

very complete explanation of the expenditure in that connection and set forth triumphs won there.

Mr. White and Mr. Clancy said Mr. Dryden had claimed undue credit for his own share in these triumphs.

Hon. Mr. Ross said it was natural for the Government to take credit for the success won mainly through its efforts.

After considerable discussion Mr. Meredith said it was interesting to find the Minister of Agriculture speaking of the triumphs and success of Ontario farmers at the Columbian Exposition whilst he never lost a chance of dwelling on the alleged depression in the country when it could reflect on the Dominion Government.

The Attorney-General said the two things were quite different. The exposition had demonstrated the abilities of the country, which were quite apart from the depression which undoubtedly existed amongst the agricultural classes, owing certainly in a large measure to the policy of the Ottawa Government.

#### EVENING SESSION.

The committee reported progress at 6 o'clock, before the item was through. After recess Hon. Mr. Harcourt moved the first reading of a bill respecting elections in outer districts. Mr. Meredith asked if the bill would have the effect of shortening the time between the day of nomination and polling day. Mr. Harcourt replied in the affirmative. Mr. Meredith thought there was serious objection to this, especially in the Algomias and Nipissing. Mr. Harcourt said means of communication had greatly improved in the outlying districts, including those named, during the last few years. Nothing but advantage, he thought, would result from the change.

Mr. White called attention to a circular which had been sent through the post from the House, franked by an hon. member. It had been sent into the western constituencies apparently, and consisted, he said, of an outrageous attack on Mr. Meredith in connection with the recent debate on the Separate School bill. He considered that an investigation should be made.

Mr. Loughrin said he understood the circular in question had been sent out under what purported to be his frank. He had already to Mr. White privately denied having had anything whatever to do with it. He now wished to do so on the floor of the House. He absolutely repudiated having had anything to do with it.

Mr. Meredith said his side of the House could not but accept Mr. Loughrin's statement. He, however, thought if the franks of members were to be forged in this way it might be better to have the franking privilege done away with.

The House then went again into Committee of Supply on the supplementary estimates. Mr. Hardy explained at some length and very carefully the item of \$15,000 for "purchasing two diamond drills for mining exploration, with equipments and extra boring tools, expenses of working and transporting the same, cost of assaying outfit and assayers' service, and incidental expenses." He referred to what was done in this respect in other mining countries, and expressed his conviction that good would result from the expenditure. One of the drills would be kept in the west, with headquarters probably at Rat Portage; the other in the east, with headquarters probably at Toronto.

Mr. Meredith said he did not object to any expenditure which would really have the effect of developing the mining resources of the Province. He had some doubts, however, on this head.

Mr. Conmee vigorously defended the item.

Mr. Meredith asked, in connection with an item for a grant to the Kingston Mining School, when the Normal School spoken of for the western part of the Province would be established.

Hon. Mr. Ross said the Government had not yet seen its way to establishing a western Normal School. It was, no doubt, one of those things that were coming, and if he had the opportunity of introducing it he would be glad to have Mr. Meredith's support. At present the attendance at the Normal Schools at Toronto and Ottawa was not sufficient to allow of the establishment of another Normal School.

Mr. Meredith said many western students had been compelled to go to Ottawa to attend the Normal School, passing by Toronto.

Mr. Ross said this would only be the case when the teachers wished it.

Mr. Dryden explained the item, \$7,500 for a western dairy school. He said it was not yet certain it would be established, but if it were established it would be located at Strathroy, on the ground that such an institution was better situated in a small town or city than in a larger city, such as London, for instance.

Mr. Clancy said such a school would not be well situated in Strathroy.

Mr. Meredith said the people of Strathroy had no confidence in Mr. Ross; that was a leading reason why the school was going there, if established, though the Minister of Agriculture would not say certainly it was going to be established at all. It was simply dangled before the

eyes of the electorate of a Minister, just as in the case of Kingston, where several grants went to make the seat sure for a prospective Minister.

Mr. Ross said certainly things looked bad for him in West Middlesex. They had been looking bad since his first election there two-and-twenty years ago. They looked particularly bad for him when Mr. Meredith and his phalanx came down from London into his constituency to try and capture it for one of his allies. They looked very bad for him in 1883, when the constituency was swarming with Tory heeled who came to capture it. Yet he had had the support of the electorate of West Middlesex for 22 years and was confident of it for 22 years more. He was not afraid of what hon. gentlemen opposite could do. But, said Mr. Ross, members of the Opposition were like Shakespeare's murderer, they saw a robber in every bush. They were so saturated with suspicion that they could not look at any act on the part of the Government from a fair and impartial point of view. Mr. Ross twitted the Opposition with having always opposed agricultural interests, notably by opposing the appointment of a Minister of Agriculture. Now they were opposing the establishment of a western dairy school. He would not neglect to tell these things to the people of his constituency. It was possible that there might be some voter in Strathroy who had voted for him before and was not going to do so now. The same situation existed in London. He warned the hon. member for London that he would be firmly seated in his saddle after election day, while there was grave danger that the member for London would be unhorsed and his saddle empty.

Mr. Meredith said it was true Mr. Ross had been elected for 22 years for West Middlesex, but it was by improper practices that this had been achieved. He twitted the Minister of Education with being the subject of a law suit, under the load of which he could not feel as easy as he professed to be. He referred to the criticisms made upon him during the session. He said Mr. Dryden had been spared in connection with the sale of cattle at the farm which he so badly mismanaged. Farmers were waking up all over the Province. That was the meaning of the Patrons' agitation. It was from Reformers themselves that the severest criticisms of the Government were coming.

Mr. Ross rose again. He denied that he had any law suit pending against him. He had been asked recently in London who would receive a writ on his behalf and had named an attorney; but no writ had been served. If Mr. Meredith were at the back of that writ let him push it. If Mr. Meredith were concerned in it he challenged him to prosecute it to the bitter end. He was not afraid to have his election practices gone into. He had been through the courts twice and had once been unseated. Mr. Meredith had been present on one occasion, if not both. He was present when after a most bitter and malicious attempt to prove corrupt practices on the part of himself or his agents the whole thing had collapsed to their great dismay. If Mr. Meredith's elections had been as clean as his (Mr. Ross's) he must feel very easy. But members on his side of the House knew something of election practices in the City of London. They knew how the voters' lists were prepared there. They knew whose aid was invoked to aid the party candidate. It did not lie in Mr. Meredith's mouth to reproach him with anything touching his elections. As to the result of the impending elections, he advised Mr. Meredith not to prophesy unless he knew. He reminded him of the telegram he had sent broadcast over the country the day before the last general election prophesying victory on the following day if only the party were united in its efforts. How dismally that prophecy had resulted. He did not doubt the present prophecy would result as dismally. He (Mr. Meredith) said the farmers of the country were disturbed at the policy of the Government. He denied this. The farmers were disturbed because of the policy of protection pursued by the Ottawa Government, which had prevented the progress of the country and caused a wide and general feeling of unrest. Mr. Ross then dealt in a humorous vein with the various members of the Opposition in whose constituencies were running members of the Order of Patrons, with whom, he said, they professed to be so much in love. Patrons were after the members for Dundas and East Northumberland. They were upon them like the shadow of death. There was a Patron haunting the member for Kent like a sleuth-hound. The member for North Essex suffered so much in anticipation from a conflict with one of his friends, the Patrons, that he had decided to retire. His amiable friend from Carleton was pursued in the same manner, and there were others who were being similarly treated by their friends, the Patrons. He was overcome by his