

the Province should be under the Minister of Education. He had received many complaints about the Institution for the Blind, but none in reference to the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, which was an admirably-conducted institution. As to the Institution for the Blind he would have a good deal more to say later on. It was not creditable to the country, not filling its purpose, and required a good raking over. As to the succession tax, he thought the amount collected from collateral relatives was too high. He thought that the owners of estates should be allowed to state in their wills to what charity the tax should go. He could not allow all that had been said about Sir Oliver Mowat to pass without protest. He protested against the statement that he was everything good, wise, virtuous and incorruptible. The job by which he foisted his son into the Shrievalty of this city was one of the most corrupt jobs ever perpetrated by any public man. He said this, and deliberately, and with a full realization of what he was saying. While he had done much for the benefit of the Province as a legislator, he was not averse to putting himself on the opposite side of a question if he found it desirable or necessary to do so politically. He had opposed to him a gentleman for whom everyone in this House had the very greatest respect, Sir Wm. Meredith, whose name would live in this Province as that of a patriotic citizen and a noble man. If the Government desired him to read the whole Secretary's correspondence, which he held in his hand, they would perhaps agree with him. Dr. Ryerson complained of the manner in which the Treasurer referred to the annuities in his address. Every dollar of the \$1,760,000 annuities was a debt, and if the Government claimed a surplus they must first write off that amount. It was a debt which could not in any way be avoided. After the able speech of the leader of the Opposition he did not feel called upon to deal with the financial statement of the Government at any great length.

#### AN EFFECTIVE REPLY.

Mr. McLean replied to Dr. Ryerson on behalf of the Government. He first complimented Mr. Hardy on his elevation to the Premiership, which he prophesied would be of great benefit to the country. He also complimented the leader of the Opposition upon his attaining that position. He was amused at the speech of the last speaker. It was said that a very foolish man could make as many charges in five minutes as a very wise man could answer in five hours. He repudiated the statement that the people of Ontario were driven or led to the polls by the civil servants, and he thought it was not right for any member to cast such a slur upon the people of this grand old Province. Dr. Ryerson had read a list of the civil servants, but there was not one there mentioned who was not necessary for the administration of the government. It was the duty of those who made such charges to point out the officials who were unnecessary, but no attempt was made to do so. There were, Mr. McLean said, three points of attack upon the Government: First, its financial management; second, its educational management, and, third, its centralizing proclivities. It was true the expenditure of the Province had very materially increased, but that did not involve extravagance or the misapplication of public money. The calls upon the Government had gradually become greater, and the Government had been equal to its responsibilities. The Government in maintaining public institutions, was not only doing a good act but was relieving the municipalities of a considerable burden. If the Opposition could show that the institutions were being extravagantly managed or that public money was being misappropriated its case would be established. As a matter of fact the institutions of this Province were more economically managed than similar institutions elsewhere. The circumstance that the expenditure had been increased was not a legitimate ground of criticism. Of the public expenditure nearly \$2,500,000 was devoted to legislation, administration of justice, education, public buildings maintenance, agriculture and hospitals and charities, not one of which but was a worthy department of government. Mr. McLean answered the charge that the liabilities of the Province had been increased by the transactions in annuities. The proceeds of these annuities, he said, could only be used for one pur-

pose, and that was to liquidate railway certificates. Last year \$177,000 was realized from the sale of annuities, but railway certificates were liquidated to the amount of \$184,000. Annuity certificates were redeemed to the amount of \$86,000, decreasing the obligations of the Province by \$260,000, whereas they were only increased to the amount of \$177,000. They were decreased out of current revenue, so that instead of the liabilities of the Province having been increased they were decreased. Mr. McLean replied effectively to the old charge that the Sandfield Macdonald surplus had been dissipated. That surplus, he said, had been hypothecated before the Macdonald Government had left office. He pointed out that in useful public works and beneficial undertakings \$16,000,000 had been expended, and yet not a dollar of debt has been incurred or a cent of direct taxation imposed. The whole sum had been provided for out of current revenue. He then left the financial side of the question before the House, and devoted some attention to the other matters which have emerged during the debate. He remarked that the House heard no more about Separate Schools and the French language in the Public Schools. The Opposition had evidently dropped that sort of thing, and were looking out for something else. They had turned themselves inside out half a dozen times on this question as well as on many other questions, and appearances indicated that they were preparing for another acrobatic feat in that line. The appearances were that they had in contemplation the interment of The Green Eye Opener and the revival of The Facts for Irish Electors. But he could tell them that they were farther from the goal of their ambition than they were eighteen or twenty years ago. The people of the Province had come to know them thoroughly. Mr. McLean defended the administration of the Education Department, concluding this branch of his speech with the remark that there was no country where the educational system was so complete or comprehensive as that of Ontario. He commended the proposition that had been made by the Minister of Education to assist the University. It would benefit the University, he said, as well as the Province. Mr. McLean dealt with and disposed of the charges that the Government had centralized power, and that too many officials had been appointed.

#### DR. MEACHAM.

Dr. Meacham was the next speaker. Mr. Harcourt, he said, had asked the Opposition to make suggestions as to how the government should be carried on, and not to criticize the Government. The Opposition had in the past made suggestions; they had asked for manhood franchise for years, and at last the Government had come over and placed a bill on the statute books providing for it. Another reform which they had urged upon the Government and which they had finally enacted was the establishment of leaving examinations in Public Schools. As a matter of fact, it should be the duty of the gentlemen who sat behind the treasury benches to give advice to their leaders in the best interests of the country. The members of the Opposition felt that their place was not to tell the Government what they would like to hear, but what the Opposition thought they should hear, whether they liked it or not. Dr. Meacham devoted some attention to Mr. Stratton, asking if it was fair to represent that there was a favorable balance in the public accounts when practically there was a deficit of \$397,000. In his own constituency Mr. Stratton was known as something of an independent, but upon the first opportunity he had to lay these views before the House he failed to do so. He asked if, when it was claimed that there was a surplus, it did not mean that there was an excess of receipts over expenditure. He criticized the Treasurer's statement of the assets of the country, and complained that the Government had not complied with the demand which the Opposition had been making for years that the public accounts should be printed in fuller detail so that the prices paid could be seen. At present, when supplies were bought by contract, the price was given, but where there was no contract the price was not given. He contended that all the Opposition had to do was to show that a fair amount of the expenditure of the Province had not been properly spent. No one disputed that the public institutions of the