

the Legislative Assembly since 1884; he had seen some men come and go, and he had seen some men stay that he would have liked to see go. (Laughter.) Very few men have come, and not many have gone whose presence in the Legislative Assembly would give him more pleasure. He commended Mr. Madole for the independence of thought of which he had given evidence, and for the clear-cut enunciation of his views, with which in the main he agreed. As Liberals they gave their members considerable latitude. It was the glory of the Liberal party that it has given freedom of speech to everybody, in Parliament and out of it. It was the glory of the Liberal party that it has been the fertile soil of all those great progressive measures in Church and State which have made Canada, which have made England, free and which make us proud of being British subjects.

The Second Campaign.

Reference has been made, said Mr. Ross, that I am here to-night to make the opening speech of the campaign. Well, it is my second campaign; I opened the last campaign in 1902. I did not expect then that the second would come on so soon; I did not want it to come on so soon; but, latterly, I thought that the second campaign should be opened. Our opponents thought that we were going to hold the bye-elections. We trust the people—the whole people. We have been scandalized—I use the term in its kindest sense—hard things have been said against us. It is said we have lost the public confidence. On the 25th of January we shall know whether we have the confidence of the people or not, and so far as I am concerned, we shall not know it any too soon. I do not want to stand as the leader of a party that is staggering under a weak majority, or that under any pretence whatever rules or governs or legislates for the people of Ontario. A Liberal leader that is true to the tradition of his party wants to have the whole people—wants to have a substantial majority of the people—at his back, that he may rule with firmness and strength, and with a resolute will. We have not faltered or staggered under our comparatively weak majority. Still, it goes without saying that the position of the Government would be better if the majority were increased. We expect that to be the result of this campaign. We expect, when we meet the enemy face to face, that we shall be able to show him that his charges are unfounded, that our reputation is unsullied, that the administration of public affairs has been in the public interest, and that no Ministry nor member of the Liberal ranks has benefited himself by one dollar because of his position. (Cheers.)

Political H. 'lucination.

Mr. Ross went on to say that he had been somewhat puzzled as to what he should talk about to-night. The field was an extensive one, but he had come to the conclusion he would take what might be called the political gossip of the Opposition—it was gossip; it was political