

Can the hon. gentleman say that we have not established an equilibrium between income and outgo when we reduced in 1912-13 the national debt of Canada by not less than \$25,000,000? I want to say this to the hon. member for Halifax and to my right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition: On March 31, 1914, less than one year ago, the net debt of Canada was less than it was when this Government took office. Let me talk to my right hon. friend about debt. He has probably never been in debt, because he has no appreciation of what it means. He never had any appreciation of the meaning of debt when he was in office, and he needs some education in that respect even now. My hon. friend cannot get away from these figures, because they are official. From September 30, 1911, about the date we took office, to July 31, 1914, the end of the month preceding the outbreak of the war, the increase in the debt of Canada was only \$8,000,000. That was under Conservative administration. But for the period of two years and nine months preceding September 30, 1911, the Liberals, under my right hon. friend the present leader of the Opposition, increased the net national debt of Canada by \$70,000,000—nine times the amount of the increase—during the same period under Conservative administration. And, forsooth, we are extravagant. Well, I think that from this forward we will not hear very much about extravagance from hon. gentlemen opposite.

What is proposed by my hon. friend the member for Halifax? He says, drop public works. Then the hon. member for the city of St. John, coming along to conduct a sort of salvage operation to pull my hon. friend the hon. member for Halifax off the rocks, says: Let us stop in the Pickwickian sense in other words, let us slow down.

I am quoting from the remarks of the hon. member for St. John. Let me ask the hon. member for Halifax this: What did he mean when he said "establish an equilibrium between income and outgo"? If he did not mean that we should cut out \$60,000,000 of public works expenditure, I would like to know what he did mean. I estimated a revenue of \$120,000,000 and an expenditure of \$190,000,000 on consolidated revenue fund and capital account. If he says, as he did, that we should establish an equilibrium between income and outgo, that means that we must cut out \$60,000,000. The real fact of the matter is that the hon. member for Halifax said a great number of things; he was hedging in the matter.

LIBERALS WOULD STOP PUBLIC WORKS.

I am trying to quote my hon. friend's remarks fairly. I understood him distinctly to say—and if I am wrong it is open to him or any other hon. member to correct me—that the remedy was to stop public works. The hon. member for St. John, as I say, was engaged in salvage operations; he was stirred to his depths by the proposal that public works should stop. Let us see what he said. I have it here; it is one of the finest passages in parliamentary history, if not in all literature. He says, quoting the hon. member for Halifax:

They might have wiped out altogether expenditures for public works for the next fiscal year.

Then he adds this immortal touch, so far as literature is concerned: "That is, if need be."

What policy did I announce in regard to public works? In my August Budget and in the present Budget I said that there were no new items in the Estimates, that as to public works we should proceed only