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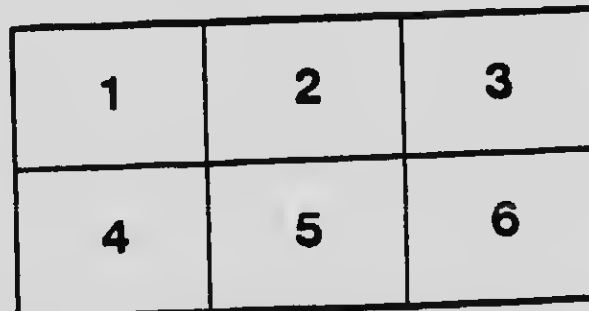
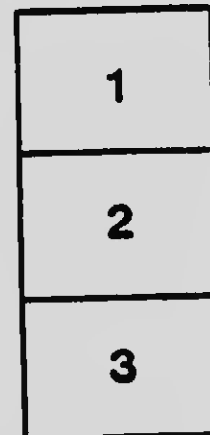
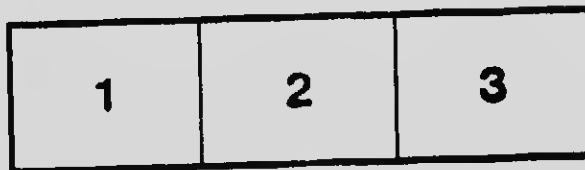
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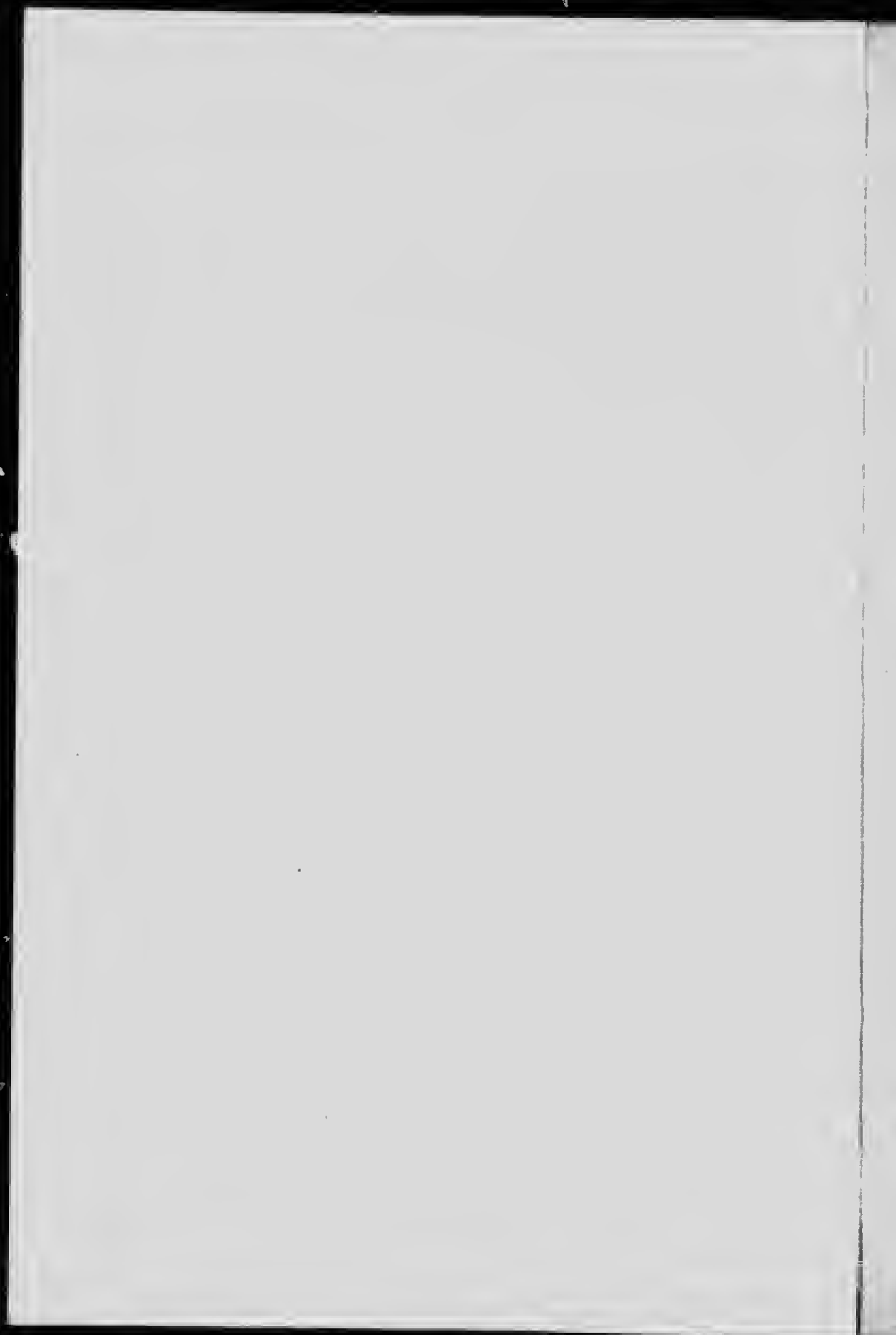
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ADDRESS
OF
HON. J. M. GIBSON
ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Comprehensive Review of
Provincial Questions

IN RELATION TO
The Advance Policy and Great Record of the
Ross Government

DELIVERED AT FERGUS, OCTOBER 21st
1901

Ceci

Hon. J. M. Gibson's Address

At Fergus, on October 21st, 1901.

THE meeting was held in the Town Hall and was the occasion of the Attorney-General's first appearance at a meeting in East Wellington since his renomination. The Chair was occupied by Mr. Argo, who made a brief speech by way of introduction. The Hon. Mr. Gibson was well received and spoke as follows:

My first word to the Liberals of East Wellington at the present time is naturally an expression of gratitude for the unanimous nomination at the Convention. When I first entered the constituency in 1898 the understanding was that the representation should be given to me for the balance of the Parliamentary term, and I gave the assurance that a nomination for a further term would not be sought by me. That assurance has been lived up to on my part in good faith. Frequently, when I have felt a desire to visit the constituency and become better acquainted with my constituents, I have been deterred from doing so by the consideration that it might be charged against me that I was in reality seeking to make myself solid for another term and my visits to East Wellington have been confined to special occasions in connection with which my presence could not possibly justify any such construction of my motives.

UNANIMOUS NOMINATION ACCEPTED.

There are many men in the riding of ability, whose names have often been suggested in connection with the Parliamentary representation of East Wellington, and from among whom excellent candidates might have been selected. It has not been without some misgiving therefore, on my part that my connection with the constituency should for the time being seem to stand in the way of very reasonable and natural aspirations on the part of any of these gentlemen. The invitation, however, appeared to me to come with such a degree of unanimity as to justify my immediate acceptance in a response to the telegraphic message sent from the President of the Association, asking my reply on the afternoon of the Convention. The honour of having represented East Wellington has been greatly appreciated by me. It can safely be said without flattery, and without any insincerity on my part, that East Wellington stands second to no constituency in the Province in the material advantages it enjoys as an agricultural section of the country and certainly not as regards the solid, sterling and intelligent qualities of the people. (Applause.) Correspondingly great is the

honour of being named as the standard bearer of the Liberal Party in such a constituency, and however far I may be considered to have fallen short of performing fully the duties of your representative in the past, I have no hesitation in making the promise of faithfully endeavouring to completely justify the confidence of the good people of East Wellington, in the next parliament.

