

elsewhere for the cause. But, in so far as the present government gave an impetus to trade by lessening the duties, by giving confidence everywhere that did not exist before, they are entitled to the credit of having done something for the people of Canada. You may talk, as I said a little while ago, as much as you like to the farmers to try to induce them to believe that times have not improved. You may try to explain to them, by methods only known to your own ingenuity, that matters are not at all as they are, but, the fact remains. And, Mr. Speaker, I join heartily with the hon. member for Addington that there is one thing that we ought to do. I concede that the government is not constituted for the purpose mentioned by the hon. member. My idea of the functions of government are fourfold. Legislation respecting morals and all such questions comes before this parliament as a parliament, but there are four principal ways in which a government is expected and ought to be expected to regulate the affairs of this country. The people demand of the government four things. They demand, in the first place, the smallest possible taxation, in the second place, a solvent revenue, in the third place honest expenditure, and in the fourth place, able administration. I rather like that way of putting it under heads. That is the way that I was taught when I was young. Scotchmen brought up under the direction of a great national overruling church believed in that. We have decreased taxation to the amount of 10 per cent, and we have a largely solvent revenue, a revenue such as was never seen in this country before. For myself, I am bound to say that I do not want to see very much of a surplus in any country. I believe thoroughly that the people can look after their money better than the government, but, I want to point out the fact that no man dreamed in this House that we were going to have such a revenue. Did any hon. gentleman opposite, when the tariff was changed, get up and say that this tariff will be such that you will have an immense revenue, that you will have a surplus of \$7,500,000 in 1899? On the contrary, they said that the country would be ruined. But, this wonderful thing happened that the revenue that was only considered sufficient, when collected, to meet the ordinary outlay, as proposed by the government, gives us, this year \$7,500,000 of a surplus. How did this come about? Trade has expanded to an extent that no one ever thought of. I am in the presence of the ministers here tonight, and I venture to say that they never dreamed when the tariff was introduced that there would be such a result. No man ever dreamed of such a trade or that confidence would be restored to such an extent that the revenue would yield such an enormous increase. Then we wanted honest expenditure in this country, and the Liberal

government has given it to us. I admit that two or three things were brought up in the Public Accounts Committee this year that I would rather had not occurred; and as a strong supporter of the government I have rather a grudge against the hon. member for Leeds (Mr. Taylor), because he did show that a year or two ago, a barrel of flour in the city of St. John cost us \$7—

Mr. TAYLOR. And ninety cents.

Mr. FRASER (Guysborough). Well, that makes it worse against me, but I want to be honest. He did show that a box of condensed milk cost more in Nova Scotia than in British Columbia, and he said he would produce a witness to prove it, but I notice he did not do so.

Mr. TAYLOR. The witness is here now and will answer the questions for himself.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order.

Mr. FRASER (Guysborough). Now the third thing came up in the Public Accounts Committee to-day—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. Order. I call the attention of the hon. gentleman to the fact that no report has been made yet from the Public Accounts Committee, and this reference to it is, therefore, out of order.

Mr. McCLEARY. And he the chairman of the committee.

Mr. FRASER (Guysborough). I was making a verbal report of the proceedings of the committee. I will say, Sir, that it has been stated to me on good authority that it was proved to-day before the Public Accounts Committee that a bill for \$1.20 was discovered for washing collars and other things during a trip of the Minister of Public Works. Notwithstanding that, I do say that we have had an honest expenditure of public money under this government. My hon. friend from Addington (Mr. Bell) spoke about the Drummond County Railway, but does any man in his sane senses think there was anything wrong about that, especially in view of the fact that the ex-Minister of Railways (Mr. Haggart) declared in this House that neither he nor anybody else ever stated that there was anything wrong about the transaction. If there is anything wrong about the Drummond County Railway transaction, why do not these gentlemen opposite show it up. We showed them up when we were in opposition, and if they want a committee to inquire into it, we will give them a committee to probe the whole thing from beginning to the end.

Mr. SPROULE. Why do you not give us an inquiry before the Committee on Privileges and Elections?

Mr. FRASER (Guysborough). The hon. gentleman would be better employed in the