

policy of hon. gentlemen opposite—were unable to find them there. Sir, I said there was also another loss. The hon. gentleman has added intentionally or not—but he has added largely, despite what he may say to the contrary, to the cost of living in this country. The hon. gentleman knows—if he tries to retrench, he will soon find out if he does not know—that it is very hard, indeed, for either nations or individuals, who have become accustomed to a certain style of expenditure, to retrench that expenditure. Sir, I say any wise statesman to-day would shun, as he would shun poison, any legislation which would tend to increase the wealth of the few at the expense of the impoverishment of the many. I say that there is no greater danger, politically speaking, confronting society than the aggregation of large fortunes in individual hands; and the hon. gentleman, if he pays any attention to the movements of current thought, knows, or ought to know that I speak the truth. I say that it is a thing which invariably produces corruption on the one side and misery on the other. I say it justifies socialism. We, in Canada, a few years ago, if we had not great wealth, had an exceedingly fair distribution of what wealth we had.

For What Ministers are Responsible.

The hon. gentleman's policy has contributed largely to alter that condition of things, and to cause this country to approximate the very condition in the Old World which has led so many people to leave the Old World and seek a home on this side of the Atlantic. The hon. gentleman can show no single instance anywhere, in which huge fortunes exist in which there is not intense poverty at the other end of the scale. Now, let us see what the hon. gentlemen opposite can be held responsible for. For the poor harvest they are not responsible in one sense, inasmuch they certainly could not avert it; although I say they are responsible in this sense, that when bad harvests overtook the country, during the Administration of my hon. friend,

they falsely charged him with being the cause of it, and falsely pretended that if they were put in office they could do better. I say they are responsible for the excessive taxation which exists, for the amount of capital which is needlessly locked up in unproductive manufactures for the capital which is lost by emigration which is very large, for the capital which is locked up in the North-West, and for the general inflation and the increased cost of living in the country. Now, how do these hon. gentlemen propose to remedy all this? I did not hear in the statement of the hon. gentleman, any relief proposed now. He takes credit to himself that he was obliged to reduce certain taxes. Well, Sir, considering that he put on probably twelve or fifteen millions more taxes per annum, than were at all required, I do not think we owe him any great thanks for that. Still, as far as it went, it was good; but it was not by any manner of means what he ought to have done or what is called for by the present necessities of the country. Now, I had thought that I might take this occasion to speak of the Administration and the policy of my hon. friend (Mr. Mackenzie) more in detail; but that, I see, looking at the time, I must reserve for some other occasion. Still, I will say this, that I am prepared to show, if the hon. gentleman wants to have it shown, that the deficits which existed during my hon. friend's Administration—the deficits of 1876, 1877 and 1878—were due to the extravagance—aye, to the deliberate misconduct—of his predecessors. I say Sir, that the deficits which would have existed in 1874 and 1875 were turned into surpluses by us. I say more—that the mischief which afterwards occurred was due to the neglect, by hon. gentlemen opposite, of my hon. friend's warnings, and I say, that in spite of all, we had substantially mastered all those difficulties by sheer economy, and that, with the solitary exception of the sum required for sinking fund—which, as the hon. Minister of Finance truly said this afternoon goes wholly to the redemption of debt we had, before we left office, succeeded in establishing an equilibrium. More