MR. WHITNEY'S ATTITUDE.

In coming here this evening to speak to some of the electors in the riding one feels a difficulty in deciding upon the questions to take up the discussion of which is likely to be of most interest. Recently the leader of the Opposition delivered a speech in Toronto which was intended for the province. The most striking characteristics of this speech were its enormous length and its remarkable thinness. If you eliminate the worn out diatribes about West Elgin and North Waterloo and the extracts from the Farmer's Sun and other newspapers, and make a further subtraction of items of policy taken with colourable variations from the Ross speeches and laboured efforts to show that because sometime or other some one on that side of the House had said something or other consistent with some of the numerous items of the business policy of the Ross Government, therefore the Government were stealing the Tory Policy—you will not have much left of that speech. I do not propose to follow Mr. Whitney through his speech, but, probably before I have finished, some of the matters on which he has dwelt will be discussed by me.

CROWN LANDS DEPARTMENT.

When I last came before you it was as the head of the Crown Lands Department, a position which was held by me until the resignation of the late Premier, the Honourable A. S. Hardy, when the Department of Attorney General was assumed by me. During my term of office as Commissioner of Crown Lands the Government was called upon to consider the basis upon which privileges of cutting pulp wood should be granted. Mr. Whitney has found fault with the Government for not disposing of these rights by public competition in the same manner as we dispose of pine timber limits. As a matter of fact it is not possible to treat the disposition of pine timber and pulp wood under the same regulations. We have adopted the policy of insisting that all pulp wood sold by the Crown shall be manufactured in this country. So far the regulations are the same. In the regulations affecting the sale of pine timber we do not stipulate for the building of mills, or the establishment of any manufacturing plant, or the employment of any number of men as operatives, or the manufacture of any lumber. Purchasers of pine limits may let them stand from year to year without cutting a stick of timber, paying the annual ground rental and waiting for enhanced value; but in all of our pulp agreements we have required, as a condition of the right to cut, that large expenditures shall be made in the erection of mills and development of water power, and that a minimum number of men shall be employed, and

that a minimum output shall be reached, our object being to insist on the establishment as rapidly as possible of centres of industrial activity at different points in New Ontario, which cannot fail to promote the general development of agricultural and other resources in the surrounding sections of the country.

WATER POWER REGULATIONS.

While I was Commissioner of Crown Lands legislation was adopted, and regulations passed providing for the leasing of water powers at an annual rental instead of disposing thereof by absolute grant. Under the regulations no water power can be secured unless under condition that the same shall be developed within a certain time with a minimum output of power, and with the further condition that power shall be provided by the lessee to other users requiring same at rates to be fixed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, in case of dispute. This is especially important in these days of easy transmission of electric power over long distances. For the first ten years the rental payable to the Crown is moderately low, but as these first terms expire and the rental values have to be fixed for further terms, often years, a considerable increase of revenue will be derived by the Crown from these power sites, many of which have great natural advantages.

PROVINCIAL PULP WOODS.

It is liable to happen that sections of the country having a supply of spruce are more or less tributary to streams, the water power on which already belongs to private owners, and in such cases there could practically be no competition between them and others in purchasing the pulp wood. A very effective control, however, is retained by the Government, by means of a provision in all agreements that the Government may at any time, or from time to time, increase the rates per cord charged for all wood which may be cut. Formerly the rate was 20 cents per cord. A year or two ago it was raised to 40 cents per cord, and the Government may at any time make further increases. Mr. Whitney tells us that the Opposition were about to press for the increase of these dues and almost goes the length of including this item of government policy in the stock of stolen goods about which he whines. All I can say is, we were entirely unconscious of Mr. Whitney or the Opposition having any views on the subject, and we acted in that matter as in all other matters, upon our own convictions of what was right and proper in the public interest. The records of the department will show that the subject had been under consideration for some time and was not hastily dealt with by the Government. Moreover, the matter was dealt with by Order in Council and not by legislation, and one cannot help feeling a certain amount of amusement at Mr. Whitney's lame effort to have himself associated with the Government in the action adopted in this matter. A glance at the map on which are indicated the different points at which the establishment of these immense industrial enterprises have either already been, or are being established will convince

anyone of the immense advantages that must be derived therefrom. Northern Ontario is exceptionally well provided with water powers on the numerous rivers which run from the height of land southerly to Georgian Bay, Lakes Huron and Superior, as well as those which run northerly towards James Bay, not to say anything of the immense power which has been so extensively developed by Mr. Clergue at the Sault.

EXTENT OF PULP WOOD RESOURCES.

Estimates made by the exploring parties sent out by the Government in the summer of 1900 show a supply of pulp timber on the sections traversed of 288 millions of cords. It is almost impossible to realize the immensity of the extent and number of enterprises which may be expected to be established in New Ontario in the near future, having in view the advantages of such an inexhaustible supply of pulp wood and of so many excellent water powers. Indeed, it does not seem at all unduly optimistic to expect that the time will soon come when this rapidly growing industry will prove to be one of the principal sources of Provincial revenue. (Applause)

The Government policy is to encourage the establishment of these industries as rapidly as possible and instead of allowing the spruce to be destroyed by forest fires to get some returns therefrom for the benefit of the Province. It is significant that Mr. Marter, the Opposition Leader's first lieutenant, and himself formerly leader of the Opposition, approves of the Government's policy in dealing with the pulp industries, as also some of the Conservative newspapers. (Applause).

WHAT NEW ONTARIO MEANS.

From the moment of Mr. Ross' accession to the Premiership the active development of New Ontario has been one of the chief items in his programme. The time seems to have arrived when that immense area can be opened up and converted into a field of mining, agricultural and manufacturing industries. Let us see what this New Ontario, this greater Ontario, consists of. In round figures the whole Province embraces an area of 200,000 square miles. Old Ontario lying south of Lake Nipissing and Mattawa River contains 60,000 square miles. North of the Lakes and Old Ontario, but south of the height of land, lies a belt of another 60,000 square miles while north of the height of land is an immense area of 80,000 square miles. In the middle belt there is a large proportion of rocky and broken territory that will never be of much utility for agricultural purposes but portions of which are very rich in mineral resources.

MINERAL DEVELOPMENT.

During the last eight or ten years great progress has been made in mining which may now be considered as an important and growing industry. Probably at no time has the Crown Lands Department been more crowded with applications for patents and leases than during my term as Commissioner, and this activity is continuing. Much capital has been invested in gold mining, principally in the westerly part of the Province. Of course many investments have been made which will never prove to be

remunerative. But the returns made from year to year show, that while there have been disappointments there have also been numerous successful developments. The returns show that in the tonnage of Gold and Silver ore treated, the gold and silver product and the wages paid for labour there has during the past eight years been very good progress and that the prospects of a permanent gold and silver mining industry are very bright.

