

to see him here with us, but I wonder whether it was an insult to him that he should be passed over because he failed to come up to the standard. I see in the corner there my respected old friend from Sunbury and Queens, (Mr. Wilmot). He has been a veteran in the fight, he was here for many years before the hon. member for Carleton, Ontario, and yet he has been ignored. In order that I may be just to the different sections of the Dominion I should mention the name of my hon. friend, the senior member for Queens, Prince Edward Island (Mr. A. Martin) who is an old veteran. Who will question the zeal of my hon. friend at all times whether the tunnel is up or not, and yet he seems to have been ignored and overlooked. It seems to me that for some extraordinary reason all these men—eminent men, able men, faithful men in the party—have failed to measure up to the standard required and they have had to be ignored.

Now, if some hon. gentleman will say that all this is not fair and generous criticism I will have to agree with him. But I say that it is just as fair, as sensible and as proper as the observations that were made by the hon. member for Carleton, Ontario and the hon. member for North Toronto as to the manner in which the Prime Minister exercised his right of selecting his own colleagues. The others, said the hon. member for North Toronto, were left to do the muck raking. To use the same illustration, these gentlemen, whom I have named are left to do the muck raking. This is the manner in which my hon. friends have referred to the hon. members who sit behind them.

Then, we had a discussion on the question of surpluses and in the course of that discussion it appears that the hon. leader of the opposition was induced to delve into some ancient history. He has been studying up the files of the Halifax newspapers of a quarter of a century ago and some of a later date. It is in some respects an interesting subject to study, but I wish to warn my hon. friend that there is dynamite in these files. I desire to warn him that there is danger and that if in his desire to establish some little inconsistency on the part of the Minister of Finance he should come across a report of a Liberal meeting at which he himself took part he may discover that the inconsistencies are not to be found all on one side of the house. Inconsistency is described by Ralph Waldo Emerson as the bugaboo of little minds. If my hon. friend wishes to come within the classification of the philosopher I need not quarrel with him about it but I do not think we are much concerned with each other's consistency. We are not so much concerned with that which he or I did or said twenty or thirty years ago as we are concerned with what we say and do and are willing to do

Mr. FIELDING.

in our positions as public men in these early days of the new century.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I think my hon. friend misunderstood me. I was citing it for the good sense it contained.

Mr. FIELDING. Yes—well, I was referring to a time when the hon. gentleman had good sense. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that my hon. friends of the opposition have a strong dislike to any mention of surpluses. A surplus, when mentioned by a Liberal, seems to start them up at once to arms. Well, we must make allowance for the hon. gentlemen. They did not have very much to boast of in the way of surpluses in their own day, and it seems that they look with displeasure upon the record of their successors who, by whatever cause it may have been brought about, have been in the happy position of being able to present an excellent financial record to the country. I have here very briefly, because I do not wish to detain the house at any great length, a few summarized statements on the surplus question and I take two periods of eleven years. This government have been eleven years in power and I take eleven years of the period of our predecessors which is a fair comparison. I find that during the eleven years of Conservative government, prior to their retirement, they had total surpluses amounting to \$9,594,000. But, then, they had deficits of over \$12,339,000, so that they had an average deficit during the whole eleven years of \$249,000. Now, I turn to the record of the last eleven years and I find that we have had, during these eleven years, making allowance for the one deficit which occurred at the beginning of our term, surpluses amounting to nearly \$94,000,000. The total surplus is over \$94,000,000 and after deducting \$519,000 of deficit, we have a net surplus for that period of \$93,626,000, an average of over \$8,500,000 per annum.

The mere mention of these seems always to be unpleasant to hon. gentlemen opposite.

Reference has been made to the use to which surpluses might be put. We are very glad to invite the attention of hon. gentlemen opposite to that also. The surplus in a country like Canada is understood to be the amount by which the revenue exceeds the charges on consolidated fund, which is the ordinary every day expenditure. But there are special expenditures; there are large expenditures on what is called capital account. Now we have taken these surpluses which have been very large and we have applied them to payments for what would otherwise have been an addition to the public debt. I find that for eleven years from 1886 to 1896, there were special expenditures outside of ordinary routine, amounting to a little over \$80,000,000 above the ordinary charges. The