richest and most populous States in Europe, is spending for its total services. Moreover, the case is worse in our respects than most. We have, as my hon. friend pointed out, an enormous proportion of fixed charges. Our fixed charges amount to something like $12,500,000, and in that I do not include expenses for collection of revenue, although it must be regarded to a great extent as fixed; I do not include the Treaty allowances to Indians, and I do not include the very considerable number of items which are really, as the hon. Minister knows very well, to all intents and purposes fixed. I say that alone ought to cause the hon. gentleman to speak more seriously than he does—perhaps not more seriously than he thinks—of the present position. But I further point out that under these very measures the hon. gentleman is passing, a very large addition is going to be made to our fixed charges. He will have to make a large addition for the advance to the Canadian Pacific Railway—it may be repaid; that remains to be seen. He will have to make large advances in aid of railways. Now, as to the probabilities of the future, the hon. gentleman cannot have shut his eyes to the fact that almost from the first day of July, 1883, to the present moment, our trade and revenue have been steadily decreasing. The hon. gentleman knows perfectly well that in all human probability there will be a loss of probably not short of $4,000,000 on the tax receipts for this year. He has not as yet laid on the Table the statement of receipts and expenditures for which I asked.

Sir LEONARD TILLEY. They did not reach me, or I would have sent them.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. We had this information before; the information we will have in a few days will be only too good evidence of the truth of the statement I make. Now, the House ought to remember that the position of any country which depends, as we do, so largely on Customs revenue is of necessity exceedingly precarious. I do not propose to detain the House by going into a minute disquisition as to the causes which lead to these reductions, but I will call the attention of the House again to this fact, that within the last ten years the reduction of our imports has been larger than it has been in almost any other country of which we know. In 1873 our nominal imports were $127,000,000 for consumption; in 1880, a year which the hon. gentleman holds up to us as an example, because then for the first time the exports a little exceeded the imports, the imports had shrunk to $71,000,000 entered for consumption: that is to say, they had shrunk nominally about $56,000,000. I do not think that our statistics are strictly accurate in that respect because I believe that the nominal importation in 1873-74 was considerably in excess of the real importation. They included, as I have always pointed out, a good many millions of goods which were really merely passing through this country on their way to Europe; so that every gentleman must see that even if you do deduct ten millions, a falling off from $117,000,000 to $71,000,000 is a monstrous reduction, and yet it is a reduction which the hon. gentleman has always contended was desirable and which it was the special object of his policy to produce. Since that time the imports have increased—he says have increased far too much—they have been increased from $71,000,000, or thereabouts, to $123,000,000—they have increased by $52,000,000. Now, Sir, it is quite on the cards, and the hon. gentleman knows it well, that there may be—I do not say a decrease of $50,000,000 —but there may be a very large decrease within the next year or two, in which case he also knows his revenue from Customs will shrink enormously, and it will shrink even more, perhaps, than the number of millions would indicate, because the first things reduced are usually those articles of luxury which properly enough pay the highest duty. Sir, we are therefore in this predicament in looking at the future; we have at present a falling revenue, and an almost certainty that it will continue to fall. The hon. gentleman knows that there is no better barometer of the position of a country than the price at which exchange is going. Now, Sir, exchange is becoming more adverse to Canada from day to day; exchange, perhaps, is more adverse to Canada to-day than it has been for fifteen years, if I am correctly informed—at any rate it is very adverse. That is very clear proof to every mercantile man, I think, that in all probability for many months to come the condition of trade will be very unfavourable to Canada, inasmuch as we will have very little to sell, and consequently we will be able to buy comparatively little. Then, Sir, he has got to consider, as my hon. friend truly pointed out, the effect on the country. There is no use in the hon. gentleman's disguising from himself what is patent to us all, that these excessive and exorbitant additional taxes have had a bad effect, both directly and indirectly; directly, by exhausting the resources of the people, and indirectly by the effect on their mind. Why, Sir, when you add $8,000,000 a year to the annual public expenditure, it is just equivalent to borrowing $200,000,000, a sum greater than the whole of the existing debt, as he states it. And he will remember this, that at any rate, in the Province of Ontario, whereas formerly our lands and population were both increasing in value, all of us who know anything practically of the state of western Ontario; all of us, I may say, who know anything practically of the value of real estate throughout Canada, are painfully well aware that real estate over almost the whole country, with the exception of one or two towns, is decreasing, or at least is stationary in value. The hon. gentleman must know that; if he does not know it, if he has not had that information given to him in the course of his various journeys through the country, he certainly could not have fallen in with many men who were conversant with the real estate of the rural population of Canada at this present moment. I have pointed out——

An hon. MEMBER. Cut it short.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. It is not my fault, I may remind these hon. gentlemen, that those Estimates were brought down at so late a period, and the least I think that can be done when we are asked to vote so many millions of the people's money, is to give as many minutes to the discussion as there are hundreds of thousands of dollars in the Estimates. I say nothing, Sir, except barely to allude to it, of the discouragement of the settlers in the North-West produced by heavy taxation; but I must say this, that whereas it ought to be our object to make these people's capital go as far as it possibly can, the direct effect of our system are that these people are compelled to pay probably one third, certainly one-fourth, more for the very tools of trade which are absolutely necessary to develop the country than they need to, and that is a great discouragement to them. I assert that this immense taxation has produced a great absorbtion of the resources of the people. The hon. gentleman boasted the other day that the deposits in the savings banks were going on increasing. Perhaps they are, but the hon. gentleman did not tell us that the bank returns, quite as useful a barometer, show that there has been no increase, if I am correctly advised, in the deposits in the banks between December, 1882 and December, 1883; that important index is perfectly stationary; the deposits in the banks remain without increase. They had increased rapidly, they are now stationary, and there is some danger that they may be diminished. Sir, it is quite true that in a new country like ours the natural tendency ought to be to advance. I have always recognized that, and the House will remember that just as I was condemned without stint by the friends of the hon. gentleman, because, in 1873, and again in 1874, I dared to warn the people of Canada that they and the Government