

nently on it, retrenchment. Every day and every hour we were told on the floor of Parliament, on the hustings and throughout the press that the people who were then ruling the country were corrupt and extravagant, that they squandered the public funds, and the inference was given—put us in power and we will economize, and the country will be safe and prosperous. Under such promises they came into power, and surely we had reason to suppose that when they got possession of the reins of Government they would have studied to retrench the public expenditure, but what do we find? They came down to Parliament with the largest estimate that had ever been voted in a Legislature of this country—not only for the Public Works of the Dominion, but the largest in those very particulars wherein retrenchment and economy was to be expected. Before they came to power they said the late Government had all these buildings crowded from cellar to garret with employees, their friends. We naturally supposed there would be a reduction of expenditure within these buildings, but turn to the record, and what do we find? I thought it would be hardly fair, perhaps, to take any single year and compare it with any other single year because accidental circumstances might affect it more or less. For the purpose of making a fair comparison I compare 1872 and 1873 with 1874 and 1875. I find the increase in the Public Works Department, for mere office work alone, was \$27,053; Postoffice, \$33,731; Agriculture, \$15,290; Marine and Fisheries, \$13,432; Justice, \$10,252; Militia and Defense \$15,005; Secretary of State, there was a decrease, and I congratulate my honorable friend upon it, of \$453. I presume that is owing to his teachings in economy in his early political life.

Hon. Mr. AIKINS—The Ordinance and Dominion Lands branches were transferred to the Department of the Interior which accounts for the decrease.

Hon. Mr. McLELAN—You have spoiled the whole thing. I see it is so. The contingencies—you know what they mean—run up to \$113,873 of an increase. Taking the increase in the whole thirteen offices, just for mere office work, there was an increase of \$336,478. I find also an increase under the head of miscellaneous, that is, when they have put all the sums they can under every possible head, there is thrown into this basket, \$213,000 of an increase.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—I hope the honorable gentleman will give his paper to the printers that we may have an opportunity of answering it.

Hon. Mr. McLELAN—My honorable

friend from Toronto, last year, when the supply bill was before the House, made a similar statement and showed the enormous increase in the expenditures of the country. To this hour that has not been answered.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—It has been answered.

Hon. Mr. McLELAN—No, but I need not pursue this point farther. Why we can take up the public accounts and without looking at the date, tell by the amount expended whether it was under the present or the late Administration. David Copperfield says his old nurse Peggotty had a habit of bursting off her buttons. On one occasion she was taking him down to Yarmouth and he had the impression that if she made him a lost boy he could track his way back by the buttons she had shed. So if we were to lose every date from the public accounts for ten years we could track the honorable gentlemen opposite through them by their extravagance. Every letter and every line of their financial history is reeking and dripping with extravagance, and now the honorable gentlemen tell us in this speech when the money is all spent in this way "that they are going to be very economical; we must make the expenditure come within our means." How strongly this reminds one of the narrative of the Prodigal Son; when he had wasted all his own substance in extravagance he came back to economy. I am sure we shall be glad to assist the gentlemen to get back somewhere near the position we expected them to occupy when we listened to their declarations before they came into power. There is another point in which there is a remarkable contrast between their practice and their preaching. I remember well that the first speeches I heard in the House of Commons when I had the honor of sitting there, by the gentlemen who now lead this Government, were denunciations of coalition, and entirely in favor of pure party government. It was then a coalition government they were denouncing, we have a coalition government now. I am not going to find fault with the Government on that account, because I believe, in the outset of this Confederation, it was desirable to bring together the best men to be found throughout the Dominion. But looking back at those declarations, and contrasting them with what we have now, we see how entirely they are contradicted and falsified. Turning to a report of a speech delivered by the Premier last summer, I find this remarkable declaration in reply to the statement that his Government was a coalition: "It would be a very grave charge, did it not want the simple element of truth," and he asked, "With whom was it I coalesced?" and again,