IRON MINING OPERATIONS.

The deposits of iron ore at Michipicoten and north of that point are being rapidly got at, supplies of ore for the smelters at Hamilton, Midland, and Deseronto are at the present time shipped in large quantities from that point, while the new Canadian Northern Railway running from Port Arthur to Winnipeg will very soon render easy access to the important and valuable iron ranges known as the Atikokan and Mattawan deposits. There is no room for doubt that the iron industry will in the early future become a very prominent industry in this Province. With a smelter at Hamilton turning out well nigh 200 tons of excellent pig iron every day, a similar concern in full operation at Midland, a charcoal smelter at Deseronto, and the promise of an immense smelting plant at Collingwood, not to say anything of the smelting works sure to be established and already under construction at Sault Ste. Marie by Mr. Clergue, and the steel plant in full operation at Hamilton, and the immense steel plant now being installed by Mr. Clergue at the Sault, we have reason not merely for satisfaction but surprise that so much has been accomplished during the last few years. (Applause)

NICKEL AND COPPER.

Among the mining industries in this middle belt of Ontario are the nickel and copper mines. While there are known to be very valuable copper deposits, the development of which has already begun, there certainly are immense stores of nickel and copper in combination. Ontario has the best supply of nickel in the world, easy of access and favourably situated for the successful development of the nickel industry in mining, smelting and refining. Indeed, the Province has not only the largest known deposits of nickel ores but the only deposits in America found in economic quantities. New Caledonia is the only rival of Ontario in nickel resources, and it is a penal colony on the other side of the globe. Labour there is less efficient and the difficulties of mining and shipping are relatively greater. The Ontario nickel mines should control the world's market, for nowhere can it be produced at so low a cost. The works of the Canadian Copper Company near Sudbury have for several years been the scene of great industrial activity, while the new Monde works and the Nickel Copper Company of Hamilton will greatly add to the extent of the output of this rare metal. The time may come, I think will come, when with the refinement of nickel in this Province we shall have the most important nickel steel industry in the world.

AGRICULTURAL POSSIBILITIES.

All this means much for New Ontario, but is equally important to Old Ontario. It must not be thought for a moment that in this belt of New Ontario south of the height of land and bordering on the lakes, there is no room for the farmer. While much of this part of the Province is unfit for agricultural purposes there are considerable areas of excellent farming lands, some portions of which are being successfully cultivated. For some years past settlement around Lake Nipissing, in the neighborhood of Port Arthur and along Rainy River, has been going on with considerable rapidity, many of the townships being very fertile and favourable for farming operations, while everyone is aware of the great increase of settlers in the Temiscamingue District. (Applause.)

NORTH OF THE HEIGHT OF LAND.

The third division of the Province north of the height of land contains 80,000 square miles and until recent years but little has been known as to the capabilities of this great area. The information obtained from the explorations made last year, however, fully confirms all previous reports as to the extent and quality of land for farming purposes. North of the height of land, and extending westerly from Lake Temiscamingue, and from the neighborhood of Lake Abitibi, there is an immense field of good agricultural land described as clay and loamy clay land where in the not distant future, I hope in the very early future, settlements will be established and wheat growing and general farming operations carried on on a large scale. Though North of the height of land it must not be considered that this fertile tract is out of the world. Practically the greater portion of it lies in the same latitude as Southern Manitoba or somewhat farther South. The latitude of Winnipeg is 50°, of Calgary 51½° and of Edmonton 54°. A large part of the wheat belts of our North West is north of where this North Ontario Belt ends and there seems no room for doubt that in the matter of latitude this portion of our Province is well within the wheat growing districts of the world.

A MILD CLIMATE.

Moreover the testimony of trappers and explorers goes to prove that the climate of the section South of James Bay and North of the height of land is much milder than the climate along the North Shore of Lake Superior and South of the height of land, and milder than the climate of Manitoba. It is said that the season opens as early as in Manitoba and closes later, and that even in its present uncleared condition it is free from summer frosts. Probably it is not too sanguine an estimate to say that there are well nigh twenty millions of acres of good land fit for settlement in the area I have just been describing, perhaps considerably more, but certainly not much less. Of the total 126 millions of acres of land of which the Province is composed only between 20 and 25 millions altogether have been sold, and fully two thirds of the Province has yet to be surveyed.

One can, therefore, appreciate the momentous possibilities of the future in the opening up and development of these districts of New Ontario.

ENERGETIC RAILWAY POLICY.

The only effective plan of securing an early settlement and development of this fertile section of the Province is to lose no time in providing railway access to and egress from them, and the Government has already announced the intention of having a railway constructed from a point at or near North Bay to the Temiscamingue District, a railway which under Government control shall for all time serve as a thoroughfare for all lines in the new district which may connect therewith. Engineers are now locating the line of this railway. Mr. Clergue proposes extending the Algoma Central from its interception of the Canadian Pacific west of Missanahie to James Bay which will afford another arterial outlet. It is not too much to expect that a line will at no distant day be projected which will run East and West through the centre of this fertile belt connecting with these outlets and these in conjunction with the numerous waterways should afford considerable transportation facilities for the settlers of a new country. Government control of the Temiscamingue line and the conditions of aid to the Algoma Central Railway will always secure reasonable freight rates. But in reality this territory is by no means remote, even James Bay is not much more distant from Toronto than Montreal and the section of country I have been describing as the agricultural belt is considerably south of James Bay. (Applause)

JAMES BAY FISHERIES.

When once railway connection with James Bay shall have been completed we may confidently rely on a most important sea fishing industry being established on our northern border. It is said that James Bay and Hudson Bay and the streams emptying into them are filled with fish—that the salmon breeding grounds are immense in extent—and that the cod grounds in James Bay are many times in extent the cod banks of the North Atlantic. This inexhaustible mine of wealth in these fisheries will afford constant business for the railways, and the industries cannot fail to bring emigration in large numbers to that part of the Province.

TIMBER POLICY.

Sometimes when charged with being without any definite policy to present to the country, Mr. Whitney and his friends pretend that their timber policy has been stolen by the Liberals. Let us examine into the truthfulness of that statement.

They claim that the prohibition of the exportation of logs was by them forced upon the Government. The claim is unwarranted and unfounded. In the fall of 1890 the Government of Ontario, in sympathy with the policy being pursued by the Dominion Government, inserted the manufacturing provision in the conditions of sale of certain timber berths in territory tributary to Lakes Huron and Superior and in Rainy River District.

Prior to the sale of 1890 the Conservatives had never propounded the manufacturing conditions as a part of their policy or moved any resolution on the subject. Mr. Meredith had, it is true, said in an academic way something on the subject by way of suggestion, but had never gone so far as claiming to have any policy of his own or putting himself on record on the subject.

EARLIER ACTION NOT INDICATED.

There was no reason why he should. The export of saw logs had not at that time assumed serious proportions, and every one knew that it was being dealt with by the Dominion Government, that there had been international negotiations, that the Dominion had legislated in 1886 and 1888 and passed different Orders in Council relating to export duties on saw logs. No one prior to 1890 expected or desired the Provincial Government to act, lumbermen and Ottawa politicians and Tory leaders alike desired the admission of Canadian lumber into the United States duty free—and under the conditions then existing neither party in the Province could have assumed the responsibility of interfering in an important question of International Trade and Commerce by proposing the imposition of manufacturing conditions which certainly would have been followed by the imposition of a very heavy duty on Canadian lumber entering the United States.

