

Mr. FIELDING. It might not be so easy to bring them down as my hon. friend seems to think. My hon. friend has had no experience in the preparation of estimates. The hon. gentleman who sits beside him (Mr. Foster) has had some experience, and I think we will have to hold him accountable for his own practices of former days rather than for the precepts of to-day. I think we can fairly make comparisons between the present and the time when the hon. member for North Toronto was in office. Although the hon. leader of the opposition may regard this as unimportant, and although he has not been guilty in this sense, I think that the hon. member for North Toronto should be a little more considerate, knowing the difficulties that always arise in bringing down estimates of this kind. Then, it is worth while remembering that although the aggregate of these estimates is considerable, there are few matters contained in them that can be regarded as being new. Most of these are matters with which the House is quite familiar, and if a particular expenditure in a particular case may call for information, the general class of expenditures is well known and the principles involved in them do not require very much time for investigation, because they have been well understood by the House. For instance, we propose to expend several millions of dollars on the Transcontinental Railway. Can anybody say this is a new proposal? Was it not expected that we would come to the House and ask for something to expend on that railway, and has not the House for several years been fully seized of the whole question? Have we not fully considered this policy? Have not parliament, the government and the country decided to go on with the construction of the Transcontinental Railway; and, if so, who shall say, when you come to vote the amount, or ask for the sum necessary to carry on the work for the coming year, that there is anything held back? I think hon. gentlemen will find that there is very little in these estimates that they cannot understand. Of course, if they are determined not to understand, even if we were to stay here for six months, some hon. gentlemen opposite would say they had not sufficient information, but I do not think there will be any great difficulty in obtaining whatever information is necessary to them to understand all these matters. True, my hon. friend from North Toronto is manifesting a lamentable want of knowledge about the geography of the lower provinces. There was a time when my hon. friend would confess to an intimate knowledge of that—when he would hardly speak so contemptuously of these little places in the lower provinces for which appropriations have been made. There was a time when he had some knowledge of the splendid region—

Mr. R. L. BORDEN.

Down where the Skoodawabskoosis  
Flows into the Skoodawabskook.

There was a time when the names of places in the maritime provinces were more familiar to my hon. friend than they are at the present time; but though the time has come when it is necessary that he shall speak the names of other places to a larger degree, he should not deny us the pleasure of bearing in mind those so-called little names of the lower provinces. Nor can he expect us to sympathize with the idea he advances, that because these are little places in the lower provinces, therefore, they are not entitled to consideration. It may surprise him to know that they do not require wharfs and piers in the inland districts of Ontario and the Northwest Territories, but it will not surprise other people to be told that wharfs and piers are usually constructed where there is a coast line and that, as there is more coast line in the maritime provinces than in the Northwest Territories, there is more occasion for wharfs and piers to be built. I remember in an inland district of my own province some years ago being honoured by an address presented by the people. The writer of the address was a humorist, and he said that the people in that section would never call upon the government for money for the establishment of lighthouses. He was quite correct. My hon. friend fails to take due account of the fact that in the maritime provinces you have this extensive coast line and that there is need of these improvements. If my hon. friend is of the opinion that these works are of no importance, I want to take exception, and I want to say that these things are as important to these respective communities as are the larger works which exist in other places. The aggregate amount of the expenditures proposed in these estimates for works of this kind in Quebec and the lower provinces is very moderate, and it is because they are set out in detail; because each item is particularized and because each piece of work is set forth, that my hon. friend, measuring entirely by the space which they occupy on the sheet of the estimates, tries to convey the impression that there is something very alarming in these appropriations. Each one of these little appropriations is as useful and as important to the community in that part of Canada as our expenditures in other parts of the country, and expenditures of this kind go as far towards making the people happy and contented in that portion of the country as larger works in other directions; and in these cases you may be able to accomplish a great deal more with an expenditure of \$200,000 or \$300,000 than in another case with an expenditure of \$1,000,000. In regard to the militia expenditures, I understand that there was a postponement of the debate by mutual consent. I understood my hon. friend the Minister of Militia and De-