

of neglect toward it, and were giving an undue proportion of public assistance to the classes and secondary education. He denied to the Government any credit for assisting agricultural education, for, although there was the Agricultural College at Guelph, yet he arraigned them because the subject of agriculture in the Public Schools had been allowed to fall into neglect. He concluded by accusing the Ministry of having failed to encourage and promote the development of the mining resources of the Province.

#### MR. DAVIS REPLIES.

Mr. E. J. Davis continued the debate, opening his speech with a spirited defence of the Public School system, pointing out that the fifth form is established by law, and if it is denied to any children it is the fault of the trustees and the parents. While as to the charge that the High Schools get too much money he pointed out that too many High Schools are established, whereas the Government had not established any High Schools and was consequently not to blame for that state of affairs. Mr. Davis then dealt with the financial statement, pointing out the inconsistencies of its attackers and dealing with Mr. Marter's attack upon the Crown lands administration, showing that the John Sandfield Macdonald Government, which the Conservatives were quoting with such approval, sold timber limits just as the present Government does, only in a worse method, and in nearly equal quantities per annum. Further, Mr. Davis pointed out that the timber is not the only capital, for the land is the permanent capital and would be left even if the timber disappeared. Mr. Davis went on to answer Mr. Marter's charge that no settlers are going into the new districts was incorrect. In 1871 in Muskoka and Parry Sound there were 6,919 settlers, in 1891 26,818, an increase of 29,899; in 1871 in Nipissing district there were 1,791 settlers, in 1891 there were 13,020; in Algoma the settlers had increased from 7,018 in 1871 to 41,856 in 1891, so that in all some 500 per cent. of an increase had taken place in the face of the Manitoba boom. Dealing with Mr. Marter's suggestion that township clerks should do the work now done by Crown lands agents, Mr. Davis pointed out that in Muskoka there is one Crown lands agent who does all the work and gets some \$500; while there are some 20 to 25 township clerks who would need some \$50 extra salary each to do the work and who would thus cost far more. After touching upon Mr. Matheson's and Mr. Howland's speeches Mr. Davis closed with a eulogy of the Province and of Canada as a good place in which to live.

#### THE FOURTH PARTY.

The P. P. A. member for West Lambton, followed, saying that the Treasurer's statement was special pleading. It was useless to tell of Quebec's taxation without saying also that Quebec had not the same good start as Ontario had. Hon. Mr. Gibson's defence of the Government's method of purchasing supplies was true, he admitted, in some minor points, but he thought that the goods which could not be profitably bought by tender formed but a small portion of the expense. Next Mr. Gurd complained of Mr. McNish's comments upon the P. P. A. in the address upon the address; he regarded it as "the wild and empty raving of an inexperienced man," who was, doubtless, prompted by "an abnormal craving to stand well with a certain class of his constituents." He went on to hold that he yielded to no man in liberality, but that he believed in special privileges to none. And the Government, he held, had been untrue to its trust in regard to the education of the young.

#### THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

Hon. Mr. Ross said that he had been disappointed in the tone of the speeches which had come from the Opposition upon the question of education. He commented caustically upon the ill-success which had attended such attacks in the past. That attack did not come from the Patrons, those barbarians, according to the member from Toronto, who had made an incursion from the rural districts into the House. What right had Mr. Howland, Mr. Ross asked to call a Patron members barbarians, a sneer at those who formed 6 per cent. of the population of the Province.

Mr. Howland interposed that he had not used the word "barbarian."  
Hon. Mr. Ross replied that Mr. Howland's illustration of the illustration

of ancient conquerors. The Jerusalem had been ploughed over.

Hon. Mr. Ross—I am sorry for Jerusalem. (Laughter.) This is the revised edition of the hon. gentleman's speech; there was no mention of Jerusalem yesterday. (Laughter.)

Hon. Mr. Ross turned to Mr. St. John's charge, that the Public Schools did not get enough attention. The grant of \$45,000 to poor schools, he pointed out, was an expenditure upon Public Schools. In 1872 the expenditure upon Public Schools had been \$294,717; in 1894 it was \$287,852, an increase of 40 per cent., while the school population had increased 7 per cent., and while the High School expenditure had increased only 30 per cent., and the High School population had doubled.

Replying to Mr. St. John's figures showing the disparity between the cost of Public School and High School education, Mr. Ross asked whether the disparity was too great. It was a fact which had to be accepted that the higher the standard of education the higher the cost must be. The comparison, therefore, which Mr. St. John had given was unfair, as he should have known, being an old Chairman of a High School Board. The leader of the Opposition had said that only 5 per cent. of the school population attended the High Schools. That, however, was a good proportion judged by the United States, Germany and other countries. In the United States the percentage of the population attending High Schools was only one-half of 1 per cent., while in Germany it was only 1.1 per cent., or about 5 per cent. of the school population of that country. In reply to the question which he put to the House, whether, if the people wanted secondary education, the Government should hold its hands, Mr. Ross made an eloquent plea for the intellectual development and higher culture, which, he contended, was the dissemination of secondary and higher educational institutions. Replying to the complaint made by Mr. St. John that the High Schools entice the boys from the farm, the Minister gave statistics which showed that a majority of the pupils of the High Schools go back to the farm. Forty-five per cent. of the pupils were farmers' sons, by which it was shown that the farmers appreciated the facilities which these schools furnished.

Mr. St. John, who several times had sought to set himself right, corrected Mr. Ross by saying that he did not use these words.

Smilingly, Mr. Ross corrected himself, after consulting his notes. "The hon. gentleman said draw the boys from the farm. I used the word entice because I thought it more finished," and added, good-humoredly, "I hope the ornateness of my language will not lessen the force of my argument." Proceeding, he denied that there was anything in the High Schools to draw boys from the farm. At the same time, it would be a calamity, he declared, if the professions could not be recruited from the rural districts, which were the breeding-ground for the prize-winners in the Universities and in the professions. With fine sarcasm he asked whether by a policy which would fasten to the land, the boys and girls born on the farms, making vassals and serfs of them, the Opposition expected to win the confidence of this Province.

Mr. Ross continued with a strong defence of secondary schools, showing that they on the one hand train the Public School teachers, and on the other lay the foundations for University work, and quoted an exhaustive set of statistics to show that in the last twenty years not only the Model Schools, the Teachers' Institutes and other direct educational institutions increased enormously, but that in point of free libraries, Mechanics' Institutes and Art Schools the Province has made wonderful progress. The number of volumes taken out from public libraries has risen from 250,000 ten years ago to over 1,500,000 now, while the percentage of fiction read has dropped from 60 per cent. to 48 per cent., the lowest, with one exception, in the world, and all this showed an increase in intelligence, for which the Education Department deserved some credit. The awards which the Ontario school system had taken at Chicago in competition against the world were last touched upon, and Mr. Ross made from them a telling testimony to the good work done under the educational policy of the Government.

He concluded his splendid defence of his department at 11 o'clock.

Mr. Whitney, rising, remarked that as they had had their fill of fiction he would move the adjournment of the debate. The House then adjourned.