

But, sir, if Mr. Foster is not ignorant, if Mr. Foster knew what he was doing, if Mr. Foster is aware of what that really represented, then how am I to characterize and how are you to characterize a man in his position who makes such statements, and scatters them broadcast over the country, and, more than all embodies them in a formal resolution in parliament, for the purpose, I suppose, of capturing a few unwary votes? Sir, what sort of creature is this? I think I will have to leave it to Sir Mackenzie Bowell properly to classify Mr. Foster. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) Meantime, allow me to say that this statement, and this you can find for yourselves in any Hansard, this statement and this method of computation go very far indeed to discredit anything that Mr. Foster may have to advance on the subject of the debt or expenditure of the people of Canada.

Sir, one word more on that subject before I proceed to review a little in detail the facts and figures that I desire to bring before you. I notice that some of my worthy friends have threatened me with the wrath and indignation of our countrymen of German descent because I ventured to insinuate that Sir Charles Tupper was kindred to the Boers. That may be. Nevertheless, I have this to say, that after reading Sir Charles Tupper's speeches and Mr. Foster's speeches, and a few of the Conservative journals, I was very much struck with the following passage which I found in a recent American journal, written by a journalist who has been serving with the Boers throughout their campaign, and a man of very strong Boer leanings. The paragraph is as follows: "The Boers seem not to know or to like to tell the truth, for they lie to one another, are lied to by their leaders, and are all but fattened with lies by their newspaper organs." I do not wish to push the parallel too far, but could there be a better description of certain Conservative leaders? Is there not the strongest presumption and evidence that Sir Charles Tupper, at any rate, in that important respect, is very near the true typical Boer?

The Debt of Canada.

Now, sir, one of their accusations, and one upon which these gentlemen dwell much, is the fact that whereas we declared that it was extremely inexpedient in 1895 or 1896 that the debt of Canada should be increased further, the debt of Canada has increased under our own regime a matter of \$7,103,000 from the year 1896 to the present year, 1900. Well, sir, again that is a true statement. The debt has increased, and I shall presently explain to you why. But first of all let me call your attention to a few little facts. In 1893, when, as you are aware, Mr. Foster was minister of finance, the net debt of Canada was \$241,681,000. I find in 1894 it had risen to \$246,183,000. In 1895 it had risen to \$253,074,000. In 1896 it had risen to \$258,497,000. Now, from 1893 to 1896, a period of four years, both inclusive, you will observe, under Mr. Foster, the net debt of Canada had increased by \$16,816,000, as nearly as possible \$17,000,000. In 1896 we took over matters with a debt of \$258,497,000, and our record is as follows: In 1897 it had become \$261,538,000. In 1898 it had become \$263,956,000. In 1899 it had become \$266,273,000