

Mr. Whitney—You need not deny it, for I make no charge; I simply say that the presumption will be in the minds of the people of Ontario that the friends of the Government were in possession of the facts long ago.

#### Claims for the Opposition.

He would, he went on, watch with some interest the measures of law reform, which it was evident the people demanded, and which might be brought down during the session. In regard to the Premier's reference to the railway to Lake Temiscaming he had little to say at this point, in view of the fact that the Government's position had not been declared one way or the other. He hoped that the Premier was not waiting to see the Opposition's policy and then annex it. (Opposition applause.)

He combatted the statements made that the Opposition had not initiated any helpful measures, contending that in the matter of travelling dairies, manhood franchise, lectures to farmers, punishment for bribery in elections, reforms in regard to itemizing public accounts, improvements in regard to education, the question of sawlogs, the development of new Ontario and in proposals to establish agricultural schools, the Opposition had led the way. On the question of Toronto University, to which he hoped to refer at length later in the session, it was, he contended, well known that great dissatisfaction existed among the authorities of that institution because they were too greatly hampered by political control.

Mr. Ross—Can the hon. gentleman give the name of any professor or any member of the faculty who has ever suggested severance from the Government or has publicly expressed dissatisfaction?

Mr. Whitney said he could not at present recall the name of any who had publicly expressed such views, but the facts were well known, and his hon. friend could, if he was not already in possession of it, get information on that point. Mr. Whitney then referred to the great Clergue enterprises. On this point he fully appreciated, with the other members of the Opposition, that Mr. Clergue's enterprises were of great benefit to the Province. But their contention was that the results desired could have been gained without granting such large concessions. In a speech by Mr. Clergue himself it was clearly shown that many of the onerous provisions of the bill regarding the matter had been complied with before the measure was passed. He referred at some length to the West Elgin and North Waterloo elections, condemning the action of the Government in regard to these, and stating that the issue of the West Elgin commission was delayed until the date of the two elections in the western part of the Province.

He complained of the refusal to allow counsel to attend the commission representing the Conservative party, whereas shortly thereafter the Dominion Government appointed an election commission, and one of the first things they did was to appoint counsel for both parties. He was sorry that the West Elgin commissioners did not feel it necessary to refuse to sit when the wording of the commission was an inti-

mation to them that a thorough investigation was not wanted. Where was the evidence? It should have been printed and laid before the House. He regretted very much that no prosecutions were to follow. He challenged the Government to prosecute Pritchett. The hon. gentlemen were living in a fool's paradise, and the people of Ontario would never condone them for not prosecuting those whose acts had created that thrill of horror and disgust throughout the public mind of this Province. (Opposition cheers.)

Mr. Whitney referred to the Government's record, and declared that the plan announced with a flourish that British warships should be built of Ontario nickel was as dead as Nebuchadnezzar. (Laughter.) The plans for reclaiming our swamps, announced with much tom-toming, only gave authority to give grants which were already on the statute book. The Premier was going to make everybody rich by sending dressed beef to Britain, but a few days afterward a prominent supporter published a letter saying that the only obstacle there was that we hadn't the beef. (Opposition cheers.) He denied the assertion that the Opposition had no policy, and declared that if returned to power they would first wipe out direct taxation. They would not grant railway subsidies without careful investigation first, and without stipulating for being recouped and retaining entire control over rates for traffic and passengers. Public schools would be remodelled, and examination expenses to pupils reduced to actual cost. A substantial increase would be made in the grants to public schools. The system of contracts with regard to public school books should be supervised. The needs of the University of Toronto would be immediately considered, as it was cruelty to allow them to remain suspended between Heaven and earth. Grants to agriculture should be increased as soon as finances would permit, with a view to increased aid to agricultural schools.

#### Law Reforms.

With regard to law reform he was not prepared to say how far the Government ought to go. It was not a party question. It was the duty of every member and every citizen to do what he could to lessen the expenses of appeals in Ontario. He would abolish all but one appeal to the courts in the Province. The Judges of the Court of Appeal and the Judges of the High Court should all constitute for appeal purposes one Court of Appeal, and the appeal should go direct from the trial Judge to a court of five of the other Judges. That would do away with a lot of expense. Mr. Whitney concluded by declaring he was not afraid to trust the people. (Opposition applause.)

Hon. Mr. Stratton moved the adjournment of the debate, and the House adjourned at 9.55 p.m.

#### Notes.

Mr. A. W. Campbell, Good Roads Instructor, addressed five meetings in Welland County last week. An effort will be made to raise \$150,000 for the improvement of the roads of that county in the near future.