Mr. Whitney by his long and laboured reference to the timber question misrepresents the facts, and I regret to say that he does this in a manner which looks like the result of deliberation on his part.

THE OPPOSITION RECORD.

The first declaration of policy by the Conservatives by resolution in the House was Mr. Miscampbell's motion in 1893. This resolution called for the manufacture *within the Province* of all lumber cut in reserves thereafter to be sold. This was a direct blow at Quebec mill owners and the lumbermen of a sister province and against the spirit of the B. N. A. Act and could not be entertained, and having been proposed as a motion of want of confidence in going into supply it could not be amended and was voted down by a majority of 21.

Nothing further was heard from the Conservatives in the House about the policy they claim to have been the owners of until the Government brought down their policy in the session of 1897, which policy was rendered necessary by the offensive provisions of the American Dingley Bill. It will be remembered that the bill was a sudden change of policy on the part of the United States. It imposed \$2 a thousand duty on our lumber going to the States but provided further that there should be added to this duty a further duty equivalent to any export duty we might put on logs going into that country from Canada, so that if as an offset to the \$2 duty on our lumber the Canadian government put an export duty of \$2 a thousand on our logs the duty on our lumber automatically as it were, would be increased to \$4.

WHAT THE SITUATION WAS.

This, of course, meant exclusion of our lumber from the U. S. markets and wholesale towing of logs across the lakes to be manufactured in Michigan. This situation was intolerable and created great excitement among those interested in the lumber trade. Deputations came to the Government, and meetings of business men for the purpose of discussing the matter were held. Public opinion was making itself heard most unmistakably. The Government was listening to what could be said on both sides of the question. This was our duty. A great and important question was forcing itself upon the Government for solution. Many who had invested heavily in timber limits purchased from private owners and which had been sold by the Crown a quarter of a century before without any manufacturing condition attached relied on any change of policy that might be adopted as to future sales not being made retrospective, and apprehending a danger that the conditions affecting their heavy investments were about to be changed, they came to the Government and stated their case with great earnestness and strong argument.

THE GOVERNMENT TOOK ACTION.

All this was taking place during the summer and early autumn of 1897. Letters addressed by the then Premier, to Mr. Scott and Colonel Davidson intimated that the question was of such gravity and importance as regards both public interests and private rights, that instead of dealing with it by Order in Council the Legislature would be asked by the Government to enact such legislation as the public interests required and the exigencies of the situation appeared to demand. These were public deliverances and there could be but one inference as to their meaning. They meant that the Government had decided to deal with the matter in the manner in which later on it was dealt with. That was the Government policy which Mr. Whitney says we stole from the Conservative Party. Let it be remembered that in the 1890 sale the Government had imposed the manufacturing conditions. It was not inserted in the sale of 1892 because the bulk of the area sold in that sale was tributary to the Ottawa and other streams from which export was sure not to take place. An increase of 25 cts. made in the lumber dues and the largest prices ever obtained were realized in that sale. Out of 633 miles sold only 78 miles went to Americans and from this 78 miles practically no logs have been cut for exportation.

THE OPPOSITION'S INDIFFERENCE.

With the exception of Mr. Miscampbell's foolish amendment nothing was heard from the Opposition about the policy they claim to have had all these years, either in the House or in the country. Mr. Whitney was touring Ontario that summer—June, July and August. He made 36 speeches in none of which does he appear to have made any mention of, or reference to, this policy of theirs which he says we stole. We had a

timber sale on the 18th of August that very year. The manufacturing requirement was one of the conditions of that sale. Even that did not appear to remind him that the subject was one worthy of reference or passing remark.

On 3rd September at Barrie, Mr. Miscampbell expressed pleasure at seeing the Government adopting the manufacturing conditions, conveniently omitting any reference to the conditions of the sale of 1890, but even then Mr. Whitney does not appear to have had a word to say on the timber question, and we do not find him uttering a word on the subject throughout this period of excited public opinion until the 12th of October, by which time it was known, as announced by the Premier, that the Government intended dealing with the matter. The House was called for the 30th November, 1897, and the speech of the Lieutenant Governor stated that a Bill relating to timber and timber licenses would be brought down. The mover of the address said that the people were strongly in favour of regulations compelling the manufacture of logs in the Province, and spoke at length in that strain, plainly indicating the policy about to be submitted.

MR. WHITNEY'S SUDDEN CONVERSION.

Then, when Mr. Whitney had to develop a positive attitude of some sort on the subject, he became frantic and stated that he was prepared to legislate to-morrow morning. (Laughter.) He could not wait for the ordinary forms of procedure and insisted that the manufacturing requirements should be put into force at the earliest hour. He even went the length of insisting that the Government policy should be made to apply to the logs cut under the outstanding annual licenses. Had his policy been adopted, the province would have incurred most serious obligations to license holders, for whatever right the Province may have to vary the conditions, and that right has been very strenuously litigated, it was not contended by the strongest advocates of the manufacturing conditions among Ontario Lumbermen, that we should interfere with operations under the then outstanding annual licenses by imposing these conditions.

But it was an illustration of the habit which the leader of the opposition has frequently displayed when he finds the Government pursuing a course which is calculated to please the public. He then determines to go one better, so to speak. In this particular case his policy of going one better would have been detrimental to the best interests of the Province from every point of view. No stronger evidence of unfitness for a leader's position could be given by a public man than Mr. Whitney's course on that occasion. He talks of our favouring the Michigan timber owner while everyone, including Mr. Whitney, knows that the Michigan people have been the loudest in complaining of our legislation, but if Mr. Whitney's absurd amendment had been adopted the Court would have declared the legislation *ultra vires* and then the Michigan lumberman would indeed have been favoured greatly at Ontario's expense. (Applause)

AS TO CORPORATIONS.

Sometimes the Government and the Liberal Party are charged with unduly favouring corporations at the expense of the public. This accusation can of course be very easily made, whether there is the slightest foundation for it or not, and it has become fashionable on the part of the Tory speakers and journals to re-iterate this charge, evidently with the purpose of creating an impression on the part of the public that in some way or other we are under the influence of corporations, or that corporations can obtain legislative or administrative favours at our hands to which they are not entitled. We deny that we have unduly favoured corporations or companies, or that to any extent or in any sense any corporation or company, or corporations or companies, have acquired any special or undue influence with the Government. We owe no corporation or company anything beyond the obligation which we owe every individual in the community the right to be heard and the right to fair and just treatment. To that they are entitled and more than that they have not had.

ACTIVITY IN ORGANIZING CORPORATIONS.

