

themselves, almost alone in being able to claim and to prove that all our expenditures have been justifiable, that they have been one and all solely and exclusively in the public interest, that they have been kept well within our resources, and, further, that, after having spent millions of money on railways, public buildings, public works and other important public services our position, financially, is admittedly exceptionally strong and enviable. At the same time, I confidently predict, sir, that this Parliament will insist, as its predecessors have rigidly and uniformly insisted, that there shall be no waste of public moneys, that the most rigid economy, in things great and small alike, shall be enforced, that public funds shall never be diverted, under any delusive pretext or pretence whatever, so as directly or indirectly to corruptly enrich favored individuals, but that to the last cent the Province shall continue to receive a full, fair and ample equivalent for every dollar of its appropriations.

I move, Mr. Speaker, that you do now leave the chair.

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

It was five minutes past 5 o'clock when Mr. Harcourt concluded his statement and Mr. Marter, amid the applause of his followers, rose to commence his reply on behalf of the Opposition. The Conservative leader's speech was not so exhaustive in its treatment of the Province's finances as was that of the hon. Treasurer. The increase in certain lines of Government expense, the land policy of the Province, the colonization roads expenditures, the expenses of public institutions, and the alleged favoring of High Schools were Mr. Marter's main topics, and he concluded at 5.40 o'clock with a reply to Hon. Mr. Dryden's strictures on his remarks on the surplus during the London campaign.

Mr. Marter opened his speech by expressing his regret that the Government had declined to postpone the budget speech, saying that his side was handicapped by not getting the public accounts and the estimates for a longer time before the delivery of the Treasurer's statement. He complimented Hon. Mr. Harcourt for his able statement, delivered, he said, in a manner void of offence to that side of the House, but said that he did not think that the Government had been uniformly careful of the interests of the Province, and that, while the Treasurer had made comparisons with the Governments of New York, Quebec and the Dominion, he had omitted to make comparisons with the Government of John Sandfield Macdonald. Such a comparison, Mr. Marter asserted, would show a very large increase of expenditure. The post of Treasurer of Ontario, he went on, was very easy, for that official was not obliged to rack his brain to devise ways and means; he had the Dominion subsidy of over \$1,500,000, and he had the Crown lands receipts of over \$1,000,000, the remaining sums, for which he was more directly responsible, being far smaller. It was easy to finance with the Crown lands of Ontario at one's back, so that whenever there was a deficiency all that was needed was to consult with the Commissioner of Crown Lands, and put on the market some more of the Province's real estate. Such had been the course in the past, and no doubt would be in the future. There had been over-expenditures in the past for fifteen years, and this had become habitual with the Government.

THE COST OF GOVERNMENT.

Since 1871, Mr. Marter went on, there had been a great increase in the cost of government. In that year the item of civil government cost \$114,613; in 1894 the same item was \$240,474, an increase of more than double, and far beyond what was justified by the 30 per cent. increase of population. Then the expenses for sessional writers had been \$2,870; now it is \$16,035, an increase of 500 per cent. There are, besides that, 120 of these sessional writers and pages for 94 members, as against 97 for 215 members in Ottawa.

The greatest expense, said Mr. Marter, continuing, was in the Crown Lands Department. The Government has been consuming the assets of the Province at the rate of a million a year, and that was not revenue, though it had been treated as such. The amount of interest received from investments was far less than that received by the Government of John Sandfield Macdonald. That Government in 1871 received \$148,700 for interest on the sums which it had husbanded, while

now the revenue from interest is but \$5,700. Thus the present Government receives but \$1 for every \$3 received by the former Government. In 1884 the Crown lands expenditure was \$96,572, and in 1894 \$111,158, an increase out of proportion to necessity.

GOVERNMENT'S LAND POLICY.

The sums spent on surveys on the northern districts Mr. Marter considered far too large, especially as, owing to what he described as the illiberal land policy of the Government, there are very few settlers going in. He would like to see the settler, instead of being fined for settling on the land, given his land free after performing settlement duties for five years; and he would also like to see him given all the timber on his lot, pine and otherwise. Such used to be the case, and when he went to Muskoka first he saw settler after settler going into the back districts, while now that is a sight rarely seen. The money spent upon surveys in these districts he regarded as largely thrown away, and it would be wise for the Government to withhold it for some years. There was also a large expenditure upon colonization roads, to which no objection could be taken if it were wisely administered, but it was the fact that hardly half the value was got for the money spent, and men were chosen not for their fitness, but as a reward for party services, past and to come. There were larger grants and over-expenditures in this branch every election year, and the men who received the money formed a standing guard of Government supporters. There would be better roads if the Government would turn the money over to the local bodies. Mr. Marter also touched upon the remuneration of Crown lands officers. Eight of these in three years sold lands worth \$8,501, and received salaries of \$9,750, a balance on the wrong side of \$1,149. Instead of these men getting salaries of from \$200 to \$500, the Township Clerk could do the work, and would scarcely need more than \$50 increase to his salary. But some of these Township Clerks might be Conservatives, and that would not suit hon. gentlemen. In the return of amounts due on timber dues for the last six years, Mr. Marter continued, there was an item of \$70,944 remaining unchanged from year to year, and among those interested in this were members of the House, a practice which he condemned as a violation of the principle of independence of Parliament.

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.

The Opposition leader then turned to the question of the maintenance of public institutions. The per capita cost of these, he said, might be less than in other countries, but nevertheless if these institutions were managed on a business basis the cost would be still less. He repeated his charge that political influence determined the giving of the contracts, and said that the expenditure was thereby increased from 10 to 25 per cent. from what it should be, while beneficiaries gave back to the Government for election funds what they got by these extraordinary prices. The Government's methods could not go on for ever, and sooner or later direct taxation must come, Mr. Marter asserted. The succession duties were one form of this kind of taxation. He was glad that it had amounted to so much, but nevertheless it was a sign that the Government had had to cast about to increase its receipts. Through its happy situation and immense resources the Province had so far escaped, but when the last of its timber assets had been sold off direct taxation must come. How soon that would be could not be told, for the Government, which was so fond of commissions, had refused to appoint a commission to look into the Province's forest resources.

QUESTION OF EDUCATION.

Mr. Marter then turned to the question of education, the last which he considered. Under a political head the expenditure of that department had increased by 300 per cent., and the Minister of Education had a fad for High Schools, to which every interest of the Public Schools must bow. This alleged partiality Mr. Marter combated. The Public School, he said, was the poor man's University, 95 per cent. of the children never going any further, and he did not think it right that these schools should be allowed to deteriorate for the sake of the 5 per cent. who went to the High School. The Public Schools had actually deteriorated twenty years, and in 1892 the expenditure on Public Schools was 56 cents per head of