

THE CLAIM OF ECONOMY.

I may be permitted, Sir, at the risk of wearying the House, to examine somewhat into the expenditures which have been made in the different services during the past year and to see how far the claim of economy has been well founded. I will grant at the on-set that the Government have adopted and have apparently so far stuck to a policy of doing nothing though how long it may be in the interest of the country to continue this policy is a matter upon which there may be considerable difference of opinion. But in the administration of different services we find that economy in the sense of decreasing the expenditure even as compared with the years immediately preceding was not always the rule. For instance, taking the expenditure for legislation, it is claimed that there has been a total decrease in this service of \$77,713 as compared with the previous year. But under this head in a previous year were two items, one for the costs of the general elections, \$71,165, and the other for the revision of electoral lists, \$12,225 making a total of \$83,390. Perhaps honorable gentlemen opposite would have wished that we would have saved the country the first item and so far as we on this side of the House are concerned, we might have shared in saving the country this expense, but in that case I would not have had the pleasure now of replying to a Budget of the present Treasurer. On the other hand, we find that the expenses of the Legislative Assembly have increased in 1898 over 1897 by \$1,768, while there has been an increase in printing and binding of \$5,720. I should give credit, however, to the Legislative Council for having reduced the expenses of that House by \$906, a state of affairs which may possibly lead to an agitation for the abolition of the Legislative Assembly in favor of a single House composed of the Legislative Council. There is also included to the debit of this service for the preceding year the sum of \$2,100 for trunks for the Members, but this is an item which has been regularly included as an expense attendant to the commencement of every new Legislature for many terms past and I am not yet aware that any of the Members on the Government side of the House have refused to accept of the articles thus provided for and with which we are charged. Under the head of Administra-