

sion practically without the Government of the day having assumed any responsibility for it. It is sent by the National Railways to the Government, apparently, and the Government simply puts it through the routine or automatic process of the procedure of the House, and it comes down to this Chamber. Unless the Government of the day will act as a brake upon public expenditure, what can we expect? I say that Canada does not possess that advantage today.

I make this protest very reluctantly. It is not a pleasant thing for a public man to have to stand in his place and protest against a policy of this character, and thus attack the Government of the country, which should be part and parcel of its development, and should be so identified with all its great interests that we should be as proud of the Government of the day as we are of the country in which we live. Unfortunately, that is not the case today; hence there is a duty upon every public man to voice his protest, even though, as I said before, it is a voice crying in the wilderness, and unproductive of results.

Honourable gentlemen, I simply mention these matters, in the hope of my remarks attracting attention. They may not be productive of very much effect, but I am satisfied that if the public men of this Dominion joined in entering their protest throughout the length and breadth of Canada, we would have a different condition of affairs.

I again congratulate my honourable friend the leader of the Government on the deep interest he has taken in the many important subjects which have been submitted to this House for its consideration since the Session opened. We have found on his part not only a willingness, but a decided effort, to give the most mature consideration to the discussions, and also, I believe, to secure the adoption of a policy which would lead to substantial retrenchment. As I have said, however, my honourable friend is only one among many, and the efforts of a single individual will scarcely be reflected in the policy upon which the Government has entered.

May I conclude by saying that it is the duty of every public man to give attention to these questions—to voice his protest, to express in the strongest possible way the views which he may entertain as to the development of our resources and as to the progress of our country. No higher patriotism can be shown by any public man than by giving the closest attention to these subjects of national interest for the benefit of the country which he represents.

Hon. Sir JAMES LOUGHEED.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Honourable gentlemen, I desire to bring a ray of hope to the Senate after the very dark picture painted by my honourable friend. I think that, slow though the movement towards reduction in expenditure has been, reductions are being made gradually and systematically. I find that the peak of our disbursements was the budget of 1919-20, when my honourable friend shared the responsibility, and when it reached a total figure of \$785,869,611. In the following year, 1920-21, it was cut down to \$528,283,199. In 1921-22 there was a still further reduction to \$463,652,436. In 1922-23 we had another reduction from that figure to \$434,452,340; and I believe, though I have not had time to make the additions, that there is a still larger reduction this year than there was last year. So that we are gradually moving towards a compression of our expenditure.

We had quite a bountiful return from our general scheme of taxation last year, which brought us a large surplus in our general operations if we leave aside the railway deficit. Our hopes are centered upon the progress which our railway system will make towards equilibrium; and if, as I believe, our immigration policy brings about the movement of that splendid procession which we had before the war, of 250,000, 300,000, up to 400,000 immigrants towards our western plains, I feel that we should not be discouraged, and that with an increased population of a quarter of a million a year, which we can absorb and take care of, the country will proceed on its way to prosperity. This is my hope.

From year to year we have seen that things were improving; but we must all put our shoulders to the wheel; and in spite of my honourable friend's belief that the raising of our voices here may be but a cry in the wilderness, I believe that if we show by our activities each Session that we intend to turn the X-rays on the expenditures of the various Departments and on every branch of the Civil Service, we shall have done our duty towards improving conditions in Canada.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: May I refer very briefly to one observation which my honourable friend has made with reference to the expenditure of the preceding Government in 1919-20? Honourable gentlemen will recall that that was the year immediately following the end of the Great War.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I have not gone into explanations, but I did not mean to mention that increase in the way of criticism.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: In that year probably the greatest expenditure of all the years