

if we take the average of the five years mentioned—is that arising from Crown Lands, or, rather, that part of it involved in the Woods and Forests Branch. But, having reference to the Estimates of 1877 furnished to me by that Department, I find that we can rely upon upwards of \$540,000 as the receipts for 1877, and I am confident this estimate has been very accurately and carefully framed, and, although it presents a smaller estimate than that furnished for 1876, this difference is not so great as to cause any alarm that the Crown Lands Department, or especially the Woods and Forests Branch of it, will not in future years be enabled to return to the Consolidated Revenue Fund a large amount of money annually, so as to enable us to satisfactorily carry on the operations of the Province. My estimate then for this coming year is \$540,000 from this source as against \$588,000 on which I based the estimates for 1876. There is a number of different items which come in and probably will swell this amount beyond the estimated sum of \$2,370,000, but it is not a matter of very much importance excepting when we come to consider our necessities for current expenditure as compared with our revenue, properly so called, from year to year. It would never be desirable to find that the current expenditure for one year would exceed the current revenue for that year. It is desirable in the management of the finances of the Province that there should be a considerable margin left as between the amount required to meet the current exigencies of the public service year by year, and the sources of that revenue which, as I have said, are fixed, and from which we cannot expect to gain more than from \$2,300,000 to \$2,500,000 each year as we go on. My next statement is one which I can also refer to with considerable satisfaction, the more especially as I was a member of Mr. Blake's Government, which undertook to deal with the formidable question of how properly to distribute in the interests of the country that very large sum of money which had been set apart by Mr. Sandfield Macdonald for railway purposes. Mr. Blake's Government undertook the responsibility not only of dealing with that large sum of \$1,500,000, less the small amount which had been paid out to the Northern Railway Extensions to Orillia and Meaford, but of adding to that sum, without assuming to recognise any other principle than the duty of the Province to aid to a limited extent those efforts which were put forward by localities in order to obtain greater railway facilities. Mr. Blake, in the