

equally culpable if we neglected to make those improvements which are called for by the interest of the Dominion. With these observations, and without further trespassing on your indulgence, I move the second reading of the bill.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—As we have been informed by the hon. leader of the government in this House that the Supply Bill specially pretains to the House of Commons, the inference would be that it is improper that we should discuss the bill which is now before us, or in other words we are simply to say yea or nay. I shall therefore follow the example, as near as possible, of the hon. gentleman, in speaking very shortly on the question before the House. In doing so, I must, in the first place, take some little exception to the statements made by the hon. gentleman as to the relative expenditure between this year and former years. Without going into particulars, I shall merely deal with the facts as they are presented to us by the bill now before us for our acceptance. It is true that there is a difference between the current expenditure of the year and the expenditure which is properly and legitimately charged to capital account. What I shall deal with is this—and what I think the country will have to consider is—what amount is the country asked to pay for the carrying on of the business of the Dominion during the coming year, and what amount has the government pledged the country to pay in future years.

- When we take the figures as they are presented to us, in that light, we find that they exceed by a very large sum any former appropriation. I shall take for a few moments the liberty of contrasting the professions of the hon. gentlemen with their practices, and endeavour to lay down a basis to show that their professions out of office are not always practiced when they assume the reins of power and the responsibilities of office. I find, and so will any one who has read the platform upon which these gentlemen appealed to the people at the last general election, that they made certain definite and positive promises and it may fairly be asked, how far have these promises been carried out, and how far do the government deserve the continued confidence of the people with respects to this particular branch of the subject—that is, the promise and the practice. One of the principal planks in the platform of

the Reform convention so-called, held in this city, was the following:—

We cannot but view with alarm the large increase of the public debt and of the controllable annual expenditure of the Dominion and the consequent undue taxation of the people under the governments that have been continuously in power since 1878, and we demand the strictest economy in the administration of the government of the country.

In introducing that resolution, Mr. Gibbons, of London, one of the lights of the Liberal party, made use of this language:

You do not need to be concerned with regard to this resolution. You have already been convinced of the truth of the principles advocated by the Liberal party, and about this one there is no dispute.

He was followed immediately by the Hon. Clifford Sifton, then Attorney General of the province of the Manitoba, and now Minister of the Interior, in the present administration. He said:

I wish to call attention to the fact that, as Liberals, we have the right to say that we are the exponents of economy.

In the Liberal campaign book we are told:

The large reduction which would take place, under a Liberal administration, in the public expenditure is sufficient of itself to justify any man in voting for a reduction of the tariff.

How far that reduction has taken place has been pointed out repeatedly in this House, as well as in the House of Commons. It is true that certain articles have been placed upon the free list. It is equally true that these very articles have ever since been sold to the consumer at a much higher rate than they were sold before they were put on the free list.

Hon. Mr. MILLS—Do you want a tax put on to bring down the price?

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—If I had time, and I deemed it at all pertinent to the subject now under consideration I could prove from the experience of this country in the past, that the placing of a protective tariff upon every article which the present government has placed upon the free list, led to its being sold cheaper than it is to-day. However, I am not going to be led away. There are articles, I may say, in the tariff that bear a higher rate of duty to-day than they did prior to the introduction of this so-called free trade policy. It is true they are articles principally imported from Great Britain, while the articles upon which the duty was lowered are imported from the United States, and the result has been a falling off in the importations during the last