The number of companies incorporated in recent years has been unprecedentedly large. A spirit of enterprise has manifested itself in the formation of companies all over the Province for manufacturing, mining, agricultural and trading purposes. Everyone is glad that this is so. It is a sign of progress. It means the development of our natural resources on which the future prosperity of Ontario will largely depend. Then there have been numerous railway companies and Street Railway Companies chartered and companies for the supply of gas or water or development of electric light and power. In nearly every town will be found a system of electric lighting provided by local companies generally composed of the most enterprising citizens of the community. Ordinary railway companies are chartered by special acts of the legislature but all these other companies apply for and obtain their charters of incorporation under general Acts to be found among our Revised Statutes, and obtain only such powers and rights as are warranted by the general laws of the Province. Special facilities have been offered for the incorporation of dairying and other companies, in which farmers are specially interested. It has never been charged that, in dealing with applications for Charters the Provincial Secretary's Department, which primarily deals with these applications, or the Government, had acted otherwise than on general principles, adopted, in all cases and with strict fairness and impartiality.

MUNICIPALITIES AND CORPORATIONS.

Between certain classes of companies and the communities where they operate, questions do undoubtedly arise and conflict of interest manifests itself. In case of companies chartered for the promotion or operation of what may be termed "*public utilities*," such as gas or water companies, electric light or power companies and street railway companies, questions

frequently arise between the municipal councils and such companies. Indeed the Company's charter as a rule is of less importance than the municipal by-law setting forth the terms and conditions under which the city, town or village, as the case may be, permits the company to operate, and local communities, very properly, through their municipal councils, view with much jealousy the placing in the hands of a few individuals who have become incorporated as a company, monopolies of these public utilities. They are called monopolies, inasmuch as in many cases from the nature of the circumstances, there cannot be competition or, at all events, effective competition. No doubt, in some instances valuable franchises have been granted under municipal by-laws without the interests of the public being amply protected, but these are matters of dealing between the companies and the municipalities, over which the Government exercises no control. The laws of the Province for many years past have given municipalities the right to establish under municipal control systems of water works and also of lighting and heating by gas. A few years ago power was conferred to establish electric light systems under municipal control, and then serious questions arose as to the exercise of this power in cities, towns or villages where there already existed systems of lighting provided by private enterprise, whether as incorporated or unincorporated companies. Manifestly it would be grossly unfair where, by private enterprise, a system of lighting sufficient for the purpose of a town or village had been established with the consent and authority of the municipality, that a competing system should be established by the town or village depriving the company not only of the public lighting contract but perhaps of a large proportion of its business with private consumers. This would mean confiscation and ruin of private enterprise and unjustifiable disregard of principles of equity and fair dealing.

PUBLIC INTERESTS GUARDED.

To meet such cases the amendments of the Municipal Act (known as the "Conmee Clauses" because the bill containing the provisions was introduced by the member for West Algoma) provide that the Municipal Council shall before establishing the Municipal Water, Light or Heating Plant as the case may be, purchase the existing system, the price or compensation being fixed by arbitration where not mutually agreed to. The basis of valuation in such a case is a very important matter, and I have yet to learn that in the clauses in question, to which the late Premier Hardy gave a great deal of personal attention, anyone has ever suggested that partiality has been shewn to the Companies. The interests of the public have been most carefully and effectively guarded.

Questions of policy, as between the alternatives of public control on the one hand and public ownership of the public utilities, to which I have been referring, on the other hand, have been by our legislation left to the decision of the communities interested. Large powers have been conferred on the municipal councils, demanded by the voice of public opinion, and the growing tendency of public opinion is in the direction of public ownership,

and in no sense can it be said that either the Government or the Liberal Party has stood in the way of or discouraged this tendency for the benefit or advantage of companies or private corporations.

SCRAP IRON ASSESSMENT.

But they say we have favoured these corporations through the medium of the Assessment Act, and that we are chargeable with the so-called "Scrap Iron Provisions" of that Act, and so on. The fact is that until the very last session of the House, there has been no legislation on the subject. For the past 40 or 50 years or more the Act has contained a provision that :

"the Personal Property of a bank or a company investing the whole or principal part of its means in gas works, water works, plank or gravel roads, railway and tramway roads, or other works requiring the investment of the whole or principal part of its means in real estate shall as hitherto be exempt from assessment; but the shareholders shall be assessed on the income derived from such companies."

This is a very old clause and the principle has remained unvaried for nearly half a century. But the question which has of recent years become very important is whether much of the property of these companies *is or is not personal property* and accordingly exempt from or liable to assessment. Whether for example gas mains, railway tracks, telephone poles and wires and such like have been liable to assessment as real estate or not. The Court of Appeal in the case of Fleming vs Toronto Street Railway Company in 1875 held that the rails of street railways were *not* assessable as real estate and so the law remained *judicially* settled for a number of years, until about five years ago in a case, Consumers' Gas Company against the City of Toronto, it was decided that the gas mains were assessable as real estate and the decision in the case of Fleming against the city of Toronto was overruled.

WHAT LED TO THE SCRAP IRON ACT.

But there is a provision in the Act that land shall be assessed in cities and towns in the ward in which the property lies, and in the case of the Bell Telephone Company and City of Hamilton the Court of Appeal held that if such property as that of the Telephone Company had to be assessed in fractional parts by wards, its value for assessment purposes was simply that of the material or in other words as "scrap," and hence the origin of what has been called the "scrap iron law".

CORPORATIONS NOT FAVOURED.

There never has been legislation relieving any of these companies from taxation burdens—*on the contrary large additional burdens have been imposed on all these companies by the Act of 1898 to supplement the revenues of the Province.* Not only Railway Companies, Banks, Insurance Companies, Loan Companies, Trust Companies, Express Companies, Sleeping Car Companies, Telegraph Companies and Natural Gas Companies, but also Street Railway, Gas and Electric Companies and Telephone Companies have all been obliged to contribute to the provincial Exchequer, and all

these last mentioned Companies continue assessable and taxable for municipal purposes as under the law they previously were assessable and taxable. It is, therefore, the case that, instead of Companies being relieved from taxation, the Courts by holding that Gas mains, Street Railway Tracks, the poles and the wiring of Telephone and Electric Companies were assessable as real estate, and the Legislature, by imposing the provincial tax, have very considerably increased the burdens these Companies have to bear. (Applause.)

THE ASSESSMENT COMMISSION.

But, in view of the fact that some classes of these companies have come into existence many years subsequent to the framing of the original provisions of the Assessment Act and could not have been in contemplation of those who were responsible for the legislation, and in view of the anomalous result of the decision of the Court in the Bell Telephone case, and in order that all these questions, as well as others relating to the assessment of property, might be fully enquired into, reviewed and reported on, a Royal Commission was issued and the report of the Commission is now before the country. There has been general satisfaction with the careful and patient manner in which Mr. Justice McLennan and his associate commissioners have been performing their duties. At the request of the Government, a form of bill was prepared by the Commissioners and introduced by the Premier, mainly with the object of removing the so called "scrap iron" anomaly, but the bill was framed in general terms and was objected to by many as likely to produce a revolutionary effect in the assessment of rural properties. It was, therefore, thought prudent and advisable to withhold the measure till another session and substitute, as a cure for the scrap iron grievance, a measure which had for two or three years been urged by the Council of the city of Hamilton and adopted by the Ontario Municipal Association, and this was done. This course was taken, not, as Mr. Whitney alleges, owing to pressure by the Companies, but simply and solely to allow ample opportunity to the Municipal Councils and the country to carefully consider the bearing and effect of the provisions proposed by the Commissioners, their report and the evidence being in the meantime printed and distributed. The distinct intention has been to remove the scrap iron grievance and any pretence that the Government, in the course which has been adopted, has favoured the corporations is entirely without foundation and contrary to the fact.

