

all pledged for railway aid before the present Government came into power was not borne out by the records. He denounced the Government for having been responsible for bringing about the present condition of affairs by retaining in office many useless officials who were living on the country. Accepting the comparison sometimes indulged in by speakers on the Government side that the Opposition had wandered many years in the wilderness of Opposition, he pointed out that the Israelites long ago wandered in like manner, but eventually were enabled to drive out the Philistines who possessed the land. His declaration that the time was at hand when the Opposition would enter into the promised land was loudly applauded. He made a general attack upon the Government for extravagance in expenditure, and closed with an eulogy of the Conservative party for having constructed the C.P.R.

Mr. Fox (West Victoria) attacked the Government for its expenditure on colonization roads, and instanced the Chemong road, which, he contended, was not in any sense a colonization road, and that the municipalities through which it ran should meet the cost, as it was simply a road from Peterboro' to Chemong Park.

Mr. Stratton, in explanation, stated that the road in question was situated in the northern part of the Township of Smith, and was needed as an outlet for the northern portion of the county.

Continuing, Mr. Fox advocated greater energy in opening up the northern and western portions of the Province.

The motion that the Speaker do now leave the chair was carried on division.

#### Committee of Supply.

The House went into committee of supply, Mr. J. R. Stratton in the chair. The estimates for civil government, \$253,185, were taken up.

A slight increase in the item for the Lieutenant-Governor's office was explained by Hon. Mr. Hardy and approved by Mr. Whitney.

The Attorney-General explained that an increase in his own department of \$365 was caused by the growth of the business of his department, arising from several branches having been added to those formerly under the supervision of the Attorney-General, notably the fisheries branch.

The item was passed, no objection being raised.

Upon the item of public works, \$18,750, Hon. Mr. Hardy explained that the reduction of \$3,450 had been effected by the retirement of two officials and reductions of salary of others. It had been intended to reduce the staff earlier in the year 1898, but this was prevented owing to the fact that the attention of the Government had been occupied by the August session of the House. Respecting the argument of hon. gentlemen that the department should be abolished and the work transferred to other Ministers, to be administered by them in addition to their own departments, he assured the House that such a course would be impossible, inasmuch as the Department of Public Works is essentially one of detail. Even though there is no great work of construction in progress there is a large amount of smaller work always in progress which requires the

supervision of the Commissioner of Public Works. It is not possible, having regard to the best interests of the public service and to the maintenance of the public works and buildings, to do away with the office of Commissioner. If subordinates are to be left to have their own way the economy practised in the department may not long be continued. It is only by constant supervision that the expenditure of the department has been kept at a low figure, and certainly the department had never been accused of extravagance. Hon. gentlemen who had been talking about cutting off the department did not understand and did not know that there never had been a time when the Ministers gave as much attention to the details of their departments, and he was convinced they would give better service to the Province if they had not so much detail to attend to.

Mr. Matheson contended that for years past the Public Works Department had not been erecting any public buildings. The question practically resolved itself into this: that it cost

about \$19,000 to supervise an expenditure of about \$160,000.

Hon. Mr. Hardy pointed out that the hon. gentleman was wrong in his estimate of the expenditure, having omitted several items which ought to be included. The expenditure of the department rightly amounted to about \$230,000 or \$250,000, so that the cost of supervising and engineering of the services of architects and various special and expert services was really less than 8 per cent.

Mr. Hoyle declaimed against the practice of granting annuities. The sum of \$2,200 was a good salary and ought to be sufficient to allow a public servant to make provision for his old age, the same as private individuals had to do. The practice of giving gratuities was wrong, whether adopted here or at Ottawa, and he should take exception to such items whenever they came up.

Hon. Mr. Hardy said he had asked Mr. Edwards why he had not made provision for his old age. That gentleman replied that he entered the service of the Province under the old law as it then stood and was now, and that he was, therefore, entitled on his retirement to a month's pay for every year spent in the public service. The recognition of such a claim would have meant paying Mr. Edwards the sum of \$6,000, and the Government thought that it would not be warranted in paying such a large amount. It was felt that if Mr. Edwards were paid a sum equivalent to eighteen months' salary that was as much as the Government could do. Formerly the gratuities given amounted to as much as \$5,000, \$4,000 or \$3,000. Mr. Marling, formerly of the Education Department, was granted \$6,000 when he retired. He was a very old public servant who entered in the Government employ prior to Confederation and was given that sum because the statute warranted it and the House voted it. The retiring allowances had, however, been reduced from year to year.