

parish politician. Speaking with all respect for his skill in debate, his fluency of speech and his finished declamations, he is a parish politician and not entitled to be named as a statesman. How could any man who took in the whole situation make the complaint he did, that because the expenditure has increased two or three-fold, therefore there had been criminal extravagance. What were we doing at the beginning? We were governing four provinces on the St. Lawrence and on the Atlantic seaboard, and now we are governing half a continent. Why should the hon. gentleman go over all those items, and why should he travel the old ground? We adopted the present policy, and we knew it would be a costly policy, and yet followed it, and it is altogether too late in the day for that hon. gentleman or any gentleman to complain that we have done what we have done. The hon. gentleman says our public works are unproductive. He complains we have spent about \$50,000,000 on canals. In all conscience, if there is anyone expenditure which that hon. gentleman ought not to make the subject of reproach to the party now in power it is the expenditure on the canals. As a matter of common fair-play he knows well that his old leaders in the Conservative party, and subsequently the leaders in the Liberal party, committed themselves to the policy of thorough canal development and pursued that policy. It is true that when Mr. Mackenzie came into power in 1873, and after advertisements calling for tenders for a very large canal expenditure had been issued and tenders had been received, that hon. gentleman took upon himself to cancel the whole business; but they did not stop their own canal expenditure. They decided on adding millions for canal expenditure. I do not make this as a ground of reproach against the hon. gentleman and his allies, because it was one piece of vigorous and earnest policy to which they were entitled to credit during those long, dismal and unsuccessful years in which they controlled the destinies of the country. The hon. gentleman spoke of the Intercolonial, of the great sum of money it has cost, \$50,000,000, and the very large deficits that have been incurred by reason of that road. I confess that I share in some degree the hon. gentleman's regret that the deficit is so large. It is a disappointment to us all, and I think, speaking from the experience of two Administrations, that of Mr. Mackenzie, in which he was his own Minister of Railways, and that of Sir John Macdonald, it has been shown that the political management of railways in this country cannot be made economical. I hope, at a later stage of the session, to express my views on this subject more fully, and I trust we will find some method of dealing more successfully with this railway question, and find it possible to place the Intercolonial Railway in the hands of a non-political Commission, fully strengthened by Act of Parliament, entrenched as the judges are now, and beyond the control of Parliament, a commission composed of able men who will be given almost *carte blanche* to go forward and make the Intercolonial Railway pay. Having regard to the enormous trade done by it in the Lower Provinces it is disappointing to see the increased deficit incurred by it. Hon. gentlemen now in opposition have no hope that they can do better, and if they spoke their minds freely they would say they could do no better. The only hope is to adopt some system such as I have

suggested, and I hold this opinion more strongly in view of the fact that I hear such a system has been successfully operated in other colonies of the Empire. But the complaints of the hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright) are loudest as regards the North-West. He saw ruin everywhere, dark clouds were hovering over the Lower Provinces, the canal system was wrapped in darkness, but the deepest darkness was away in the western country. He reminded us that our predictions had not been fulfilled. I will not weary the House by reminding the hon. gentleman of the predictions he made, which are found recorded in his own Budget speeches. They are very entertaining to all who have a sense of humour; a humorous man making an analysis of the hon. gentleman's Budget speeches, noting and commenting on the various predictions and promises he had made, would make this House scream with laughter. The hon. gentleman commonly has a commercial crisis on hand and impending. On Tuesday night it was afar off, for it was only within a "measurable distance." When elections are coming on, however, it will be found that the commercial crisis is at hand. It was so in 1881, 1886, and before the last election. Now, who is this political prophet? Why is he entitled to speak with the authority he claims for a large part of the honest working people of this country? Whose arm does he make strong for work, whose heart does he make lighter; and half the strength of a man is the heart and hope he brings in the morning to his daily toil? What immigrant walking behind the plough on the western prairie whistles with a lighter heart for reading the hon. gentleman's speeches? What fisherman rowing out towards the sunrise over our sleek Atlantic seas has felt his arms strengthened after reading one of the hon. gentleman's speeches? Upon what meat doth this Cæsar feed that he hath grown so great? I have shown his entire unfitness to be called a prophet; he has shown his entire unfitness to be regarded as a safe and responsible statesman, because, right after the last election he took occasion—and I hope his Ontario colleagues will not stand by him in that—he took occasion to sneer at and wound the pride of six of the provinces of this Dominion. He called us in these six provinces the shreds and patches of the Dominion; he called us in the East, and he called you gentlemen in the West, shreds and patches. Was it good politics for a man who aspires to leadership to wound the pride of six provinces; was it good politics to tell fifty-seven members of this House that they and the people from whom they come are in the main a gang of thieves, and that they were in the pursuit of public plunder? I heard my hon. colleague from St. John (Mr. Hazen), in his speech at the opening of this session, refer to that language with due warmth and resentment, and I heard my hon. friend from Halifax (Mr. Kenny), later on in the session, referring to a letter which Richard J. Cartwright wrote in the *Toronto Globe*, describe it as being insulting, and slanderous, and calumnious, and diabolically false. Although I feel that resentment which both of these hon. gentlemen feel, I cannot work myself into a state of anger, for I have a sense of profound pity, that a man, who has sat in Parliament so many years with colleagues although they are not of his party in this House, could find no better words to say of them than that they are a gang of