

the law had been passed under false pretences or mistake. We then said : Abandon your law, do not continue this struggle with the Provinces. You said there were not and could not be any license laws in force. We find that there can be and are such laws. Abandon your law. *No, Sir John said ; though the Privy Council has decided that the Provincial laws are good, this law is good also.* NOT AS A MATTER OF NECESSITY, BUT NOW, AS A MATTER OF POLICY, I WILL MAINTAIN IT. (Laughter.) He went to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court decided that the law was bad. We said, now at any rate abandon your law. He refused. We said, if you will not abandon—at any rate suspend, until the decision of the Privy Council, the operation of this vexatious law. He at first refused ; but *we moved in the House and forced him*, by bringing the weight of public opinion to bear, *reluctantly to agree to the suspension of the law.* The Privy Council heard the case, and decided that it was quite true that a license law was waste paper ; but this was not the Provincial law, which Sir John Macdonald had declared to be waste paper ; it was the one he himself had put upon the statute book. (Loud and prolonged applause.) And so

#### THE GREAT LAW,

of which the Tories were to have all the credit, was torn to pieces, it was thrown into the waste-paper basket, and there was an end of it. No—not quite, because you had to pay the bill, and besides the hundreds and thousands paid before, you paid \$150,000 last session, and I don't know whether that will close the account or not. Besides the public money paid there is to be considered the turmoil and confusion, the collision of authority, the difficulties, the inefficiency in the operation of the existing laws, the expense to the Provinces, and to individuals, all created by these gentlemen in their insane determination, as far as they could, and further than the constitution warranted, to extend what they call Dominion rights and to diminish your Provincial rights, and so to accomplish their dream of centralisation at Ottawa. In that case almost every Province was actively fighting the Dominion. *A pretty state of things, the Dominion harrassing the Provinces, and the Provinces retaining lawyers, who are said to be expensive people to employ—(hear, hear)—to defend their rights against these unwarrantable attacks!* yet such became the relations of the Dominion and the Provinces owing to the action of the Dominion Government. The result is rather humiliating for the man who BOASTED OF HIS INFALLIBILITY AS A CONSTITUTIONAL LAWYER, and who, in 1882, invited the electors to trust his assurance that the Provincial license laws were waste paper,