

every member of the House, that the ordinary legal business had also so increased that this alteration was necessary in order to secure its proper surveillance. To show this increase of business clearly, he would refer to a few statistics since Confederation. In 1869 the registered references were 1,693; in 1872 they were only 1,971, being an increase merely of 178; in 1873 the registered references amounted to 2,753; in 1874 to 3,403; in 1875 to 3,320; in 1876 to 4,344, and in 1877 it reached the amount of over 5,700. The correspondence in 1875 covered only 3,000 pages; in 1877, 9,000; while taking the last twelve months the volume contained 10,024 pages. It would, therefore, be obvious to every one that it was necessary to reorganize this Department. It might be objected to the proposition that in England the Minister of Justice and Attorney-General were represented by Attorney-General and Solicitor-General, but there would, under the new Bill, be this qualification: that the Attorney-General would have charge of all the Crown prosecutions formerly entrusted to the Minister of Justice, so that the duties of the two offices, when separated, would be clearly defined. There could be no confusion from the creation of this additional office as all the correspondence would be retained in Department of the Minister of Justice. In England, however, it had been the rule that the Attorney-General, as legal adviser of the Crown, should be outside the Ministry. In several of the British colonies the same rule had been followed, but in New Zealand the same system as that proposed in this Bill had been adopted. There was no other colony where this subdivision of the offices of Minister of Justice and Attorney-General existed, but in several colonies the offices of Attorney-General and Solicitor-General had been maintained as in England. The change proposed by this Bill was one merely in name, as far as the difference between the practice of the Dominion and that of England was concerned.

Mr. MITCHELL said he had grave objections to the passage of this Bill.

He would not enter into the various matters which the hon. gentleman had explained to the House, as to the necessities for the proposed change in the Department of Justice. He was not prepared to say whether that change was necessary or not, but he would say that there was too much legal influence in the House already. Members of the legal profession had too much Parliamentary influence in the country, and he objected to the Bill on the ground that it tended to take away from laymen positions to which they were entitled in the administration. When he looked round and saw the amount of influence possessed by the lawyers in this House, and the way legal gentlemen monopolized positions, and desired to extend that monopoly to every emolument and office in the country, he could not but consider this as another effort of the Government to swamp the independent laymen of the country and maintain and extend the monopoly of the lawyers. Why should this old officer, the Receiver-General, who was one of the best men in the House, though he did not say much, be legislated out of existence? He thought it was very bad taste on the part of the Minister of Justice to take such a course with respect to his colleague, and one that he should be ashamed of being placed on record. As to the abolition of the office itself, he (Mr. Mitchell) did not object to it, but he strongly objected to see the offices of the country monopolized by the legal sharks of this House.

Several Hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. MITCHELL said it was well known that lawyers were always called land sharks; but, joking aside, he must say that he did not approve of this change. He did not see any necessity for another legal officer in the House. If they found the Minister of Justice overworked then there would be some reason for it. But the hon. gentleman had made no complaint of this kind, and they had had other Ministers of Justice, the present Chief Justice Dorion, and the present Judge Fournier, and the hon. gentleman's immediate predecessors. He had not heard from any of these a statement that they were overworked, and he, there-