

919,460, and on the 28th of February just past, the debt had risen to \$401,891,909, or an increase of \$61,972,000 in the last three years.

But, Mr. Speaker, how was this debt increased and what was the cause of the increase? The increased debt under the Conservative Government, was incurred entirely for the purpose of taking care of liabilities left to it by the Liberal party when it went out of office. It was a legacy, Sir, left to this Government, and this Government was in honour bound to accept and provide for it. I shall give to the House a statement of what it has cost this Government to care for some of the undertakings that the Liberal Government rushed into so recklessly, previous to their defeat in 1911. In order to care for these liabilities left them by the Liberals, it was necessary to provide no less a sum than \$178,000,000. For the fiscal years 1912-13 and 1914-15 we find the following expenditures on works which were in progress when the present Government came to power; on the National Transcontinental railway which was undertaken by the Liberal Government against the advice of the Conservative party; the present Government expended \$56,000,000, and on the Hudson Bay railway \$9,000,000.

Mr. W. M. MARTIN: Does the hon. gentleman object to the construction of the Hudson Bay railway?

Mr. BRADBURY: I will answer that question in a minute or two. On the Quebec bridge, which was undertaken by the Liberal Government, the present Government was obliged to spend \$10,000,000. It is a monument to the shame of the late Government that a great undertaking like the Quebec bridge should have been permitted to be placed in the hands of incompetent men, and that it should have cost not only the loss of \$6,000,000 to the people of Canada, but the loss of 80 lives of our citizens through the neglect of the men constructing and managing that bridge. That makes a total of \$75,000,000.

Then there was the implementing clause in connection with the sale of G.T.P. bonds. The bungling finance of the late Government necessitated the providing of \$4,994,416 to pay the difference between the price at which the bonds were sold and their par value. This was something to which the late Government committed this country through incompetence or something worse.

Then, there was the caring for the balance of the issue of £14,000,000. Six million

eight hundred thousand pounds of Grand Trunk Pacific bonds had to be provided for. The present Minister of Finance, in order to save the country an additional loss of \$6,000,000 or \$8,000,000 or \$10,000,000, took up the bonds at par, and paid \$33,093,333. Therefore since coming into office this Government has had to provide these enormous sums in order to pay the liabilities left on the hands of this country by the late Administration. Mr. Speaker, had it not been for these liabilities which the Government had to meet, had it not been for the war, the national debt of this country would not have been increased by one dollar. In fact, it could very easily have been reduced, and would have been reduced. This, Sir, is my answer to hon. gentlemen opposite who try to make capital out of the fact that the national debt of this country has been increased by the present Government.

How do our hon. friends opposite stand in regard to the pledge which they gave to the people in 1896 to reduce the national expenditure of this country? They stand on that count just as they stand on every one of the pledges which they gave to the people previous to 1896. Every pledge that they gave was ignored and violated by the Liberal party. The people of this country at length awoke to a realization of the class of men who were in control of the destiny of this country up to 1911.

These hon. gentlemen who are criticising the public expenditures of to-day, who are advising the Government to curtail them, are on record as having promised the people that, if they were returned to power in 1896, they would reduce the public expenditure of the country, although at that time it was very small in comparison with what it has reached at the present time. In 1896, one of their pledges was:

We cannot but view with alarm the large increase of the public debt, and the controllable annual expenditure of the Dominion, and the consequent undue taxation of the people under the governments that have been continuously in power since 1878.

The Conservative party had been in power since 1878, and that was what was worrying the Liberal party.

We demand strict economy in the administration of this country.

The right hon. gentleman who to-day leads the Opposition made this pledge:

If we get into power, we will follow the example of Mr. Mackenzie; and say that, although we may not be able to bring the expenditures to what they were under him, we can reduce the amount two, yes, three millions of dollars per year.