

took office. He could have saved something by stopping them. It would have been a foolish thing to do; but only in degree not in principle more foolish than to have permitted them to remain unfinished on the failure of the companies. He did not do this. On the contrary he is actually claiming to-day special merit that, under his administration of the department, these roads have been pressed on to completion. But Mr. Joly went further than this. He did not content himself with completing the contracts actually let; he incurred expenditures to which the action of his predecessors in no way bound him, and to that extent has further embarrassed the financial position as the result of these railways. His construction of the Loop Line at Three Rivers, his contract for the bridge at Hull, and his extension of the line to Aylmer, are all works beyond the obligations imposed upon him by his predecessors in office. We are not condemning these works. They may be all very valuable—that is not the point with which we are dealing at this moment. What we urge is that their having been undertaken by Mr. Joly, of his own motion, without the assent of the Legislature, and in excess of any obligations incurred by Mr. DeBoucherville, destroys all right on his part to complain that his embarrassments arose from the obligations which he inherited from his predecessors, and which, his friends allege, had he been in office all the time would never have been incurred.

It is not necessary to say this much in relation to the plea that the financial embarrassments are the result of a policy on the part of the Conservatives when in office, to which the Liberals, then in opposition, were opposed. We come now to the question: Did Mr. Joly succeed in doing what he promised the electors at the May election he would do, restore the equilibrium without recourse to any system of imposts to increase the revenue? If he did, if he even made a reasonable approach to doing it, then he may claim that he should have been permitted to remain at the head of the Government. If he did not, then he has failed in his mission, the *coup d'état* of March, 1878, is without even the semblance of a result to justify it, and he has been properly restored to the position of leader of the Opposition which for so many years he adorned.

Mr. Langelier at the last session of the

Legislature, submitted a number of statements in order to show the receipts and expenditures of the province during the year ending 30th June, 1879,—a year at the commencement of which the late Government had got safely seated in their saddles, and should have been able to make their skill felt in producing those wonderful financial results which were promised. The first thing which strikes us in dealing with this subject is the extraordinary difference between estimate and expenditure under the Joly Administration. The late Mr. Bachand promised important economies when he submitted his estimates for the year, and we had any extent of rejoicing in the Ministerial press at this wonderful result of a change of Government. People contrasted the estimates of Mr. Bachand with those of his predecessor, Mr. Church, and cried out: See how these Liberals effect economies. But as months rolled on, and the day of reckoning arrived, it was found that their savings were only figures of speech, and not figures of arithmetic. The late Mr. Bachand undertook to carry on the Government, proceed with contemplated public works, and meet the interest and charges upon the public debt, with a sum of \$2,314,041. In his budget speech he was very emphatic upon this point, saying:—"The present Government engages 'to fulfil all the obligations of the Province, legitimately contracted, without injury to the public service, by the adoption of a policy of economy and retrenchment well applied, and without recourse to direct taxation.'" He proceeded to show in what manner, and to what extent, and to what branches of the public this policy was to be applied, and he concluded his statement by the declaration that he anticipated that the financial year closing the 30th of June, 1879, would show all the obligations of the Province honestly met, the public enterprises faithfully carried out, and a surplus in the Treasury of \$17,495. He also "pledged his word that the expenditure of the various branches of the public service would not exceed the amount estimated by him." He unhappily was not spared to see the results of the year's administration; but when the figures came down, it turned out that the actual expenditure for the same services reached the sum of \$2,685,340, a larger sum than has ever been spent in one year on ordinary ex-