

been shown by Mr. Howland. When obliged to return home on account of ill health, he took his subordinate officers with him, and though he worked under the double disadvantage of ill health and absence from the seat of Government, it could be proved that he had accomplished more than enough to show the advantage arising from the subdivision of departments.

The item was agreed to.

On the next item—Department of Public Works \$38,611.

**Hon. Mr. Holton** contended that in as much as the superintendence of the Intercolonial Railway was otherwise provided for, and as the Department had been shorn of some of its former functions, it did not afford work enough for a head of a department devoted to it exclusively.

**Hon. Mr. McDougall** denied that the department was shorn of any of its proper functions. Even as regarded the Intercolonial Railway, the commissioners for that work would have to act under the control of the department. The work would be carried on at a distance, and the commissioners would relieve the department of the care of a variety of details, but he did not feel that the department had lost any of its dignity or responsibility in consequence of the provision of the Intercolonial Railway Bill. He (Mr. McDougall) had endeavoured to manage the department as economically as possible, and was prepared to show that its expenditure was less than in 1867 or 1866.

**Mr. Mackenzie** said he desired, in connection with this item, to speak at some length, to ask information and to give information on some points in which the public interests were deeply involved, and with that view he would ask that the item stand over.

**Hon. Mr. McDougall** desired the honourable gentleman to indicate more definitely what he referred to.

**Mr. Mackenzie** said he referred to the management of the department, and the extravagant, almost scandalous, manner in which public moneys were squandered by certain officers of the department. He would only remark further just now that he thought

the member for Chateauguay did not understand the matter correctly when he represented the Minister of Public Works as having reason to complain of having been shorn of some of the proper functions of his department. What the Minister of Public Works had indicated, during the election, that he was desirous of securing was not the labour connected with the construction of the Intercolonial Railway, but merely the political advantages that might possibly result from it. The honourable gentleman expected it to be the great engine by which he and his new allies were to be sustained in power for many years, and the member for Chateauguay acted unjustly in insinuating that the object the honourable gentleman had in view was not likely to be realized. If there ceased to be a minority and majority on the question in the Cabinet, and other difficulties removed, he must confess those expectations were in a fair way of being realized. It was an injustice to the Minister of Public Works and his colleagues to say that they would not take advantage of the opportunities which the construction of the Intercolonial Railway would afford them.

**Hon. Mr. Holton** said the difference between himself and the member for Lambton was more apparent than real. The statement made by the Minister of Public Works during the election was that the acumen and corrupt proclivities of the leader of the Government had been very much under-rated, if he did not use the expenditure connected with the construction of the Intercolonial Railway to secure his remaining in office for the next ten years. He (Mr. Holton) had not intended to call in question the sincerity of the Minister of Public Works in that declaration, or the adherence of his colleagues to the purpose he had imputed to them. He thought, however, there was an unfairness in taking away from the Minister of Public Works the control of that expenditure, but probably this was an additional evidence of the correctness of what the honourable gentleman told the electors. The leader of the Government had deprived him of that power with a view to the more certain fulfilment of that brilliant prospect which the honourable gentleman had depicted.

[Sir J. A. Macdonald (Kingston).]