

gratulation as to the past, and as to the present, found it very easy to be congratulatory as to the future. I am not surprised that when they were able to felicitate us upon our present condition they should come to that conclusion with reference to our more immediate future; and I hope that the early apprehension by the public of Canada of the fallacy of the views of the hon. Finance Minister, their early reaching the conclusion that he was not a trustworthy guide, the determination which they evinced—not, indeed, until after there had been, under his advice, an unhealthy expansion, a diversion of capital from which we are suffering to-day, but still much earlier than we would have expected them to do—their reaching, I say, the conclusion that they must retrench and draw in, will enable us to pass through what one hon. gentleman called the present crisis, and pass through the present period of depression, at any rate, within a period of not very protracted length nor of very great severity. But I do not believe that there are indications which would render it justifiable in the Legislature of this country, in members of Parliament, or in Ministers, to invite the commercial and the general community to launch out at this time. I believe that we have before us a year of considerable difficulty; I believe we have before us a year in which it will be requisite to exercise the virtues of prudence, of frugality, and of retrenchment in public and in private affairs, and that the true advice to give to the people is what I have just now suggested—not to befool them with statements as to their immediately returning into the state from which they have recently gone, but rather to point out the true method by which it is alone possible to hope for a recurrence of good times. I am quite aware that the hon. gentlemen opposite, many of them, denounce statements of this description, that they declare that they are unpatriotic, that they declare that it is wrong to deal with facts as they present themselves to the mind of the speaker, if those facts are not grateful to their ears; but I believe that it is our duty not to exaggerate but to state facts, and the conclusions from them, as we really understand them, and that honest advice of that description is what we owe to our country; and, therefore, notwithstanding these denunciations, I am determined, for my part, to “tell the truth and shame—the Tories.” Now, Sir, the second paragraph of the Speech deals particularly with Manitoba and the North-West; and some later paragraphs with railways there and with the financial status of the Province. I am very glad to hear the account of the well-being, the hopefulness and content of the settlers there, which are said to have been manifested to the visitors from the British Association. We all cheerfully voted the supplies which were asked from this Parliament in order to carry out the projected visit of the British Association; we were all very glad that it took place; we all expected considerable benefit from it, and there was no dissenting voice as to the pecuniary arrangements that the Government proposed upon that occasion; but it did strike me as one of the most cogent proofs of the excellence of the hon. member for Cumberland, in that particular part of oratory to which I referred, namely, hyperbole, that he should have declared that no event in the history of Canada during the present century has been so important, or redounded so much to its advantage, as the visit of the British Association. I remember in my own experience a good many things, and I have read of many more which I conceive to have been of infinitely greater importance to our country, which have conduced more to its credit and prosperity than the visit of some two hundred, or whatever the number may have been, of eminent British gentlemen, could by any possibility do. Now, Sir, the expectations of immigration, it is said, have been disappointing but by the hon. gentleman's account, not so very much so. He says about 100,000 came in. I shall not enter into the controversy which is going on from Session to

Session as to the accuracy of these figures. We will get them, and they will be analysed in due time. But extravagant expectations of immigration were, no doubt, entertained. At one time we hoped great things from the railway company and we were told when the contract was let that one of the burdens from which the country would be relieved was that of getting immigration into the North-West, because the railway company would do that for us. I have not observed, in any accounts that I have received, any large expenditures, as yet, by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company upon immigration, but I do observe *per contra* that our own expenditures have been very largely increased, and this year they will be found considerably to have exceeded half a million of money. Notwithstanding that glowing picture which the Speech gives of hopefulness, well-being and content in Manitoba and the North-West, I am obliged to reiterate the view that there have been great blunders and errors in the policy of the Administration, with reference to that country; that the railway monopoly, the policy as to other lines in Manitoba in the earlier years after the contract with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, the locking up of large blocks of lands, the speculative sales which were made, and the operation of the tariff, have all been extremely adverse to the creation and permanent existence of that condition of hopefulness, well-being and content which we all agree is so essential to the growth of that country and the prosperity of Canada at large, dependent, as it is, for its prosperity upon the prosperity of the North-West, so great is the stake it has taken in that country. The hon. member for Cumberland pointed out in a sentence that fact. He says one cent on a bushel of wheat to the farmer of the North-West is of the greatest importance; we must not handicap him in his effort to get his wheat to the markets of Europe. That is the great difficulty. That is the difficulty which we have got to combat, a difficulty largely of our own creation, in view of the policy of the Government with respect to the whole Canadian Pacific Railway. The anxiety of the people of that country to obtain some other mode of communication, their anxiety to reach Europe by some other means, cutting off us of the East by a short run to Hudson's Bay, their proposals with respect to the expenditure, the zeal which they display in pressing the construction of that railway, are to my mind the strongest evidences of the feeling that must exist there, as to the vital importance of procuring some other means of communication or some competition with respect to moving their produce. I was very sorry to hear—I suppose it was a half inspired utterance—from the hon. member for Cumberland (Mr. Townshend), when, in referring to the expedition to Hudson's Bay he told us that whatever difficulties it might have evidenced as to its primary object, the establishing of the possibility of a route between the North-West and Europe, we had at all events to congratulate ourselves more than to console ourselves with the reflection that we had found a new salmon fishery. That will, indeed, be balm to the people of the North-West. I am very glad under these circumstances to hear, and I hope it is not now too late, that a liberal land policy with respect to railways in the North-West is about to be adopted. When the Pacific Railway Company was chartered we were told that it would supply us with branch lines; that a very large proportion of the land grant was to be taken in districts off the main line, and that interest and policy would necessitate their building the branches; and in the earlier days, after the execution of that contract, they adopted that view themselves and they projected very lengthy lines—I cannot now give you the mileage, but in one year the projects transmitted to the Minister covered more than one thousand miles of branch lines. But a change took place in their policy and in the policy of the Administration, and it was determined to make it the primary object, to the exclusion and sacrifice of the branch lines, in