

tonnage on the upper lakes which cannot go any further than the city of Buffalo, but if a canal system was projected on the basis of a ship canal, the industry of our lake region would be stimulated. I do not say that it is possible to do so at present, it is a thing to be considered in the future; it is not one that can be taken up with the greatest ease, but at the same time it is one that I say may be fairly made a subject of consideration between the two nations with great advantage, and introducing it in the way the hon. leader of the government did I think would certainly redound to the benefit of the country and only be carrying out the policy that was inaugurated by the late government when they appointed a commission for the purpose of bringing about this very result, and I feel sure we will all await with interest to see what the report of the commission that is now sitting will be upon the matter, upon its feasibility and practicability and all the information with regard to the grain and produce of that great western country and its mode of egress to the market of the world. Now, hon. gentlemen, I won't dwell upon that question of the warrants. It has been ably discussed, but I cannot help thinking that the issue of warrants by the present government is quite an exceptional necessity. The late government carried the legislation up to the last moment fighting to get the Remedial Bill through parliament, and it became impossible, as parliament ceased to exist upon a certain date, to consider the matter of voting supplies, and it would be impossible to go on to the end of the year issuing warrants for the whole of the expenditure of 1896 between the 1st July and 31st December. Therefore I think it is quite an exceptional case. Without thoroughly understanding the constitutional merits of the case at all I certainly think that the government, in order to keep the machinery of government working smoothly, had no other alternative, that there was no other course open to them except the course they took. It was impossible to go on issuing these warrants to the end of the year, and they had no other course to pursue but to call parliament together as they have done. When the late government were in a majority they failed to pass the estimates for the year, attaching more importance to the Remedial Bill. I must say I had a good deal of sympathy with the remarks made by the

last speaker in regard to the question of forming a kind of political alliance between the various provinces and the Dominion in the formation of the government. I think that is a question that is fairly open to criticism. The political tendency of that, if followed up, would be towards federalizing the constitution rather than decentralizing, as we decided upon when confederation was formed. The hon. leader of the Senate to-day will recollect perfectly well that he was called in 1871 from the bench to take the leadership of the province of Ontario. The reason of that was that the Hon. Mr. Blake and the Hon. Mr. Mackenzie, who defeated the Hon. Sandfield Macdonald at that time, were obliged to make one choice or the other. The decentralizing of power as between the province of Ontario and the Dominion was determined upon then by the dual representation being done away with. Up to 1871 dual representation was allowed in Ontario; it is, I believe, still allowed in Quebec. That is to say, you were allowed to have a seat in the Provincial House and also a seat in the Dominion House; but it was felt in Ontario that was an unwise course to continue to pursue, and the dual representation was done away with. The Hon. Mr. Blake and Mr. Mackenzie selected the Dominion House of Commons for their political arena, and the hon. leader of the Senate with great advantage to the country was called down from the bench to take their places and to carry on the government of the province of Ontario. I merely recall that in order to show that the course that is now being pursued has the effect of changing that position because if the members of the provincial governments that are in alliance politically and in sympathy with the national government of the day are to be selected before the representatives of the national parliament it would certainly have the effect of intensifying our party system and subordinating the provinces through their governments to the influence of the Dominion government. I think most people will agree that party ramifications are too extended already, and are carried on to too large an extent at the present moment for the enlightenment of the people. Now, the hon. leader of the Senate, referred in his speech a few moments ago to the fact that religious cries were more prevalent before confederation than they have been since. Before confederation we