

as he had ever heard, said Mr. Hardy, the hon. members referred to had never sought to change the system under which they themselves are paid.

He was waiting to hear the hon. member for Toronto say that he intended petitioning the Ottawa Government to change its system in this respect. It would, no doubt, suit the Sheriffs, Registrars, County Attorneys and similarly paid officials to receive their pay by salaries, instead of being under the necessity, as at present, of collecting their fees from those who transact business with them. The hon. member for North Hastings made a bold statement when he alleged "that the net receipts from the eight registration divisions of Toronto (counting it as two), York, Lambton, Simcoe, Middlesex (East and Westing ridings), Huron and Oxford were \$5,842."

Sir, the figures cannot be found, continued the speaker; they do not exist, and never did exist; they are figments of the hon. gentleman's imagination. Either he has been misreported in the speech, which he himself revised, or else the figures obtained in the original reports have not been brought before him. Taking 1891, if that was the year meant by the hon. member for North Hastings, the average of the eight registry divisions mentioned by him was \$2,811. Where, therefore, it was possible for him to get an average of \$5,842 the speaker was at a loss to know. If he had said 1893 he would have found the average even less—\$2,610. Therefore in neither of the years mentioned—1891 nor 1893—was it possible for the hon. member to have found an average of \$5,842, as represented by him.

The hon. member for North Hastings had spoken of eight County Attorneys who received over \$3,000 a year each. He (the Commissioner) could not find these figures. In 1891 there was only one County Attorney whose income exceeded \$3,000. That was the County Attorney for York. The Attorney for Wentworth came next with \$2,990. In 1892 the County Attorneys for York and Middlesex were the only ones who received more than \$3,000. He could not imagine where the hon. gentleman had obtained his figures, and his speech on the matter had thrown no light on them. But of all the startling information on the subject the most wonderful was the calculation made by the hon. member for North Hastings as to the savings to be effected by the adoption of the system now advocated. He could not describe it otherwise than as a perfect caricature of figures. He could not imagine what could have prompted the hon. member to put forward such an extravagant and unfounded array of figures. Mr. Hardy then quoted from The Empire's verbatim report of Mr. Wood's speech the paragraph in which that gentleman had estimated the savings to be effected by the abolition of the fee system at \$315,000, to be made up as follows:—\$115,000 taken from the present receipts of Registrars, \$110,000 from the present receipts of Sheriffs and County Attorneys, and \$90,000 from present receipts of other officers paid by fees, making a grand total of \$315,000. The hon. gentleman's figures were received with loud applause. No wonder. But what was found on investigating these figures? Why, that the salaries of all the officials paid by fees amounted to \$344,000 in all, or only \$29,000 more than Mr. Wood proposed to save by substituting salaries for fees. The salaries of all the Registrars and County Attorneys and Sheriffs and local masters and Surrogate clerks and other officers now paid by fees were to be paid out of this small balance of \$29,000. It was a magnificent exploit in finance, the most magnificent probably that had been seen since the days of Moses. (Laughter.) Now, to examine the figures closely for a moment. The figures of the Registrars for 1893 were \$111,000, rather less than for the year before, when they reached \$117,000. Now, Mr. Wood proposed out of this total of \$111,000 to make a saving of \$115,000—(laughter)—and out of the balance, a balance on the wrong side, he proposed to pay the salaries of the 43 Registrars of the Province. (Laughter.) Then as to Sheriffs. In '93 the Sheriffs in Ontario received \$71,000 in all in salaries; and the County Crown Attorneys in '92—he had not the figures for '93—received \$63,466, a total of \$134,466. This sum represented the salaries of 85 officers, 41 Sheriffs and 44 County Attorneys. Out of this sum the hon. gentleman proposed to save \$110,000. This would leave a surplus for the salaries of these 85 officers of \$24,000, an average of \$282 a year for every Sheriff and County Attorney. The total incomes of the other officials, local Masters, Surrogate Court Clerks and others paid by fees amounted to \$98,000, and out of this sum the hon. member proposed to save \$90,000, leaving the sum of \$8,000 to be divided among the 63 officers who came under this class.

