

the public debt. The public debt is only a burden in proportion to the number of people who have to bear it. If Canada should have a population of twenty millions instead of what she has to-day, her public debt would be almost insignificant. The true test of the public debt is not merely the amount of it; it is the proportion in which it has increased as compared with its increase in the previous history of the country, and the proportion which it bears to the population of the country. I have made up a statement of the net debt per head, beginning with the year 1891, and coming down to the close of the last fiscal year, and it is as follows:

Year	Net debt per head.
1891.....	\$49.09
1892.....	49.15
1893.....	48.98
1894.....	49.40
1895.....	50.57
1896.....	50.82

This was the point at which the debt per head stood when this government came into power. Now we come to the latter years:

Year.	Net debt per-head.
1897.....	\$ 50.87
1898.....	50.77
1899.....	50.62
1900.....	49.88
1901.....	49.84
1902.....	49.59
1903.....	46.84
1904.....	45.74
1905.....	45.63
1906.....	44.63
1907 (to March 31)	42.84
1908 (to March 31)	40.50

Our Population Close to Seven Millions.

The census authority of Canada, whose figures I have quoted, has made his estimate of the population of Canada, as it stood on the 31st of March last past, being the end of the fiscal year; he has applied his usual method of computation, allowing for the natural increase of population and taking into account the immigration, of which we have carefully compiled records, and the statement made by the statistician is that on March 31, the population of Canada was 6,863,500. If that statement be correct, and it is given by the statistician as being prepared in the usual way, the net debt per head of Canada on March 31 last was \$40.50 per head against \$50.82 on the day when my right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) assumed office.

Capital and Special Expenditure.

Sometimes it is said: 'Oh, well, but this government have had good luck, and have not spent much money outside of the ordinary routine; they have been able to show a surplus in that way.' I have had an examination made of the expenditures outside of what we call consolidated fund, that is what is called the capital and special expenditure—all those things that are not charged to ordinary consolidated fund. I find that in the eighteen years, from 1878 to 1896, this special expenditure, capital and other expenditure, apart from the consolidated fund, amounted