

else he has seen to, that justice has been done to the proprietary of the Short Line. We have also got a new Minister of Agriculture. My hon. friend the member for London (Mr. Carling) was well qualified for that office. His well-known interest in one of the great cereals of the country was a strong reason why he should be Minister of Agriculture. I have heard him called the King of the Barley Market, and he is also a large farmer; but I regret to see that what sometimes happens to us politicians, that just as soon as we reach a position we abandon the training, which was supposed to be our qualification, has happened in his case. The hon. gentleman has actually, in the interest of London and the Militia Department, sacrificed a large portion of his farm just as he has become Minister of Agriculture. I regret it, because I think the country has felt that the hon. gentleman should rather engage further in agricultural pursuits, instead of selling at an alarming sacrifice a large portion of his farm. If he were still engaged in cultivating it, I feel that the honest tiller of the soil would have greater confidence in him as Minister of Agriculture. That is not all. I am told the hon. gentleman, still in the interest of London and the public, is proposing to sell a large portion of his farm to the Canadian Pacific Railway, and presently the hon. gentleman—who was a large farmer, and so, I felt, had a very proper claim to be Minister of Agriculture—will be a farmer without a farm. I regret this, because I would like the hon. gentleman to retain as many titles to public confidence in his capacity of Minister of Agriculture as possible, but he seems to me to dispose of his titles in a very lavish way. In a few weeks he makes great sacrifices in the interest of his constituency and the public in these transactions, and no one can be surprised, under those circumstances, that he is so popular and strong in his constituency of London. The hon. gentleman has since dabbled in statistics, and we have had a number of statements as to the prospects and operations of the country in the various Departments administered by him. I am glad to see he is so diligent in that portion of the Department to which he belongs. I do not think his predecessor, in all the long years he was Minister, ever gave to the public such an amount of statistics as the hon. gentleman has in a few weeks. This is encouraging, because we have often wanted statistics from the hon. gentleman's predecessor on this floor, and now we are going to get them from the hon. gentleman. We have restored to us the Department of Justice, of which we were for some time deprived. That is a very important department. I always regretted the fact that it left this House, not so much with reference to its strictly ministerial and departmental work, as with reference to the legislative work. There is no doubt whatever that the Minister of Justice ought fittingly to occupy a place in that body in which circumstances seem to demand the vast mass of the legislation of the country should be initiated and receive its principal sifting, and that, as a parliamentary officer, we want him here. The Government felt that, I presume, and they decided they would no longer deprive us of the benefit of that officer, and determining to supply us with that officer, they made the choice they did, I congratulate the hon. incumbent of the office. He enters federal politics, as the French would say, by the great gate; for him there is no apprenticeship in our Parliament. There is certainly a period during which he filled a provincial office creditably, and received certain other training to which I shall presently allude; but, as far as federal politics are concerned, he comes into Parliament as the incumbent of the important office of Minister of Justice, without passing through any apprenticeship in this House. No greater compliment could be paid to a public man. The Government felt the office was important; they felt that no one was available in Parliament and that they had to look outside. We have looked upon gentlemen opposite belonging to the profession which the hon. gentleman adorns, and who,

I supposed, were fitted for the place, as men among whom the choice, if any, would be made; we have not concealed our appreciation of their qualities and abilities to fill that office, but the Ministry scrupulously determining to give us the very best available talent, felt it was necessary to look outside for the bright light which could not be found in the phalanx from Nova Scotia of patient supporters of the Government who have patiently endured many things for a long time to reap this reward. As a lawyer the hon. gentleman has come to the front with a bound over many heads; as a legislator he begins his federal career at once as Minister. It was a bold step, justified, no doubt, by that superior talent which is so soon to be exhibited by the hon. gentleman, and I have very little doubt, from all I have heard, that he will fill the office extremely creditably. But whence comes he? Whence, I say, does he come? He comes from the bench of justice. Who would have thought it? What did hon. gentleman opposite say of a then unhappy gentleman, who thought it his duty to submit the name of a judge for the office of Attorney-General for Ontario. They slanged me—not here, of course, because we do not use slang here—but outside I was slanged in the country in good set terms for many long years for that. I was told that I had degraded the bench, that I had soiled the hitherto unspotted ermine, that I had created a feeling of want of confidence on the part of the people in the judges of the land, that I had rendered it impossible for the judges to conduct impartially the trials of election cases. I had been guilty of unconstitutional and republican practice; I had degraded public morality; I had done a thing which no honest man could do otherwise than condemn. This was the language which was used toward me because I gave that advice which was followed by the elevation of Mr. Mowat to the Attorney-Generalship of Ontario, and it was used towards me by the supporters of hon. gentlemen opposite and by their organs. I remember, in this chamber, the present Chief Justice of Nova Scotia—I remember the Hon. James Macdonald, then filling the office the hon. gentleman now fills, with all the weight and dignity which is due to that position, denouncing me for this act. I remember hearing Sir Charles Tupper, very shortly after it was consummated—for I believe that is the proper word to apply to such an unhallowed deed—using this language towards me on the public hustings:

“He trusted that when a judge came to decide as to which party had a majority, it would not be under a conviction that high political honors awaited him on one side or the other to reward him for his subserviency. (Loud cheers). If ever there was a law which struck a dangerous blow at the independence and purity of the bench, it would be that which would allow the ermine to be sullied by a partisan decision. The moment a precedent was established, and the moment a great Province like Ontario sanctioned the precedent, the dangerous precedent, that a judge might forsake the bench and enter into the troubled and muddy waters of political strife, that moment a blow was struck at the character of the judiciary, and that confidence was shaken which every one ought to repose in those who were called on to perform those high duties.”

Then as to the organs. The *Mail* on 25th October, 1872, said:

“But, from a higher than a personal standpoint, thinking men in Canada will condemn the new appointment. When once a barrister succeeding to the post as his right [shall I read Thompson or Mowat] when once a barrister succeeding to a post as his right from among the law officers of the Crown, or selected for especial fitness, displayed in the conduct of non-political business, has been promoted to the bench, we in Canada have thought that he put off all political bias, that he flung away with his barrister's gown even the recollection of party struggles, and relegated political preferences to a limbo, whence only history would unearth them. We have thought it the salient feature in that bright record of unspotted ermine which has distinguished the administration of justice in Canada from that of the United States. The action of Mr. _____ will be a rude shock to this faith which has been so blindly and so universally entertained. Latent in his judicial composition under cynical garb or impartiality must have lurked all the old preferences and animosities, and all his warmest sympathies and antipathies.”

“Mr. _____ will have only himself to thank if any of the decisions he has recently given are viewed with suspicion or are actually called in question.”