

I will now review the statements and the Honorable Premier's speech on the Budget, which were distributed.

The Honorable Premier, this year, again renews his attack by means of comparative statements, wherein he endeavors to show the deplorable state in which his Government found the finances of the Province in May, 1897, when he assumed the direction of affairs, enormous annual deficits, alarming increase of the debt, etc., but, Mr. Speaker, even if all this were true, it was their doing. Does he forget the disastrous results of their reign from 1886 to 1891?

The Honorable Premier is frank enough to admit it himself in statement A, which was handed to us: Deficit, 1889-90, \$1,380,569.18; 1890-91, \$1,444,236.09; 1891-92, \$1,742,651.02!

The net consolidated debt, which was \$10,527,273 in 1886, when these gentlemen came into power, had reached \$15,181,320 in 1891, when they went out of power. Besides this, they left a floating debt and further obligations, amounting to \$10,862,353.00! a total of \$26,043,673.

It was in this state of bankruptcy that the Conservative party under the Honorable Mr. de Boucherville, were called to power. They undertook a herculean task, but they courageously set to work, going even so far as to imperil the political existence of the party, by putting on the people additional taxes (though only temporary) in order to meet the exigencies of the situation, and retrieve the disasters caused by these gentlemen.

It was the liquidation of a bankrupt estate, and, for this reason, I last year maintained, and emphatically reaffirm now, that they have no right to-day to make comparative statements to show that, under the present administration, the expenditure was less or the revenue more than during the years of the liquidation of the bankrupt estate, left by the Liberals in 1891.

The present Government, in this House and out of it, unceasingly asserts that, from 1891 to 1897, we continued the system of annual deficits inaugurated by themselves. But is this so, Mr. Speaker? It is positively incorrect.

During the last session, statements were placed before the House to show that there were deficits in the Ordinary Budgets, viz:—\$24,828 in 1892-93; \$230,202.28 in 1893-94;