

remain here, will have an enormous cost to pay. Now, Sir, there is this consideration, that you cannot impoverish one class of the community without so far diminishing the wealth of the nation, and if you take money from them in this way you make the nation to that degree poorer. Now, are we at the present time in a condition to incur this large and needless expenditure? I think there is not a gentleman in this House but who will agree with me that we are not. If there is one fact better understood than another in this House, it is that this year we have to face a very large deficit in the revenue. We are not going to be able to collect enough to meet our ordinary expenditure, and at the end of the current year the balance will be against us. Not only that, but in every Department the expense and charges upon the revenue are running up, and we are increasing our indebtedness at an alarming rate. A great deal has been said this Session about the national debt. We have financial geniuses in this House, who can reason us out of it altogether, who declare it is a mere *bagatelle*. But, Mr. Speaker, there are some plain facts that cannot be ignored and one of these is, that we are running into debt at a fearful rate. We are mortgaging the whole future of the country, and loading it down with a weight of debt from which, I fear, it will not recover. As regards the comparison between the Canadian and United States debts, we had one financial genius here this Session, who by adding the State and municipal debts together, also the provincial, demonstrated that the debt of the United States was 13 cents greater *per capita* than the debt of Canada, but in order to attain that result he had to strike off \$71,577,296. Why he did so I cannot tell, unless it was too bulky to handle easily. But I do not think that we can take that as a correct basis in considering the condition of the two countries. There is not a gentleman in this House but will admit that the man who owns \$20,000 worth of property, and is in debt for \$10,000, if he is wiping off that debt from year to year is in a far better condition than the man who has only \$10,000 worth of property, and owes \$5,000, and instead of making any advance towards payment, is running deeper into debt every year. That is about the position in which the two countries stand. While the Americans are rapidly paying off their debt, we are as rapidly increasing ours. Let me draw the attention of the House to the way in which the two countries deal with the indebtedness.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Question.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. I am speaking to the question now, and an important part of the question, too. The Finance Minister, in the return he made, stated that the debt of the Dominion was something over \$253,000,000. We have been told, and told correctly, that at the end of the war the debt of the United States was \$2,773,226,873. Now, let me draw attention to the way the United States have handled their debt in the past. In 1813 the debt of the United States was \$55,962,827; in 1835 they had paid that all off, except \$37,513; in 1866, after the disastrous war, it had risen to \$2,773,226,373, and in 1884 they had reduced it to \$1,408,000,000.

Mr. HESSON. That was done by the National Policy.

Mr. ARMSTRONG. What have you done to pay off our debt with your National Policy? By your National Policy you have raised the tariff to the very highest possible point, and, notwithstanding that enormous taxation, you have brought us face to face with a deficit. That is what the National Policy has done for us. Now, I submit for this House to consider whether it is worth while to incur all that enormous expenditure merely for the sake of uniformity. There are one or two features of this Bill that require special mention. Special prominence has been given to the question of revising barristers, and that has been pretty well venti-

lated; but there is another feature to which I wish to draw attention, and that is the question: Who are going to be appointed for that special purpose? Now, the hon. Secretary of State claimed that they were going to appoint the judges. Why? Because the Bill gives to the Government power to appoint the judges if they see fit. We on this side believe that is not what the Government intend to do. They will not appoint judges, because I am proud to say that we have a set of judges who are bound to do justice. We have had experience in revising voters' lists in Ontario, and we have had no reason to complain, but those are not the men who are going to be appointed. They are going to be barristers of five years' standing. What will be the test of their fitness? I am justified by the events of the past in saying that they are going to be chosen for their fitness to manipulate the voters' lists. I know it has been claimed on behalf of the Government that they are going to appoint honorable men to the positions—barristers of five years' standing. I do not want to say anything disrespectful of barristers; the profession of a lawyer is an honorable one, and there are very many honorable members of the profession. But unfortunately, like all other professions, there are shaky characters in it, men extremely suitable for this work. Hon. gentlemen opposite may say there are 206 electoral divisions and you cannot find that number of such men as I have referred to. The Government have taken care as to that point. They have provided in the Bill that one man may revise the lists of a number of constituencies; so, no doubt, there will be a sufficient supply of men to do all the work required. If there is not a supply sufficient to give one to each constituency, there will be enough, by grouping several divisions, and so the work will be satisfactorily done. Hon. gentlemen may say these are harsh words and they are not justifiable. All we have to guide us as to the future is our experience in the past. I ask hon. gentlemen, without regard to politics, if we are not abundantly justified, by our experience in the past, in arriving at the judgment we place on Government measures now? I have had only a short parliamentary experience; but I have seen, in pursuance of an Act rushed through the House, one leading man in this House, one whom the Government had always cause to fear, kept out of his seat, in pursuance of an Act of Parliament, for a year and a-half. I have seen, during my short experience, a man whom the people chose to represent them driven from the House by a vote of the majority of the House, and a gentleman whom the people rejected elected to take his place. I have also seen an hon. gentleman, who had forfeited his seat, and who had no more right to sit and vote in this House than the Mikado of Japan, elected to a seat by a special Act passed by the votes of the majority of the House. I ask, if in the face of these facts, we have not good reason to believe that what appears on the face of the Bill is not exactly what is intended to be carried out. But we have other evidence to guide us in forming a correct judgment. Reference has been made to the Gerrymander Bill. I do not hesitate to say that that was one of the most infamous measures that any Legislature in any civilised country ever enacted.

Some hon. MEMBERS. How about Mowat's Bill?

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Some hon. gentlemen speak of Mowat's Bill. This is neither the time nor the place to enter into a discussion of that Bill; but I am ready to take that Bill and sit down with any hon. member on the other side, and if he is open to conviction, he will admit that that Bill does not contain anything to deprive electors of their rights. As regards the first Gerrymander Bill, I do not want to repeat the remark which I uttered; but this is decidedly a worse measure than the Gerrymander Bill. The election of a man by a vote of the majority of the House had a boldness about it which made us almost feel a