal liability proffered by Mr. Marter against the Treasurer. He did not want to hurt Mr. Marter's feelings—(laughter)—but he wanted to use such language that there could be no doubt about the position held by the hon. member.

Mr. A. F. Wood protested to the Speaker that Mr. Conmee's language was out of order, and Mr. Speaker concurring in this view, Mr. Conmee said he was sorry if he had exceeded Parliamentary limits, but he wanted to be very plain and emphatic.

Mr. Conmee then proceeded very ably to defend the general financial course and position of the Government, and to confute various statements and arguments of other members of the Opposition.

CLOSING SPEECHES.

Mr. A. F. Campbell was the next speaker, and for an hour or more he attacked

the Government and their policy. He ridiculed the surplus as a myth, and insisted that a proper system of bookkeeping and of setting of legitimate liabilities against legitimate assets would show the Government to be deeply in debt. It was argued by some, he said, that the people of Ontario must have confidence in the Administration of Sir Oliver Mowat, and must believe the affairs of the Province to be economically and judiciously administered, or they would not retain them in power; but, urged Mr. Campbell, the people had not confidence in the Government, and it would not be in power now but for the unfair manner in which they had gerrymandered the Opposition out of the proportion of seats to which their numbers in the Province entitled them. (Opposition applause.) Mr. Campbell then touched on Mr. Hardy's speech, and charged that there had been no money spent on colonization roads in St. Joseph's Island, in his own riding, for the two years after his election, but grants were being made now that an election was pending. The timber policy of the Government has been oppressive and cruel to the settlers, and has retarded their progress. There are good markets for farmers among the miners, and yet the Government's greediness in getting every dollar without adequate return has defeated its own ends, and has resulted in the present lack of progress. Mr. Campbell also charged that the license system is used as a huge political machine, used for its own ends. Years ago the municipalities had the licenses as their own, but the Government, with its surplus decreasing, had to stretch out on all sides to get money, and took control of the licenses. Mr. Campbell contended that the returns from the Agricultural College have not been commensurate with the immense expenditures upon it, some of which were reckless. As for the tuberculosis question, Mr. Campbell read a letter from Prof. Wm. Saunders of the Ottawa farm showing that the charge of carelessness against the Dominion institution was unfounded. He referred to the annuity debt, and concluded by declaring his firm belief in the result in the coming election of the spirit of unrest in the country. The handwriting was on the wall, and the Government had been weighed and found wanting.

Mr. Gibson (Huron) spoke briefly. He referred to the Sandfield Macdonald surplus, holding that Mr. Macdonald had put a million and a half of that surplus in such a position that it could not be spent for anything else but railway assistance, while large portions of the alleged surplus then had claims upon it which would prevent its being considered proper portions of the surplus. Of the whole \$3,800,000, the sum of \$2,300,000 could scarcely be considered as legitimate surplus, and the rest was really devoted to railway extension. Mr. Gibson then referred to the part the Opposition had played in criticizing expenditures, and held that their course in assenting to the great majority of the items of expenditure incurred made them equally liable with the Government to the country. As for the administration of the sums appropriated, Mr. Gibson stated that the expenditure per head per year in the asylums under Mr. Sandfield Macdonald was \$134, under the Mowat Government it was \$125, only \$1 difference. In other items the same continuance of the economy of the Sandfield Macdonald regime could be seen. He denied that the license system was used politically as far as his own county was concerned, and he knew of Conservative hotelkeepers who told him that they would prefer the present system to that favored by Mr. Meredith.

Mr. Cleland moved the adjournment of the debate, and the House adjourned at 11.50 p.m.