HELPING MUNICIPALITIES.

Much has been said also about a clause which the Premier proposed for introduction in the Municipal Amendment Act, authorizing Municipal Councils to exempt or to partially exempt some of these companies from assessment. It is well known that in not a few towns and smaller municipalities there are Street Railways, which have never paid dividends and, which indeed, have not made revenue sufficient to

meet their operating expenses. It was thought that in cases of this nature Councils might safely be entrusted with a certain amount of discretionary power. For many years Councils had the right to exempt manufacturing industries from assessment, for periods not exceeding ten years, and, in the cases of these unremunerative properties, operated for the public convenience, at a sacrifice, a discretion might very well have been given to the Councils to exercise as they thought prudent and reasonable. In the larger cities, like Toronto, Hamilton, Ottawa, London, etc., the provisions would have been practically inoperative, as no Council would have dared to act under it. But the Premier withdrew the clause rather than allow the Opposition the opportunity of attributing to the Government motives in connection therewith of legislating in favour of wealthy monopolies—motives the very opposite of those which led to the proposal of the clause.

CORPORATIONS AND THE OPPOSITION.

But acts speak more loudly than words and the votes and proceedings of the House show which party has favoured corporations. On 14th March 1899, on the order for second reading of the Bill 165, an Act to supplement the Revenues of the Crown, providing for certain taxes on corporations to be paid to the Province, Mr. Foy moved a six months hoist, and Mr. Whitney and the Opposition voted for Mr. Foy's motion and against the bill. Again on March 30th, in the same session, on the order for the third reading of the bill, Mr. Whitney himself moved the six months hoist and, with his followers, voted for the motion and against the bill. (Applause.)

LEGISLATION.

Our legislation has been well abreast of the times, and, generally speaking, we have been as progressive in our legislative record as any country in the world. No reforms are being clamored for by the people. We have always been fortunate in giving measures of legislation at the right time. Governments or Party leaders must refrain from being so far in advance of the people that they will not acquiesce, and must not lag so far behind public opinion as to be considered unprogressive. All the important measures of reform, given to the people by Liberal Governments, have been easily and naturally accepted by the people and assimilated a part of our system. A good illustration of this is to be found in the reforms of our Courts and law practice. That, which in England gave rise to much confusion and clogging of the wheels of justice, was, by means of Sir Oliver Mowat's Administration of Justice Act of 1873, followed by the Judicature Act of 1882, experienced as a comparatively easy transition from what now appears to have been a mediæval, to a common sense and modern system. The suitor no longer spends half a fortune with no better result than to find out that he is in the wrong Court, the best talent of the legal profession is no longer wasted in sharp practice and scientific hair splitting, multiplicity of actions has been discouraged in favour of expedition and directness as well as completeness of remedies, and law and equity, so far

as the Administration of Justice is concerned, have become synonymous terms.

BENEFICENT MEASURES.

The ballot in elections, improved methods of conducting elections, sensible provisions for disposing of disputed elections, the law for settling at rest forever the Municipal Loan Fund difficulties, numerous Acts relating to labor, the Mechanics' and Wage Earners' Lien Law, the Employers' Liability Act, the Factory Act, the Shops Regulation Act, the Railway Accidents' Act, Acts for facilitating the adjustment of disputes between masters and workmen and the settlement of industrial disputes of a general nature, providing for Councils and conciliation, law for the Registration of Voters: all are illustrations of how fortunate the Liberal Government has been in giving to the people measures, which they were prepared to receive and which they have accepted with satisfaction.

In this age of Benefit Societies what could have been more timely than our Insurance Corporations Act of 1893? In Massachusetts and other States the legitimate benefit societies were being swamped by the endless varieties of fake concerns, which unscrupulous adventurers were organizing and, which, day by day, were springing up, resulting in a general crash and the loss of millions of dollars by the poor wage earner. What legislation could have been better timed than the Ontario Act of 1890 stopping the further incorporation of these societies here and the Act of 1892 requiring all such societies, whether home or foreign, to comply with certain conditions and register in the Department at Toronto?

PRACTICAL PRAISE.

Much of our legislation has been copied by other Provinces and by state legislatures, which is the best testimony that we have been sensible as well as progressive. At the same time, there has been a complete absence of anything like a clamor or demand for the repeal of any of the laws we have enacted, which also is conclusive evidence of the people's general approval.

Laws relating to educational matters have, within the last ten years been thoroughly revised. Laws, affecting the interests of farmers and the great agricultural industries of the Province, have been enacted and generally approved by the people. An evening might be taken up in the discussion alone of these matters.

GOOD ROADS.

During the past session a measure, relating to good roads was passed through the House under the personal supervision and guidance of the Premier which is likely to produce most beneficial and lasting results. If the Province, by a contribution of one million dollars, shall have succeeded in stimulating the municipalities generally to a policy of action in improving the condition of our country roads, the final abolition of the last relics of toll gate mediævalism, and the adoption of modern methods of road construction, the Premier, personally, will have earned the gratitude of the pub-

lic for having so courageously grappled with a question which undoubtedly was surrounded by many difficulties. (Applause.)

UNWARRANTED BOASTING.

Mr. Whitney boasts of his efforts to make the provisions of the election law more stringent, and accuses me of adopting some of the amendments which he had embodied in a bill introduced by him in the session of 1900. In the speech of the Lieutenant Governor an intimation had been given that the election law would be amended, and in no sense is it true, as stated by Mr. Whitney, that the Government Bill was a copy of his Bill. Both Bills dealt with penalties, but as Mr. Whitney knows quite well, the most important clauses of the Government Bill were not covered by his Bill at all. His effort at best was a poor attempt to forestall a Government Bill which he knew was about to be brought before the House. (Applause.)

ADMINISTRATION.

If we have been progressive and up to date in our legislation, we have been no less fortunate in the administrative career of the Government for the past thirty years.

What scandals or misdeeds have ever been charged against us? What mistakes have been made?

Let it be borne in mind that justice has been administered throughout this Province all this time, and ever the suggestion of wrong doing or maladministration of the most trifling character has never been made. The Public Works of the Province have been carried out all these years and large amounts of public money expended, and I have no recollection of a suggestion, much less a charge, of maladministration ever having been made. (Applause)

Our Public Institutions have been managed efficiently and economically and, considering the amount of detail connected with this department of administration, there has been a wonderful absence of irregularities or jarring of any description.

The Crown Lands Department has been administered without jobbery or corruption. It is true that discussions have frequently arisen as to this or that question of policy pursued by that Department, but there has been no question regarding the honesty or integrity of the Government in carrying out that policy, a policy which over and over again has been approved of by the people. (Applause.)

EDUCATION.

Mr. Whitney has always talked loudly and volubly on Educational matters, but if anyone were asked to state precisely what Mr. Whitney wanted to accomplish, or what changes he desires to make, he would have much difficulty in giving an intelligible answer.

Everyone who has children attending school or everyone who is, or has been, a school trustee is apt to have his own views on education. Do

what you may in improving the system and there will always be found those who will say that everything is wrong.

