

For the year 1911-12, upon which we have just entered, one can only speak generally. It is impossible to make estimates with any degree of accuracy and in all my experience in budget speeches I have thought it better to be general in this respect. Let me say, however, that we have no reason to fear that this year will not be in every respect a satisfactory one. The estimates now before the House call for a liberal expenditure and we shall still have supplementary estimates to come which no doubt will add materially to the bill of fare. But, we have every reason to believe that the revenue will be abundant and that we will find it sufficient to meet all our ordinary expenditures and also a share of the expenditures of a capital and special character.

We know that in a country which is so largely agricultural as Canada very much depends upon the condition of the crops, and no man can at this date fore-shadow what that condition may be, but we have no reason to doubt that the blessings of Providence in respect to generous crops will be extended to us in this year as in the past. We think that the outlook in every respect is one that should give us much hope. Desirable immigrants are coming in. I emphasize the word 'desirable.' We have surely reached that stage in our affairs now when it is quality rather than quantity that we want in regard to immigration, and we have good reason to believe that the Department of the Interior is using every legitimate effort to see that the immigrants who are coming into the country are of the best class. We are getting capital in abundance. Population and capital are the two things that a new and growing country need, and the country has every reason to be satisfied with its condition in this respect. With every prospect for business activity, with every ground for hoping for good crops, with trade and commerce flourishing, with the outlook so good generally, we have every reason to look with confidence to the future. There are those who will say: That being the case, let well enough alone.

Some hon. MEMBER. Hear, hear.

Mr. FIELDING. I say that is not a sound motto for any country in this progressive age. The business man never accepts the motto to let well enough alone. In the time of his greatest activity and his greatest prosperity he is looking for opportunities to open up new fields of business, and as it is with the individual so it should be with the nation. 'Let well enough alone' has never been the motto of the Dominion of Canada. In all times past, when we have had a prosperous condition of affairs, when my predecessors in office were able to make

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statements perhaps hardly so rosy as that which it is my pleasure to make to-day, but nevertheless hopeful and encouraging statements, they were not content to let well enough alone, and why should they preach that doctrine to us to-day? If we are to adopt that policy let us cease building railways, abolish our subsidies to steamship lines and cease to send trade agents to foreign countries. We are seeking new markets everywhere; our steamships run to all countries, many of them heavily subsidized; we are sending our trade agents over the civilized world; we are doing everything that is inconsistent with the policy of 'let well enough alone' because when things are going favourably that is not a reason for doing nothing, it is rather a reason for being alert to avail ourselves of other opportunities. We need new markets in all directions. We need them for the surplus products of Canada as it is to-day, and we shall need them in even greater degree for the vaster surplus of Canadian products to come to us from the great west in the near future. For these reasons we have endeavoured to enlarge our markets in all directions and it did not seem to be wise, while we were sending agents to Africa and China and the distant parts of the world, to close our eyes to the opportunities lying much nearer home. Into that I do not wish to enter to-day.

Every prospect for Canada to-day is bright and hopeful. With peace and progress and prosperity at home, with the friendliest relations with the great republic lying alongside of us, with the warmest attachment to the great empire of which we are so proud to form a part, the Canadian people can look forward to the future with every hope and every confidence.

Hon. G. E. FOSTER (North Toronto). Mr. Speaker, we have listened with interest to the remarks made by the Finance Minister in presenting briefly the salient points of the financial year preceding the one that has just ended and also the one which ended on the 31st of March last. I hope my hon. friend will not make a precedent of his action of last year. It is now some fifteen months or thereabouts since this House and the country has had an exposition of its financial position from the Minister of Finance in the Dominion parliament. That is a step which I should be sorry to see made a precedent. The Minister of Finance came to an indulgent House and a warm hearted opposition and asked for \$46,000,000 or \$47,000,000 of supply for the next year, that is our current year, before he had deigned to make an exposition to the House of the financial stewardship he had undertaken for the past year. That