

should continue in the ratio of the past few years, we shall soon reach an empty exchequer and loss of credit in the markets of the world. If this House should exercise its constitutional functions and rejected this Supply Bill until the unwarranted extravagance of the government is checked, we might then have a reduction in the public expenditure which would enable us to meet the liabilities we have assumed.

Hon. Mr SCOTT—The hon. gentleman from Calgary surely must have forgotten all that has happened in the last eleven years. He talks as though there had been a continuation of the conditions that prevailed during the preceding eight years. He forgets that there has been a financial revolution since 1896. Taking a few figures that I have hastily put down, I find that the Conservative government, from 1887 to 1896 added \$118,000,000 to the debt of the country, an average of \$6,500,000 a year. When the present government came into power, in 1896, they at once devoted their thought to a reduction of the expenses of the country and decreased taxation. In 1897 we changed the customs tariff of this country, adding a considerable number of items to the free list, and making a general reduction all along the line. From 1896 to the end of the last fiscal year this government has added to the public debt \$19,474,000, an average of \$1,600,000 a year. The hon. gentleman's friends, during their term of office, added nearly five times as much, on the average, to the public debt as the present government had added since it has been in office. Year after year, this government had a surplus. They have paid large charges out of the annual revenue, and in this way the average increase of debt has been only \$1,600,000 per annum. Then, take the per capita charge. In 1896 it had risen to \$50.82 cents per head. It has now been reduced to \$42.84, and yet my hon. friend would lead us to believe that we are going into a state of bankruptcy. There are the figures and we are told figures cannot lie. No government since confederation has carried on public works to the extent the present government has been doing, in increasing the mileage of railways and making various improvements throughout the Dominion. My hon. friend has failed to point out in what specific work

the government have made a mistake. Will any one say that we ought not to have aided the Grand Trunk Pacific and built the National Transcontinental Railway? True, it is going to cost a good deal more than we anticipated, but who is going to get the benefit of the expenditure? The labouring element of this country will share largely in that by an addition of 30 per cent to the wages that had been paid before. The increased cost of material has caused an increase of wealth to the people of Canada, but the people are far better able to pay the increased expenditure than they were to meet the ordinary expenditure in 1896. The tax per capita now is less than \$43, whereas it was nearly \$51 when this government came into power. There are the figures, and they speak for themselves. The hon. gentleman has failed to name any particular work that we should not have undertaken. As has been observed elsewhere, hon. gentlemen may complain of the expenditure, but each individual man has been accusing the government of not spending enough in his own particular constituency. Public buildings and harbour improvements have been demanded in all directions. The railway subsidies have been enormously increased, so I think the hon. gentleman has rather exaggerated the condition. As years go on, it will be found that the credit of Canada will continue to improve. We may have to pay a higher rate of interest on new liabilities, but that is because the value of money has changed. Consols, which some twenty years ago were very nearly at par, are down now to 87. Investors in England have found many ways of getting more profitable returns for their money than by putting them into consols, and the consequence is that they have decreased to their present figure. That indicates that money will be harder to get on the terms we have been paying. I do not intend to extend my observations, but I have given figures which I think answer completely the criticisms made by the hon. leader of the opposition on this Bill.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Before dealing with the question before the House, I wish to call the attention of the hon. Secretary of State to what I regard as unfair treatment of one of our members. In the present estimates, provision is made for the