

Hon. Mr. WILMOT—The Customs and Excise are the barometers of the state of the trade of the country. I have shown that there is no increase from Customs, apart from the port of St. John. These figures speak for themselves. Now, let us see what the revenue has been from excise. For the first nine months of 1876-7, the collections from excise amounted to \$3,928,758, and for the corresponding period of the current fiscal year, \$3,847,948; showing an actual falling off during the present year in the revenue from Customs and Excise. I ask the hon. Secretary of State to explain where this increase, that the Finance Minister and himself claim, has taken place in the revenue? In the face of such facts, I cannot help a feeling of regret that the financial affairs of this country are in the hands of such a financier as Mr. Cartwright. The hon. Secretary of State speaks of his having got money at a lower rate of interest than ever before. That is easily explained. Never in my experience have I known money to be so low in the Bank of England as at the time when that loan was negotiated. The rate was actually only one per cent. Does it show any great ability on the part of the Finance Minister that he was able to obtain money at four per cent when the people of England were afraid to invest in foreign loans, and when money was held at the Bank of England at one per cent interest per annum. The Secretary of State said that nothing can be done by legislation to improve the condition of the country, that although bankruptcies involving \$90,000,000 have occurred in one year, nothing can be done by the Government to restore the prosperity of the Dominion. I take issue with him on that point. I tell him we are importing from abroad products which our own people could be profitably employed in producing. I have read recently the words which fell from Bismarck, the German Chancellor, with regard to the policy they have been pursuing in Germany. He admits that the policy of free-trade has proved a failure and that they have got to adopt the policy of France in order to put Germany in a proper position. I tell the Secretary of State if there is any common sense in this country, any knowledge of the interests of the Dominion, or any desire to improve its condition, there must be a change when

*Hon. Mr. Wilmot.*

the elections come round, and there must be a condemnation of this do-nothing policy. We must have men of genius and statesmanship in office, men who can put the country in a better condition than that in which we find it to-day. I have quoted from those returns to show that the statement made by the Finance Minister was entirely fallacious, misleading and contrary to the facts.

Hon. Mr. PENNY—The hon. Senator from Saugeen in addressing the House, began by submitting estimates, and it seems to me he took a rather singular way of regarding them, considering the views he expressed earlier in the Session. In referring to the Estimates before the House he regarded them as the minimum, and contended that the expenditure would certainly exceed them. On a former occasion, speaking of Mr. Tilley's estimates, he insisted that they by no means represented what the expenditure would have been if the late Administration had remained in power; because, he contended, they were in excess of the contemplated expenditure.

Hon. Mr. MACPHERSON—What I intended to show was that the Estimates could not be regarded as any indication of what the expenditure would be.

Hon. Mr. PENNY—The Estimates of all Governments are under, rather than over, the amount actually expended. That is one of those financial axioms of which no one entertains any doubt. I need not refer to what has been said about the length of the Session, because the hon. Secretary of State has disposed of that. I think nobody is so simple as to suppose that the Ministry would desire to keep us here all this time, if they could get through with their business in six or eight weeks.

Hon. Mr. MACPHERSON—I did not refer to the time so much as to the product. The time does not increase the expense much.

Hon. Mr. PENNY—The hon. gentleman seemed to forget when he spoke of a Ministry "of all the talents," that it turned out one of the most incompetent that ever occupied the Treasury Benches in England. So I do not want anybody,