Mr. Hardy asked the House if he was right in describing this as a caricature of figures. He insisted the term was not too strong a one to be used. They were

stated, the total incomes of 43 Registrars for '93 was \$111,000, of 85 Sheriffs and County Attorneys (taking the Attorneys for '92) \$135,000, and other officials \$98,000, a total of \$344,000. Not including Toronto, where circumstances were of an altogether exceptional character, where currents of business centred, and other circumstances contributed to make it occupy an altogether exceptional position—not including Toronto, the average of the Registrars of Ontario was \$1,443. The average of the 42 County Attorneys was \$1,337, and the average of 63 legal officers was \$1,636. These averages, continued Mr. Hardy, were not high. They scarcely reached the salaries of postmasters in villages and small towns. They are nothing like they are popularly supposed to be, or what they appear to be from the statement of hon. gentlemen opposite, that they range from \$1,000 to \$5,000. The hon. member for North Hastings had argued for uniformity in payment. Would that be right? It was proper to pay on a uniform principle, but surely in no business or profession did such a rule prevail as uniformity in payment of salaries of officers doing work of which the value differed greatly in different localities. There is no such thing as uniformity of reward in business or professional life. One professional man may earn \$5,000 or \$10,000, another \$1,500 or \$2,000; one man in trade or speculation is making \$15,000 or \$20,000, another \$500; one bank manager is making \$10,000, \$15,000 or \$20,000, another \$800 or \$1,000. In all ordinary walks of life business intelligence and ability will assert itself, and a man who has acquired prominence in the community will stand higher and receive a higher remuneration than his neighbor. Such had been the state of affairs for all time, and it was an absurdity to maintain otherwise. Mr. Balfour had pointed out the absurdity of the outrage of taking fees from counties which do a large amount of business and carting them away to help pay the expenses of another county. Some illustrations might be given of this. Algoma in one year registered 664 instruments, Bruce 3,367 instruments. Should Bruce help to pay Algoma's salary to its Registrar? Glengarry registered 784 instruments, Elgin 2,969, Dundas 947, Huron 3,578, Lanark 642, Hastings 2,386, Haliburton 250, Toronto 5,310. When worked out it would be seen to be an outrageous act of injustice. There was, the papers say, one custom house office where \$1 worth of income was realized in one year and where the expenses were \$1,200. There are places where an office must be kept for public service, and where the choice must be made between the salary and the fee systems, and except under unusual circumstances the fee system is correct. It is used in England, in the United States and in Canada, and comes down to us from antiquity. The Opposition had not given one instance of real enormity in the present administration of the system. If the fees were too large they could be cut down, and the Minister of Education had a bill in hand whereby a further reduction would be made. (Hear, hear from the Opposition.) It was not the first time the Government had announced this, Mr. Hardy rejoined. The effect of these reductions was to return a large portion of the fees to the municipality or the Province as the case might be. If the salary system were adopted, great additional expense would be entailed on the Government. The officials would have to be paid, and the men under them; persons would have to be provided to take care of the fees, to collect them, and to see that the full measure of them were got.

a gross imposture. It was absolutely disgraceful that they should be seriously laid before the House, and that they should be heralded through the newspapers and platforms of the country as an accurate presentment of the case. It was infinitely disgraceful to this House that such figures should be laid before it. (Loud Ministerial applause.) It was more disgraceful in the hon. member for North Hastings, and more than disgraceful to those who shared with that hon. member the responsibility of bringing such figures before the House. (Renewed applause.) If the hon. member were here, said the Commissioner, he would indulge in some strong language on his action. Continuing, he said it was interesting to see how easily and quickly the hon. member for North Hastings and other members of the Opposition could profess an increase of virtue, as they had done on the present occasion. Why, it was only the other day that Mr. Whitney had actually declared his conviction that the Attorney-General was lowering the whole moral tone of the country! (Laughter.) He could not understand why hon. gentlemen professing such virtue should have put up as the mover of the motion an hon. member who had during the last few years received many thousands of dollars in fees from the Dominion Government—(applause)—and who was even now in receipt of fees. They must think the people are easily hoodwinked and humbugged. As he had