It not infrequently happens that learned educationists criticize existing conditions, without suggesting practical improvements, and it is easy to collect snatches here and there from academical discussions and present them as evidence that everything is wrong. This is Mr. Whitney's favourite plan of attack. But it is not long since Dr. Sangster, an experienced educationist as well as practical teacher, from the public school up, in reviewing the progress made in Ontario in our schools during the last half century, stated that our system was an eminently successful system, and expressed doubt whether more and better work is accomplished in public and high schools anywhere else in the world or whether as much good work is done anywhere else in schools of a similar grade. Dr. Sangster is a thoroughly independent critic, and this expression by him of his deliberate opinion is worth infinitely more than Mr. Whitney's unfairly selected excerpts. Any quantity of testimony similar to Dr. Sangster's could be produced.

Mr. Whitney aims at deriving some political advantage from a policy of general, instead of, specific criticism and fault finding. He has charged that the Educational Department is conducted on political lines, which is the reverse of true. He has criticized the public school course as having been framed with a view to leading up to entrance in the high schools, instead of providing a rounded out course for the vast majority of pupils who never enter the high schools, but he has never ventured to state what changes he would suggest in the public school programme of studies. For my part, I have always been unable to see what better can be done for the public school pupil than to let him take precisely the same work as if he intended going into the high school. Mr. Whitney has clamored to have the entire control of the University divested from the Government and has insinuated that such was the view of the University authorities, but none of the University authorities support him in this statement, nor will the people of the Province approve of placing the control of that institution in the hands of any irresponsible body, call that body what you may, Trustees, senate, convocation or anything else.

During last session the Government made a very important provision for the better equipment of the University. When Mr. Whitney found that the Government proposed doing this he had either to approve of the Government measure or condemn it for going too far or not far enough. He settled the matter by concluding that the Government had not gone far enough, though it is but a few years since it would have been absolutely impossible for any Government to have proposed to the House anything nearly so liberal as our measure of last session.

FINANCIAL.

It is not my intention to discuss the financial affairs of the Province this evening at any length. The people of this Province have complete confidence in the financial record of the Liberal Government and there

has been, from time to time, abundant testimony from quite independent sources, that the people of Ontario have good reason to feel satisfied with the statements which, from year to year, our treasurers have been able to present. There has been much discussion for the past two decades about our surplus, and an evident desire at all times, on the part of our opponents, to impress the people with the view that we have no surplus. The Royal Commission of able financiers, appointed by the Government soon after Mr. Ross' accession to the Premiership, for the purpose of examining into and reporting on the Provincial accounts from Confederation down to the present time, has found that the accounts have been accurately kept and that the statements made by successive treasurers were reliable. It is true we claim prior to Mr. Ross becoming Premier, that deducting all obligations presently payable, we had in round figures a surplus of \$5,000,000 or more. We did not claim this surplus remained after making allowances for liabilities to be provided for in future years in respect of railway subsidies.

RAILWAY LIABILITIES.

We treated these railway liabilities just as the Dominion and other Provincial Governments have done, and not as forming a part of our present public debt. No Government treats obligations of this special character as ordinary public debts. The Dominion Government issues railway certificates exactly as we do, payable year by year with interest during the currency of a fixed term, and never includes them in any statement of debts of the Dominion. Manitoba treats railway liabilities exactly as we have hitherto been doing. Our opponents have been insisting that we should put in our balance sheet or statement of assets and liabilities, debts accruing in the future, and only part of our assets. They take certain special assets and set off against them all our future liabilities, although the accruing interest on special items of interest bearing assets will be more than sufficient each year to pay accruing annuities and certificates falling due in that year.

WE HAVE NO DEBT.

We have an annuity payable by the Dominion of \$1,333,000. It might be asked why should not the annuities or certificates we have to pay in future years go against this instead of being charged up against our cash capital bearing interest? In the Dominion year book, published by the Dominion Government, is published a table of provincial debts. No debt of the Province of Ontario is given in this table. Our annuities are thus referred to in this Dominion year book.

"The Province of Ontario has sold annuities to the extent of \$1,432,510, to provide for railway expenditures, but these amounts are paid off by a fixed sum every year, and, while a liability, does not stand on exactly the same footing as ordinary public debts."

They are like any other necessary payments of yearly occurrence, just as annuities to retired officers of the Dominion Civil Service, or Indian annuities, or even the Provincial subsidies under the B. N. A. Act, which

are never taken into account as Dominion debts. However, it has been customary in our annual statements to show the present value of these accruing future liabilities, and Mr. Ross in the first speech made by him as Premier, stated in the plainest manner possible that the present value of our outstanding railway scrip and annuities amounted to \$3,000,000, and, if deducted from our interest bearing assets amounting to \$5,000,000, that a surplus of \$2,000,000 would represent our financial position.

A COMPARISON.

Compare this with the position of other Provinces. Quebec's gross debt of over \$35,000,000, Nova Scotia \$3,700,000, New Brunswick over \$3,000,000, Manitoba nearly \$6,000,000, British Columbia \$7,500,000, Prince Edward Island about \$500,000. Where is there a country, State or Province *in the world* having better reason than Ontario to be satisfied with its financial position? (Applause.) But development means expenditure. The opening up of New Ontario, by the building of railways, making extensive surveys, constructing colonization roads, providing for the administration of justice in the newer settlements, can only be carried out by the outlay of money. That able, sagacious and far seeing statesman the Hon. E. B. Wood used to say when Provincial Treasurer of the Sanfield Macdonald Government, that *if Ontario continued to make the same progress in the future as in the past generation, it would have to do so by direct taxation on its people.* These are his very words. We have made greater progress and there is no prospect of direct taxation. (Applause.) Our opponents occasionally claim that we are living on capital, having reference to the revenue we derive from our woods and forests; but the same Treasurer of the Sanfield Macdonald Government treated and regarded receipts from this source as ordinary receipts and as a matter of fact similar receipts are so treated by the Dominion and all other Governments. (Applause.)

THE PROVINCE AND MUNICIPALITIES.

Again our opponents, envious of our successful financial record, sometimes argue that we rob the Municipalities, in the matter of revenue from liquor licenses. As a matter of fact, municipalities are deriving about the same revenue from this source as they did before Sanfield Macdonald went out, and might, if they chose to do so, increase their receipts from licenses. But the same Treasurer, was known to express the opinion in one of his budget speeches that the Province should appropriate the entire revenue from licenses just as the Province of Quebec does today. (Applause.)

CREDITABLE FINANCIAL RECORD.

We must progress, and if our surplus is not as large as it once was, who will say there is nothing to show for it? Have we not expended wisely in erecting public institutions, for the care of the insane and other helpless classes of our population, and in carrying out many public works in the Province which have never been criticized, at an outlay of about \$10,000,000; in aiding and stimulating the construction of railways at a cost of \$7,000,000 or thereabouts, in constructing Colonization Roads at a cost of nearly \$3,000,000; in surveying and exploring the newer portions of the Province at a cost of about \$1,450,000; and so on—all capital expenditures? I am saying nothing of the settlement of the Municipal Loan Fund involving a distribution among the Muni-

palities of \$3,388,777 of assets. And whoever heard of any country erecting New Parliament Buildings without incurring debt for the purpose? Our present Parliament and Department Buildings were paid for out of ordinary revenue and we do not even count in our surplus the valuable property known as the old Parliament Buildings Block, a property which should realize a very large sum. We have ample resources and with just such management in the future as the Liberal Governments have given the Province in the past, there need be no dread of Mr. Whitney's threatened direct taxation. (Applause.)

