

EXTRACTS FROM THE SPEECH OF
Sir Richard Cartwright

ON THE
BUDGET.

MARCH 30th, 1886.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT, who was received with cheers, said: Sir, had any gentleman told me nineteen years ago, much more, two or three and twenty years ago, when we were first discussing this project, that in the nineteenth year of our Confederation the debt of Canada would be very nearly three times as much per head as the debt of the people of the United States is to-day; had anybody told me that the necessary taxation of Canada would be 50 per cent. greater than the necessary taxation of United States; that in 1886, in the nineteenth year of our Confederation, our total volume of trade would be \$24,000,000 less than it was thirteen years ago, in 1873; that after having had possession of the North-West for fifteen years, after having expended \$100,000,000, or thereabouts, of the public funds, and a very large amount—how much I am unable to state—but probably \$40,000,000 or \$50,000,000 of the private means of the people of Canada, in endeavoring to develop and settle that country, we should to-day (on the evidence of the census, returns placed in our hands by the gentlemen opposite) after that huge expenditure and after the lapse of fifteen years, we should scarce boast, from the Pacific Ocean to the confines of Ontario, of a poor 200,000 settlers there; had anybody told me that starting with the advantages we had, after nineteen years, and after

Importing at great cost

to the people of this country, some, 900,000 immigrants, as our records allege—whether truly or falsely—the total white population of Canada would, at the expiration of those nineteen years, be scarcely 1,000,000 more than it was in 1867, I must confess I should have felt tempted to entreat that person very harshly—almost as harshly as some hon. gentlemen have occasionally felt disposed to treat me, not for venturing on predictions, but for calling attention to certain facts as they actually existed. Sir, had anybody made such a statement then, I would have pointed to the increase of Canada in the twenty years which elapsed before Confederation. I would have pointed to the increase of the United States in the first twenty years of their existence, from 1790 to 1810, when they, certainly under greater difficulties than we have had to contend with, made far greater progress than has unfortunately fallen to our lot. I would also have pointed to the progress of our sister colonies in other parts of Her Majesty's dominions, and I should have asked what reason there was to suppose that Canadians would have fled from their country as if it were stricken with a pestilence, or to suppose that our people would have displayed so little prudence and so little energy as to permit such a state of affairs to exist. * * * You will find only too good reason to think that in