

some explanation from Hon. Mr. Langevin, maintained that their charges showed, as a matter of fact upon the estimates, an increase of \$4,641. He then proceeded to show the amount of saving to be expected by the abolition of four departments, and though for convenience of calculation, he would individualise these, he would not be understood as suggesting to the Government which might be most profitably dispensed with. However taken the following *pro forma*. The abolition of Customs would give \$64,622; of Inland Revenue \$49,486; of Secretary of State \$60,089; and of Public Works \$63,611, making a total saving of \$237,806. He might fairly include the latter, for, while not desirous to reflect upon its present head, he must say that if there had been one department more injurious to the country than another it had been that of Public Works. Every work with which they ever had to do had been a total failure. They were just competent to initiate, but never to complete. In every case it had been necessary to call in arbitration. The Grand Trunk Railway had been constructed under the supervision of the Government, and every difficulty under which it had been since found to labour had been the result of its defects of construction. Ignoring the two most important railway considerations, straightness and evenness of grade, the engineers, of whom one was the Department's, prolonged the line for which they were payed per mile by running round every obstacle they encountered, till the road ran altogether in Horgarth's line of beauty, while the gradients of Government supervision were so steep as to make it necessary for engine drivers to back up one hill to gain momentum to carry them forward on the next. The department was also responsible for the Chats Canal, the most extraordinary work of any country, a mere hole in a rock without outlet or inlet, out of the line of the Ottawa Ship Canal, and the cost of which might as profitably have been sunk in the St. Lawrence. The Houses of Parliament, also constructed under Board of Works supervision, and the cost of which had been estimated at \$678,000 had involved an outlay of close upon \$3,000,000, the contractors having been paid \$48,000 in excess, and arbitration having amounted to \$30,000. The Public Works Department had therefore, he contended, squandered more money, and exhibited more incompetence than any other. In conclusion, the honourable member would not go on at any greater length to enlarge upon his subject, but would appeal to honourable

members to say whether it were possible for the country to maintain such a rate of expenditure much longer. He did not bring his motion with any desire to displace Ministers; it was the system not the administrators that he objected to, and if there were to be 13 offices maintained, would as soon see them filled as at present as by any gentlemen from his own side. He believed, however, that seven or even five might be made sufficient, but allowing as many as nine, had so indicated the means of saving to the public Treasury \$237,800 yearly. In the time he had occupied, he had endeavoured to touch as many points as he could pertinent to the object he had in view, which was in the interests of the country; and thanking the House for the amiable manner in which they had listened to him, he took his seat.

Amid cries of "question," "divide," etc., the Speaker declared the resolution lost on a division.

CLAIMS FOR LAND USED FOR DEFENCE

Mr. Blanchet moved an address for a statement of claims submitted for the decision of the Provincial arbitrators of the former Province of Canada, consequent upon the appropriation of land required for military defence in the county of Levis. In moving for the address the honourable gentleman said that in his part of the country public opinion was strongly in favour of the right of appeal from the decision of the arbitrators.

Hon. Mr. McDougall said that as the Act previously stood, the right of appeal from the decision of the Provincial arbitrators to the ordinary courts of law had been limited to the Province of Quebec. In the United States, the decision of the arbitrators was final. He thought that the experience of the various Governments of this country in dealing with questions of this kind that came before the Provincial arbitrators, showed that it was not in the public interest that appeals in that class of cases should be permitted. Take for instance the case of the Beauharnois canal. Various claims had been made by owners of property along its route for damages to their premises, and in one case where the decision of the arbitrators had been appealed against, a judgment had been obtained against the Province for a large sum, something like \$50,000. The opinion of the public officers and of those who were not interested in the case was that the parties in whose favour the judgment had been recorded were not justly