

tions; I should be sorry indeed if this party had to go to the country in 1883, if the elections shall then take place, depending simply upon its record in connection with the question of Free Trade and Protection. On the contrary, I am convinced that there will be no shirking of other issues; that we shall be able to appeal to the country on all the issues the hon. gentlemen opposite have named; that we shall be able to show that the financial administration of the affairs of this country by the hon. gentlemen now in office has been a wise, economical and patriotic administration; that we shall be able to show that in relation to the development of our great North-West, they have adopted a policy which was not only wise and patriotic in its inception, but which has already vindicated itself by the results which have since taken place; that we shall be able to show that in consequence of the land regulations of the Government, settlers and capital have been flowing into that country, giving to it a development such as we could never have hoped for two or three years ago. Upon all these questions the party now in power will be able to appeal to the country, quite as certain of a favorable verdict as they are upon the great question of the National Policy, upon which I venture to say, if you were talking with hon. gentlemen opposite in their private chambers, simply as their private friends, nine-tenths of them would declare that the people of this country are against them. Sir, much has been said in relation to the financial administration of this Government, and though I do not propose to take up much time in discussing it, I have grouped together a few figures which I think will show that we have nothing to fear in presenting the record of this Government on that subject. It is important that this subject should be referred to for two reasons: the question of whether the hon. gentlemen now on the Treasury benches or hon. gentlemen opposite, happen to hold office is in itself, apart from the interests of the country and the policies they respectively represent, a matter of no great consequence; men reign and pass away, but the influence upon the country of the discussions which take place are lasting and abiding, and it is because of a settled determination apparently on the part of the hon. gentlemen opposite, for what reason it is difficult to appreciate, to show that this country is going headlong to financial ruin, that it is important to present the facts as they exist as tersely and as briefly as possible. Scarcely a speech is made by hon. gentlemen opposite, especially outside of Parliament, in which we are not told of the enormous increase of expenditure which took place under the Conservative Government of this country, from \$13,500,000 in 1867, to nearly \$23,500,000 in 1873-74; and we are asked to believe, from that bald statement of figures, that the financial administration of the Conservative party was disastrous to the interests of the country. Let me, in the first place, protest against the method of calculation which hon. gentlemen opposite adopt. The year 1873-74, which they always assumed to be a year of Conservative administration, does not in any sense belong to that party; they are not responsible for the expenditures of that year, as I shall be able presently to show. But even assuming for the purpose of this argument, that they were responsible, what are the facts? Surely hon. gentlemen, in the interests of the country, might be honest enough to state that the Dominion in 1867 comprised only four Provinces. We were for the first year only laying the foundations for the future government of the country; the expenditures were small in all the Departments; Parliament simply met together for the purpose of paving the way to that greater policy of development which was followed afterwards, and therefore to speak of the expenditure for 1867 as an expenditure which ought to be considered in any matter of comparison or calculation, is to do a great injustice not to the party then in power but to the country itself. At the end of the period what was the position of the country?

Instead of having four small Provinces we had seven Provinces and the great North-West. The country as it exists to-day had been completed as regards its geographical boundaries. At the end of that period, and as a consequence of that enlargement, the expenditures which were made during those six years were all expenditures, as was stated by the late Finance Minister in his celebrated circular when he went to England to float his first loan, made on works of great public utility, on works of improvement, on objects of development, and on the necessary expenditure connected with the enlargement of the Dominion, and the acquisition of the great North-West Territory. I have the accounts here, but I will not detain the House by dealing with particular items of increase. All of them are of the character to which I refer. But if it was wrong during those six or seven years to have increased the public expenditure, if it was a crime on the part of the Conservative party to have done so, what shall we say of hon. gentlemen opposite, who came into power full of promises of economy and retrenchment, with a backing such as no Government before that time had, and who yet went on adding to the expenditures all the time they were in office? But I have said the comparison was not a fair one. The Conservative party were not responsible for the expenditures of 1873-74. I am not going to refer to the fact that the accounts were made up by hon. gentlemen opposite so as to include certain items of capital expenditure, such as the expenditure on the Intercolonial Railway, on the Dawson Route, and certain Customs refunds; but there is an easy way of testing this matter. The Government of that day were responsible for the Estimates they submitted to Parliament. The Estimates were the measure of what they believed would be the proper expenditure during that year. Well, Sir, what did we find? That the total amount included in the first Estimates brought down were for \$31,008,423; that the expenditure on capital account included in that, amounted to \$9,974,240, leaving the expenditure, on account of Consolidated Fund, according to the Estimates as first brought down, a little over \$21,000,000, exactly \$21,034,183. Then there were certain Supplementary Estimates brought down, three sets, aggregating \$604,483, making the total Estimate, for 1873-74, as brought down by the then Administration, \$21,639,666. The expenditure for that year—and hon. gentlemen opposite were in office for eight months of the time—was \$23,316,316, or \$1,676,650 more than the Conservative Government obtained power from Parliament to expend in the Estimates which they brought down at that time. It may be said that Governments very often spend more money than is estimated; but I think we may fairly assume that had the Administration which was in office before 1873 continued in power, they would not have spent more, judging by their record of the preceding year. The warrant for assuming this is to be found in the fact that the Estimates brought down for 1872-73 amounted to \$29,675,460, including an estimate for capital expenditure of \$9,949,500, leaving \$19,725,960. The Supplementary Estimates amounted to \$575,774, making the Estimates brought down by the Government for the expenditures required for 1872-73, \$20,301,734. And yet, although they obtained the power from Parliament to expend that amount, the actual expenditure made by the Government in that year was \$19,174,647, or \$1,127,087 less than they had obtained power from Parliament to expend. If we find a Government bringing down Estimates on the eve of a general election, as those Estimates of 1872-73 were brought down, with every desire to make the probable expenditure appear as low as possible, and if we find that the Administration remaining in office is able to get through the year's business and expend \$1,000,000 less than they had obtained authority from Parliament to expend, we may fairly hold that the same Government remaining in office will make ends meet and