

The fiscal policy which we have today to present to the House is the same that was inaugurated in 1897 when the Marchand Government came into power. We have maintained and continued that policy which consists in increasing our receipts without imposing burthens on the working and agricultural classes and in causing especially wealth and the big commercial corporations to contribute to the public treasury. That policy consists further in equitably spending the revenues raised, keeping solely in view the progress and prosperity of the Province, and giving all the encouragement possible to education, agriculture and colonization, the three principal items of our programme without neglecting, however, the other services.

We do not intend to depart from the tradition bequeathed us by Hon. Mr. Marchand. We propose to add every year a new link to that unbroken chain of surpluses of receipts over expenditure which has existed since 1898 and which has proved that the Liberal administrations have managed our public affairs with efficiency, success and prudence. Those administrations, moreover, have won the approval of the business men of this Province without distinction of party as they have also received the approval of the electorate whenever the latter has been consulted since 1897.

Before 1897 our budget nearly every year showed a considerable balance on the wrong side, amounting to a deficit of \$984,000.00 to definitively wind up the last year of the Conservative regime.

Since then, a complete evolution has taken place in the financial situation of the Province and we are entering upon a new era; but it has been necessary to restrain the Province within the iron girdle of strict economy in order to balance its accounts and keep the expenses within the bounds of the revenue.

The Government has done its duty and can confidently submit the result of its financial administration to the House and to the tribunal of public opinion. It has kept its eyes continually open, has neglected nothing to promote the collection of revenue and the recovery of taxes and to watch over the expenditure. For it is not sufficient to make the receipts and expenditure balance;