

The necessity for the bill was created by the fact that the time was approaching when the Legislature must under the constitution meet, a number of protests had been entered and it was evident there would be bye-elections, and a large number of them. It was apparent to anyone that the Legislature might be called under circumstances which might render it impossible for any public business to be transacted. But there was still another justification for calling the House together at this time, and that was that without this bill the bye-elections (leaving out of the question the few seats affected by this bill) would have to be held with a doubt upon the meaning of the law, under which the hotelkeepers, telegraph men, livery stable keepers and bill posters might be deprived of their votes. (Opposition laughter.) Hon. gentlemen might laugh at that, but it was necessary to have this point cleared up before the bye-elections are held. Hon. gentlemen opposite complained of the Government tyrannizing over the people.

Mr. Matheson—Hear, hear.

Mr. Conmee—I don't know of any Government that tyrannized over any people more than that Government at Ottawa which hon. gentlemen opposite supported for twenty years. (Cheers.) He defended the Government from the charge that the machinery of the License Department was used to tyrannize over the people, and in refutation of this fact stated that the only hotelkeeper in Rat Portage who was a member of his committee was the only man who lost his license. In reply to a question, he said that the hotelkeeper in question, it was true, held another license, but it was taken from him and a poor man was given it. He also read a letter in reply to the charge of the hon. member for Centre Grey that a hotelkeeper who supported him had lost his license, showing that the hotelkeeper in question had not applied for a renewal. He approved of the Government proposal to regulate the fisheries, which might be made a source of revenue and which are deserving of development and encouragement. He did not think the hon. gentlemen opposite were warranted in insulting the 30,000 farmers who went to visit the Agricultural College at Guelph by charging that they went there to get a ten cent lunch. (Government applause.)

#### Appealed to the Records.

He then read quotations from former speeches made by the hon. member for East Hamilton, who had said of Sir Oliver Mowat, "He is the greatest constitutional lawyer the country has ever produced. Sir Oliver Mowat will live in the minds of the people when his traducers are forgotten. While from Ottawa there comes every day the story of fresh robbery committed under the watchful eye of the Government, who can point out a scandal in Sir Oliver Mowat's whole history?" And yet, added Mr. Conmee, he comes to this House as a follower of that said party and lectures hon. members on the Government side of the House. The hon. member now came to the House and held up the numbered ballot as one of the means by which the Government

tyrannizes over the people. If the people were all as ingenious and crooked—he begged pardon—he was going to say as crooked as lawyers might be, to work out such a scheme as the hon. member had suggested, there might be some force in his argument, but he pointed out that there would have to be a conspiracy of perhaps 40 persons, who would perjure themselves to enable it to be carried out. But a few years ago the hon. member for East Hamilton had approved of the numbered ballot, and pointed out that by the numbered ballot no man could be cheated out of his vote, and that there had never been a single case where the manner in which a man voted had been improperly revealed. (Government cheers.) That was the hon. gentleman's opinion, continued Mr. Conmee, when he was getting those little jobs, and now he can say nothing that is good, and the Government supporters cheered again. They would have to take the hon. gentleman as they found him. Could they believe him now or did they believe what he said then? When was he uttering his honest opinion? He left it to his hon. friends on the opposite side to settle it between themselves when they retired to their room. Discussing the timber question, he twitted Mr. Matheson with talking upon a subject of which he was in ignorance, and, after some cross-firing with the hon. member for South Lanark stated that the hon. gentleman represented a constituency which would return Hon. John Haggart's gardener if he took the idea to put him up.

Col. Matheson, with great indignation, demanded that Mr. Speaker compel the hon. member to withdraw the expression, which Mr. Conmee ultimately did, remarking that it was no worse for him to make the statement than for Mr. Matheson to charge that his election in West Algoma had been secured by the expenditure of colonization roads money.

Mr. Matheson replied that the tone of the debate was being lowered by having such a man make such assertions, and the Speaker informed the House that the hon. member for West Algoma had withdrawn the assertion.

#### Evening Session.

Mr. Conmee continued after dinner, explaining that he did not wish to be misunderstood in his remarks about fire rangers. What he wished to say was that six only were appointed by the Government; the others, about a hundred in all, were the nominees of the timber license holders, and it was a far-fetched charge of Government connivance in the matter. He denied that one dollar of colonization money had been used to effect either his own or his colleague's election in the Algomias. Mr. Matheson had visited that district and returned with the story of rebellion against the Liberals, but not only had they, in his case at least, been returned with an increased majority, but they had captured Muskoka as well. (Government applause.) Taking up other Opposition arguments, he said there were more supplies purchased by tender by the Government than were purchased by tender by private corporations, such as railroad com-