

little to do indeed. And yet, strange to say, it was provided that the Minister of Justice, even with the very little he had to do, except as a high legal functionary called upon to give advice to the Crown—the duties were very responsible and ought to require legal attainment, but were not of that continuous every-day work which required a separate Department—was not to do his work alone; the Attorney-General had to do his work. The Minister of Justice, assisted by the Attorney-General, would preside over the Department of Justice. The Minister of Justice, the Chancellor, the keeper of the Vice-Regal conscience in this country, was not even head of his own Department, but was to be assisted by the Attorney-General in the Department of Justice, where there was little practical work to do, while the Minister of Justice had nothing to do with the Attorney-General's Department. The hon. gentleman had said there was an enormous increase of business. The hon. gentleman did not look very much overworked; he did not seem to have suffered in his health. Any Minister of Justice applying himself solely and entirely to the work of his Department could fairly perform it; one man could do it with proper assistance. True, the hon. gentleman stated there had been a large increase of references. How did that occur? He (Sir John A. Macdonald) could easily understand it. It was simply the introduction of a circumlocution system. These matters, he believed, had all been brought to the Minister of Justice. There was a good deal of justification for that circumlocutory process from the fact that the Administration formed in 1873 were, most of them, inexperienced men in the practical working of the administration of affairs; therefore, they went, very properly on first taking office, with uncertain steps, feeling their way, not being willing to take certain responsibilities, which older and more experienced men would consider as routine. The older the present Government became, so long as it retained a reasonable portion of its older members, this necessity for reference would decrease. Take, for instance, the Minister of Customs. He was an able

man, and being an old commercial man, was peculiarly well adapted to that office. But he did not know anything about the general administration of the Customs Act. Questions of law from every collector all over the Dominion came to him, and he was obliged to refer them to the Attorney-General, in order to get a report upon the law respecting them. It was a fact that there were so many Departments taken in charge by men who had no experience, that the references to the Attorney-General's office were increased. The Dominion had not grown so enormously since 1873 as to require an entire, a distinct, and a separate Department. Look back at the Department as he (Sir John A. Macdonald) had left it. If he had simply been Minister of Justice and Attorney-General, he would have had no difficulty in performing the work, and would have had plenty of time besides. He held that Department, and the still more troublesome one, as the hon. member from Lambton had no doubt experienced, of First Minister. He was bound to say the two, or rather the three, were too onerous for one individual. With competent men at the heads of the different Departments, the one holding the office of Minister of Justice, could perform, and would be able to perform, its duties for a long time to come. There was no necessity for an increase of salary. The hon. gentleman said the Department looked after the penitentiaries, which was an enormous affair. Why, looking after the penitentiaries had always existed. When he was Attorney-General of the old Province of Canada, they had not only to look after the penitentiaries in Ontario, but also after every county gaol in the Province of Ontario. That work had certainly not increased. Then, the hon. gentleman had been relieved from the charge of the Mounted Police, rather a troublesome affair, the moral management of which, not the supply and material, should always have remained there. There was no necessity for this Department; it was a causeless division of labour, an unfortunate division of labour. He thought it would work badly; it would be well that the present system should exist, but espe-