

believe, further, that in no previous period of our history has the material well-being of our people been as great as it is to-day. For evidences of that we have only to visit the people in their homes, where we find them better housed, where we find them better fed, and where we find also a general material improvement which is most marked and most satisfactory. The contention of hon. gentlemen opposite that the condition of the people to-day is worse than it was in 1878, is capable of proof. Now, frequent reference is also made by these hon. gentlemen, as a sort of bugbear to frighten the people, to the national debt. We all know that during the last ten or fifteen years Canada has expended very large sums of money on important and necessary public works, on the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, on the Intercolonial Railway, on public buildings all over the country. In fact, there is only one trouble with Canada, and that is that our revenue is too small. If we had a couple of hundreds of millions per annum instead of thirty or forty millions, it would be very much easier to conduct the business of the country. As a matter of fact, the net debt has increased 19 cents per capita during the last fifteen years. But let us go back and examine the history of this debt. I find that in 1873, the net debt was \$99,848,726; in 1879, it was \$142,990,187; that period was under the regime of hon. gentlemen opposite. During those six years the debt had increased \$43,141,726, or an annual increase of \$7,199,289. Let us take the history of the debt under the Liberal-Conservative regime, and we find that whereas in 1879, the net debt was \$142,990,187, in 1894 it was \$246,183,089; or an increase in the fifteen years of \$103,192,842, or an annual increase of \$6,879,723. The actual debt increased more rapidly from 1873 to 1879 under the regime of hon. gentlemen opposite, than it has during the fifteen years since. The estimate which the people of Canada placed upon that fact can be understood when we remember that they evidently considered that the administration of public affairs by hon. gentlemen opposite was—I would not like to say incompetent and corrupt, though that is the kind of language with which the hon. member for South Oxford emblazons his financial statements; but I will simply say that it looks, at all events, as if the people of Canada thought it might have been incompetent and corrupt, because they took the very first opportunity of turning them out, and they have kept them out, and my opinion is that they will keep them out for many years to come. Sir, take the condition of the trade of the country. One would imagine, listening merely to the doleful utterances of hon. gentlemen opposite, that our trade was decreasing. Let us refer to the condition of trade in 1879 when these hon. gentlemen retired. At that time the aggregate trade with Great Britain

was \$67,288,848; in June, 1894, it was \$107,255,123. In 1879, our trade with the United States was \$70,904,720; in June, 1894, it was \$88,844,040. I shall simply select one or two other places with the trade of which we are most intimately concerned. In 1879, our trade with Newfoundland was \$2,280,823.79; in 1894, it was \$3,633,154. With the West Indies it had fallen, under their management, to \$4,753,099; in 1894, it had increased to \$7,131,172. I will not weary the House by giving other figures. Sir, the hon. member for Brant (Mr. Paterson) during the course of his speech the other evening, said that he was delighted to hear that the banks of the country were in a solid and solvent condition, that it was a source of pleasure to him, that he rejoiced in it; but he said that it was due, not to the favourable condition of the country, but simply to the good management of the banks; that it was solely a matter of management. With all due deference to the hon. gentleman, I contend that while the administration of Canadian banks has been most capable and most wise, at the same time, I do not care how wise the management may have been, if the banks had not had good customers, and if the general condition of the country had not been prosperous, certainly the banks could not have been prosperous. If the banks were simply doing business with thieves and robbers, as the manufacturers and the manufacturers' employees are termed by hon. gentlemen opposite. I do not think their condition would be very satisfactory. But nothing reflects more perfectly the condition of a country than the condition of the banks, and that is such a political axiom it should not have to be argued, in any deliberative assembly. I was rather surprised when the hon. member for North Brant (Mr. Paterson) stated that the conditions of the banks afforded no indication of the general condition of the country. I have no doubt the hon. gentleman was then referring to the chartered banks. I find that the habit of referring, in the course of a Budget debate, to the savings of the people is not confined to Canada, but that Sir Wm. Harcourt, in his recent Budget speech, delivered in England, referred to that fact, and the hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright), when Finance Minister, stated that the savings of the people in the savings banks had increased within a certain date from \$2,000,000 to \$7,000,000, and he thought that was a subject for congratulation. The hon. member for Oxford, in making that statement, recorded his opinion that these savings banks deposits are an indication of the well-being and thrift of the people of the country. The amount of deposits in the savings banks in 1874 was \$7,210,260, and in 1878, when hon. gentlemen opposite resigned the seals of office, they had increased