

that lapse will be remedied as soon as possible.

Looking at this production which I hold in my hands, particularly the first four pages thereof, I would be disposed to say that so far as regards the first half of this production it might perhaps be very fitly described as the song of the cuckoo, as a kind of jubilation on the part of the hon. gentlemen opposite on having got into such an exceedingly well-feathered nest as they now occupy without any exertion, pains or effort on their part. It is satisfactory for me to know, as my hon. friend opposite has said, that Canada is now in a condition of bounding prosperity. He might have said with perfect truth, and no man could gainsay it, that for the last fifteen years the prosperity of Canada has been phenomenal, that not merely in the history of Canada, but I believe in the history of the whole civilized world known to us there is no instance of a country having prospered during the fifteen years which have elapsed from 1896 to 1911 as Canada prospered under the administration which has recently resigned power. I can understand perfectly well that my hon. friend opposite did not like to make comparisons. To those of us who remember the state of stagnation and retrogression which prevailed in Canada for the fifteen years preceding 1896—from 1881 to 1896—it is very easy to understand why my hon. friend did not like to make any unpleasant comparison. I am not equally scrupulous. I think it is well that at this early date he should remember, and the members of this House and the people of this country should remember, that during the last 15 years the prosperity of Canada has been perfectly phenomenal. When we came into office we know the position in which we found Canada. From a trade and commerce of about \$200,000,000, the trade and commerce of Canada expanded under the late administration to \$300,000,000 during the current year, in all probability. We had a surplus last year of \$30,000,000. There is scarcely any doubt that the surplus will reach \$40,000,000 this year, and although my hon. friend appears to think that the results of the late census must have been disappointing to our peo-

Rt. Hon. Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT

ple, surely he cannot have forgotten that even if only 1,786,000 souls were added to our numbers between 1901 and 1911, and if that is less than we had at one time hoped it would be, it certainly does compare most favourably with the addition to our numbers between 1881 and 1891, when, even with the aid of counting a very large number of people who were absent from the country into the returns, we barely mustered 500,000 souls all told. Five hundred thousand, as compared with 1,780,000, is a record of which the Reform party need not be ashamed.

I observe that the hon. gentlemen—and I have not the slightest objection to them doing so—are extremely desirous of putting into effect a certain Bill which passed through this House after mature consideration, a matter of three or four months ago. I may say it would have been much more to the credit of the House of Commons if they had taken that measure up and devoted some time to putting it into effect than spending time in wrangling during the last months of the session. As far as I can understand from the paragraph in the speech from the Throne, what the hon. gentlemen propose to do is simply this: we took power to do everything they propose to do, but we reserved to ourselves the right to make the experiment whether we could or could not do all that the people of the Northwest expected to be done without the necessity of sinking millions of money in the purchase of certain elevators. I do not mean to say that it may not prove good policy. As stated at the time, it might be necessary to be done, but I say it would have been wiser and more politic and prudent to have made the experiment in the first instance before putting the country to very large expenditure with results that may prove very different from those which hon. gentlemen expect.

As for their other propositions, I am wholly in accord with them in thinking it is right and desirable that all possible means should be taken to preserve the fertility of the soil and encourage agriculture, and anything in that way fairly conceived and fairly carried out will always have my individual support, and I think I can say