ELECTION FRAUDS.

The most has been made of any frauds which were perpetrated in West Elgin or North Waterloo, in the way of attempting to smirch the record of the Liberal party. In season and out of season, more frequently out of season, Mr. Whitney has exhausted the supply of vituperative and abusive words which the English language affords in discussing these matters. We have never thought to excuse or palliate the wrong doings of those irresponsible persons, who, in these bye-elections, were guilty of improper conduct. But the theatrical displays made by Mr. Whitney from time to time throughout this Province, in discussing these two election cases are strong testimony of the weakness of his general opposition to the Government and its policy. Two blacks do not make a white and no one is ever edified very much by hearing the pot call the kettle black. But one would suppose, from the simulation of virtuous indignation, practised so frequently by Mr. Whitney, that he belonged to a party whose record in the past was free from even the suspicion of electoral wrong-doing or impurity. No Government in Canada has gone further than the Ontario Government, or so far, in following up with prosecutions those who were reported at the election trials, and if some of those, who were concerned in some of the election irregularities, have escaped punishment, it has not been from any fault on the part of the Government.

THE CONSERVATIVE RECORD IN PART.

A long list of cases might be mentioned of systematic frauds perpetrated by the Conservative Party in Election Contests, cases in which deliberate efforts were made to thwart the will of the people.

Take a few illustrations: In the North Ontario Election of 1896, 21 ballots for Graham (Liberal) were abstracted from the ballot box and 21 substituted for Major McGillivray the Conservative who sat in the House for a time as the result of the fraud.

In a South Grey Election 7 ballot boxes were opened after the election and envelopes containing the Landerkin ballots taken out, 26 of them abstracted, and 26 forged ballots for Mr. Blyth the Tory Candidate substituted.

In a West Northumberland Election a Deputy Returning Officer, while the ballots were in his custody, took them out of the box and put them in his safe, and while there they were tampered with, some being stolen and forgeries substituted.

In a South Wentworth election the Liberal candidate was the choice of a majority of the voters but was left at home by 15 good ballots marked for him being conveniently stowed away in the envelopes for spoiled ballots.

In a Chateauguay election the Liberal candidate had a good majority of 175 whittled down to 9 by similar fraudulent practices.

And so in other cases, the fagot vote frauds of East York, the Lincoln case, the

King's County case of Prince Edward Island and the Queen's County case in New Brunswick are illustrations of flagrant defiance of the popular will.

But it has been very conclusively demonstrated that a prevailing system of fraud was carried on by the Conservatives.

In the Dominion elections of 1896 in 24 constituencies selected there were 3,658 spoiled ballots, as against 541 in the election of 1891. The circular of instructions given to the man Freshorn by a man who told him they were given to him by the Conservative organizer in Toronto throws a flood of light on the system which was being worked.

SCHOOLS AND CORRUPTION.

Indeed it would appear that there were schools of instruction in fraud and up-to-date fraudulent devices in full operation in the Conservative organization.

The following is the Conservative circular:

"We have the printing of the ballots, therefore a sufficient number should be printed extra to enable the Deputy Returning Officer to have them marked for our candidate, and ready to use after the count to replace those read out wrongly to the Scrutineers. Or the Deputy Returning Officer can have them marked and folded in his pocket to slip into the box in place of an opposition ballot if the opportunity happens. This of course will occur quite frequently if we have control of both Scrutineers."

"To get control of both Scrutineers, have one of our men, not a prominent one, but a supposed kieker, apply to the Opposition to be put on as a Scrutineer inside. They are generally short of workers, and a few plausible men will turn the election in a close constituency. Or the man can write to their headquarters for Scrutineer papers if he lives in the country."

"Efforts should be made to make these methods work in wards that give the heaviest Opposition vote."

"Having control of both Scrutineers a large vote can be polled—dead and absent voters, etc., can have their ballots marked. There is no redress if both Scrutineers were present."

"A friendly constable should be present to keep the poll clear of loungers and inquisitive people."

"The Deputy Returning Officer should be a reliable, sharp and plausible man, so that if we do not get control of the Opposition Scrutineer he can, when the counting time arrives, ask both Scrutineers to take a piece of paper and record the vote of their candidate as he reads the ballots which have been emptied on the table. He will then have a chance to read out wrongly, so that a majority can be secured for our candidate. The ballots should be put back into the box as quickly as they are read. The extra ones will do to fix things correctly when he goes home."

"Spoiled ballots can be made sure by a little doctoring. Opposition ballots can be spoiled by the lead out of a lead pencil fastened under the little finger with beeswax, drawn across opposite our candidate's name in opening the ballot."

"If you cannot get control of Opposition Scrutineers, have your Deputy Returning Officer announce that he is against you so as to lead them astray if possible."

"SPOILED" BALLOTS ACCOUNTED FOR.

Is there any room for surprise that as the result there should have been so many spoiled ballots in the 1896 election? (Applause.) The people of this country will never

know what was the true expression of the popular will in some of the Dominion Elections prior to 1896, under the management of the Conservative Party. One's faith in the genuineness of Mr. Whitney's moral indignation is not strengthened very much by the blind apathy and indifference he has always displayed with reference to the iniquitous record of his own party. Some might accuse him of hypocrisy. I prefer to consider the course he has adopted the matured result of his notions of the best way of achieving a little party capital or advantage. (Applause.)

TIME FOR A CHANGE.

After all, Mr. Whitney and his party rely for success on the empty cry that it is time for a change. They hope that in some way or other the people will be influenced by the vague consideration that the Liberal Party having been in power a long time the Conservative Party should have an innings. It is true we said with reference to the late Dominion Conservative Government that it was time for a change. But there were broad differences of policy between the two parties and charges of rank maladministration and fraud had been brought home to the Conservatives. Prominent men in the Party had been sent to prison and a very prominent Minister of the Crown had been banished from political life. Moreover the Conservative leaders were at sixes and sevens and quarrelling among themselves. In short, all conditions pointed to the absolute necessity for a change, and the people insisted on, and made the change.

CONDITIONS ARE THE REVERSE.

But the very reverse is the case with the Ross Government. It will be the present Premier's first appeal to the people. They not only have confidence in him and approve of his policy but they admire the man. His programme of onward progress is what the people want and they are not going to cut short his brilliant career as Premier. No man in Ontario to-day stands near him in qualification and fitness for the high position he fills. His integrity, his earnestness, his courage, ability and unrivalled eloquence are a combination of qualities which no other man in the Province possesses. His reputation and fame are much wider than Ontario. Few names are better known in Canada and few, very few Canadians stand higher or more prominently, from even an Imperial point of view, than George W. Ross. The people want him to continue Premier of Ontario and do not think it is time for a change. (Loud and continued applause.)



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