

Let me ask my right hon. friend who has made an attack upon me to-day—and I must say I was surprised at its demagogic character; it did not seem to me to be quite in keeping with his ability as a statesman and parliamentarian—let me ask him, who bungled the Quebec bridge? Who let the contracts for the Eastern division of the National Transcontinental? Does he say that we should repudiate these contracts entered into by his Administration? For that is what is implied in the criticism of hon. gentlemen opposite. At least \$25,000,000 or \$30,000,000 will be required before the Quebec bridge is completed—I mean the total expenditure. Who conceived it? At whose instance was the work commenced and the contracts let? Am I blameable because I was obliged to find money for all these purposes, for the purposes of these huge enterprises undertaken, some of them most unwisely, by hon. gentlemen opposite when they were in power?

Now, let me say this to my right hon. friend—and I say it because I want him to remember it and the people of Canada to know it: upon four accounts alone during the last four years \$125,000,000 had to be found for works undertaken during the incumbency in office of my right hon. friend. That is greater than the entire revenue of Canada in the year preceding that in which we took office. So that, if he is basing his criticism of me upon revenue as well as expenditure of the year before we came into office, he must write off the revenue for one year.

So much for direct liabilities. But what about indirect liabilities? What about guarantees? Who initiated the policy of guarantees in this country. My right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition. \$125,000,000 were given in guarantees by his Government; \$70,000,000 to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company, and, I think, about \$55,000,000 to the Canadian Northern Railway. Through the action of my right hon. friend these companies became involved with the credit not only of the Dominion but necessarily of the provinces as well, and the result is that we have been obliged to take the action for which we have been most severely criticised by hon. gentlemen opposite and in some places throughout the country. We have inherited not a rich legacy, but obligations such as have devolved upon no Government that ever held office in Canada; obligations for which we are not in the slightest degree responsible. These facts cannot be controverted; I defy any hon. gentleman to get up and say that I did not have to find the money which, as I have stated, I have been obliged to find. With what face does the hon. member for Halifax charge this Government with extravagance! When the charge of extravagance is passed from this side of the House to the other side, there is only one course for hon. gentlemen opposite to adopt, and that is to put up the white flag and throw up both hands, because no possible defence is open to them on the facts.

NO JUSTIFICATION FOR STATEMENT.

The hon. member for Halifax said:

There never was the slightest effort on the part of this Government to establish an equilibrium between income and outgo.

What are the facts? My hon. friend had absolutely no justification for that statement; he knew better. In 1912-13, the year after we took office, we had the largest surplus in the history of this country. I have not changed the methods of bookkeeping which prevailed under my predecessor—that cannot be controverted—and up to this year we have had to our credit as a Government the largest surpluses in Canada's history.