

ascertaining to what extent the timber and mineral resources of the country ought to be applied before we should be asked to enter into large engagements, and before we should be asked to enter on a railway policy. Yet these gentlemen do not know to what extent the timber revenues of the province have gone. I appeal to you that it would be but the act of a sensible, prudent man, such as yourselves would do, in the ordinary every-day concerns of business, to permit the people of the province, by means of a commission, or in some other way, to ascertain to what extent the timber revenue and other resources of the province have been squandered, that we should know how necessary it was for us to husband our resources and say how near we are coming to direct taxation, and in order that we may determine how we are to aid those railway enterprises and those mineral enterprises that are knocking at the doors of the Assembly asking aid and assistance for their development. I think in refusing that commission this Government has acted in a high-handed and improper manner for the interests of the people of the province of Ontario.

I will proceed now, sir, to discuss

#### The Centralization Policy

of this Administration. Ever since this Government has come into power the tendency of its legislation has been bureaucratic, has been to centre in the Parliament at Toronto or in the executive having the confidence of that Parliament all power and authority possessed by the people. I have heard Mr. Mowat on the floor of the House declare that patronage was a nuisance to any Government, but the Government has acted on the policy that patronage should be used. In respect to appointments of various kinds, you recollect how they have seized hold of the appointments of division court clerks and bailiffs, of marriage license issuers, of license inspectors and commissions; how they have taken the control of the educational system into their hands in order that they might stretch out this patronage and power.

Mr. Chairman, and Ladies and Gentlemen,—I venture to say that in this country the first thing to look to and prevent is the getting into office of the young men who are political aspirants. This is the policy which, as the leader of the Opposition, I enunciated at the last session of the Local Legislature; and I endeavored so far as possible to add to that policy that the control of local matters should be left in the hands of the people of the locality in which work was to be done. If that were done, sir, these scandals and references to the conduct of public officials from time to time would not have been made. I also urged the public

interest that the registry office of the City of Toronto, in the County of York, should not be divided in the interest of the office-seekers and friends of the Local Government. Mr. Chairman, I venture to say that the policy of the administration of the day has been to provide means by which their friends and supporters could

#### Fatten at the Public Expense.

I venture to say, and I can prove it, that a policy, such as this, the policy that I have outlined, would tend to remove in a very great measure the possibility of these office-seekers fattening at the public expense, and the first and foremost point in that policy is that as far as possible each locality should have the dealing with and control of its own affairs. (Cheers.)

#### THE LICENSING SYSTEM.

##### A System of Tyranny and Coercion of the Liquor Dealers.

And now I begin to speak of another branch of this subject. I refer to the licensing system. I do not propose to-night to enter as fully into this subject as I shall do upon some other occasion, but I shall endeavor to show, what we all know in regard to that question, and what every constituency knows in regard to that question, that the licensing system is used as a huge means of building up and supporting the Government in power. (Cheers.) We know it is used as a means of terrorizing those engaged in that business. Why, it was only the other day that a reputable journal of Toronto made specific charges against the licensing system and showed that from one end of the country to the other these charges could be truthfully made and supported by evidence incontrovertible. (Cheers.) You may say that these are only assertions, these are charges which you cannot prove, but I want to tell you in regard to this matter and matters which have been lately brought to light, that the charges cannot admit of controversy, and I want to read evidence to you as briefly as possible to show how they can be proved. And I shall read to you first the evidence of the prominent dealers of the City of Hamilton, indicating the way in which the licensing system was used. I shall also refer to two other documents in proof of my position, showing that the licensing system is made use of for the purpose of bolstering up the fortunes of the Government at the expense of the people of this province. Now, sir, there was a certain Mr. Lottridge who brought an action against the *Hamilton Spectator* for libel, and in the course of the investigation which took place in accordance with the powers given to the judge presiding