

due to the House, and he hoped before the debate closed the ex-Treasurer would be heard from. There were discrepancies in receipts and disbursements extending over a long period of years, but no explanation was vouchsafed. It might be said, these large sums being carried from year to year, an explanation without time for investigation would be difficult, but when an explanation regarding the discrepancies in the figures for the year 1898 was asked it could scarcely be denied, for the figures must still be fresh in the memory. But in this year, too, there was a very great discrepancy between the returns made by the Financial Commission and those made by the late Treasurer. The Financial Commission gave the total receipts for the year 1898 at \$3,710,927, while the report of the late Treasurer gave the total of receipts for the same period at \$3,647,000; and the commission reported \$3,864,000 as the total disbursements of the Province, while the Provincial Treasurer made the total of the disbursements \$3,803,000. When these facts were brought to the attention of hon. gentlemen opposite, and when other explanations were asked, they were met with captious remarks and attempts at witticism. This, however, would not prevent gentlemen who wished to have these explanations bringing the matter up. Mr. Foy commented on the fact that although the Financial Commission had possessed the power to call witnesses and to take their evidence under oath they had not done so, and had evidently obtained all the information which they received from the office of the Provincial Treasurer. Moreover, the investigation was made in private. That fact must be borne in mind when considering the value of the report. The Opposition or anybody else were at liberty to challenge the value of the report. He thought it ought to be explained how it was that the receipts from the Dominion as given in the public accounts were \$207,000 more than were actually found by the commissioners. By including the railway certificates and annuities among the liabilities of Ontario the commissioners had sustained the contentions of the Opposition and condemned as faulty the methods of previous Treasurers.

#### Calls It Poor Financing.

The Government in the past had raised money on securities held by them at a cost of 5 per cent. payable half-yearly. That was not a good financial transaction for a Government which claimed such large assets. He challenged the statement of the commissioners that the Upper Canada building fund, the Upper Canada grammar school fund and the land improvement fund had been declared by the inter-provincial arbitrators to be held exclusively for the Government of Ontario. That statement should have been qualified by the addition of the fact that those funds were to be held for the purpose for which they were established. Mr. Foy discussed the question of whether Ontario could obtain the moneys standing to its credit in the possession of the Dominion, and held that the Province could only borrow such moneys for the purpose of local improvements. It would be simply

an advance on the part of the Dominion, which would have to be repaid by the Province.

Mr. Ross pointed out that the words "the Province may repay" were used in the statute. The Province, therefore, might or might not repay the advances.

Mr. Foy dissented from such an interpretation of the statute. He went on to quote Mr. Fielding's letter as showing that the Province could not draw these moneys for the ordinary purposes of government. The speaker hoped the day would never arrive when the Province would be compelled to ask the Dominion for advances under such extraordinary conditions.

#### Cheap Binder Twine.

Mr. Pettypiece (East Lambton) dealt with the charge made by the Opposition that the Government, in their conduct of the Central Prison binder twine industry, were playing into the hands of a monopoly. What were the facts? At the Central Prison between March 1 and August 1, last year, 5,000 bales of binder twine were manufactured. This twine was sold to the farmers direct at 10 1-2 cents per pound. The fibre from which it was produced cost \$1-2 cents per pound. The twine was sold between June 1 and August 20, and the sale was advertised in 70 local papers. Every order received from the farmers was filled. The Government thus furnished the binder twine to the farmers at as low a rate as it could be sold for. This year they expected to do even better. (Ministerial applause.) Mr. Pettypiece said the Opposition professed to be friends of the farmers, yet they were doing all they could to decry the work in behalf of good roads carried on by Mr. A. W. Campbell. For example, Mr. Matheson, in a recent debate, was reported to have said that a street macadamized in Perth under Mr. Campbell's direction had to be torn up and made over. In reply to this, Mr. Pettypiece read a letter from ex-Mayor Shaw of Perth denying the accuracy of Mr. Matheson's statement, and asserting that the great majority of people, both in the town and county, expressed the opinion that good work had been done. "It is rare indeed," continued the writer, "to find anyone giving a contrary opinion. The work is one of which any town might be proud, and is, I think, admitted to be even superior to that done at Smith's Falls, where the town is expending large sums of money obtained by the vote of the people for that purpose. The streets are well drained on both sides of the road in most cases, and Col. Matheson knows this, because he himself asked to have one of the drains put down in front of his own premises." (Applause and laughter.) Mr. Pettypiece praised the successful efforts of Mr. Dryden to stamp out the San Jose scale, and then, reverting to the Opposition amendment calling for the dismissal of Sheriff Brown of West Elgin, asked what the amendment had to do with the budget speech. The speaker pointed out that the Liberals denounced corruption, and he enumerated Liberal papers that had also condemned electoral wrongdoing. The Conservatives were anxious apparently to have no investigation, for they denounced the commission of inquiry