

prior to confederation, the officials have been paid by salary, and the fees have gone into the public treasury. The salaries given are moderate, and have not hitherto been objected to by anyone, so far as I know.

It has been said in the Opposition press that the number of officers and employees at Osgoode Hall is unnecessarily large. That I dispute. It is said that the number has doubled since 1871, and that the salaries of some of them have increased. The increases in salaries were in consequence of increased experience and efficiency in those who got the increases. If the number has doubled since 1871, the business has more than doubled. Thus the number of writs issued from the process office in 1872 for Queen's Bench and Common Pleas was 891, while the number for 1892 was 2,097. Besides, since 1872 the work of the officials has been increased, not merely by the increase in the number of actions, but still further by there having been an increase in the number of departments which the business has occasioned. It is since 1872 that we have had a Master in Chambers, an Inspector of Legal Titles, a Master of Land Titles, and the shorthand reporters to the courts. The work done now by the officials at Osgoode Hall is far more than double the work done in 1872.

I have had an examination made of the comparative amount of fees on the one hand, and of salaries and incidental expenses on the other hand, at Osgoode Hall from 1885 to 1892 inclusive; and what is the result? The fees at the Land Titles office in its early years were exceptionally large, and exceeded the expenditure; but taking the aggregate amount of the salaries in all the offices at Osgoode Hall which are analogous to those under consideration, and it is found that the salaries alone have always largely exceeded the fees. In 1872 these salaries amounted to \$55,777, besides the expenses which are borne by those officials elsewhere who are paid by fees; while the fees; as ascertained from the stamps sold, amounted to \$37,000 only. The amount named for salaries does not include the salaries of the Accountant, the Inspector of Titles, or their clerks, nor the salaries of the shorthand reporters. Adding these, the excess would be by so much greater. The figures for the preceding years show substantially the same result as the figures for 1892.

SUBSEQUENT EXPERIMENTS.

7. The present Government, by the authority of the Legislature, made some other experiments in the same direction in the case of certain judicial officers in the county towns, who had theretofore been paid by fees, there being thought to be other reasons than those of economy for substituting salaries for fees in these cases. It was not desired, however, to give salaries exceeding what would probably be the income from fees; and the salaries were to be fixed on that basis. We made the experiment in the case of Surrogate Judges and Local Masters, two of the highest classes of officials in the public service, and the result demonstrated that as much cannot be realized from fees when they go to the public as when they go to the officer himself, however honest and honorable the officer is. It was under the Judicature Act of 1881 that our experiment was made.

LOCAL MASTERS.

That Act authorized the commutation of the fees payable to Local Masters and Deputy Clerks of the Crown for a fixed annual sum, not exceeding the average income from fees for the preceding five years. Under this Act, between 1881 and 1889, eight of the Local Masters were successively commuted with, the fees funded, and a fixed salary paid to the officer; and in every case the fees fell off, and there was loss to the Province.