

swelling up, and said that in 1881 the importations had gone up to \$119,000,000. Now, the importations were \$91,000,000 in that year. I merely mention that as showing that wherever the hon. gentleman's figures are tested by reference to the blue books they do not agree.

HON. MR. PLUMB—Will the hon. gentleman repeat.

HON. MR. SCOTT—The hon. gentleman said our importations had risen up to \$119,000,000, in 1881, and they were really \$91,000,000 in that year.

HON. MR. PLUMB—I said they were \$91,000,000.

HON. MR. SCOTT—I understood the hon. gentleman otherwise—he intended to say it, no doubt.

HON. MR. PLUMB—I showed they were \$7,000,000 less than the exports.

HON. MR. SCOTT.—I do not propose to advert to those extracts taken from the blue book, which we can all get correctly by referring personally to them, but I do propose to express, at all events, my dissent from the conclusion which the hon. gentleman reached when he thought he had an opportunity of a fling at the late Government of the Hon. Alex. Mackenzie. He said that that Government inherited no responsibilities, that they came into office with a clean sheet and no responsibility at all from their predecessors. The hon. gentleman's memory must surely be at fault. I think there was a treaty made by the Government of Sir John Macdonald, with British Columbia, to which Canada was bound by solemn obligation, to complete within ten years the railway to the Pacific coast. If my memory serves me, I think the party with which the hon. gentleman is allied lost no opportunity, in parliament or out of parliament, of denouncing the bad faith that the Government of Mr. Mackenzie was manifesting towards British Columbia, because in 1874-75 they had not hastened the construction of the railway, because they were so slow in beginning, and hesitated about incurring so large an expenditure, and now the hon. gentleman tells us forsooth, that the late Government incur-

red no responsibilities, and were not bound by any financial ties to increase the debt of Canada. Does the hon. gentleman forget that about the time the change of Government took place, tenders had been called for, involving a very large expenditure in the enlargement of the Welland Canal, which is just now about being finished? He surely must forget that contracts had not even been given out for some of these works. I believe one or two had been awarded, but the great majority of them, certainly nineteen-twentieths, had not been given out, although tenders had been called for.

HON. MR. PLUMB.—Hear, hear!

HON. MR. SCOTT—I assume I am correct. Then in 1873, the policy of the Government was announced to be in favor of the enlargement of the St. Lawrence and Lachine Canals. They were all part of the general system, and I am not now criticising the Government of Sir John Macdonald in committing this country at that time to these important public works. If one had to be undertaken, all had to be dealt with, and they were undertaken in the interest of the people of this country; but when that was done, and the Government of Mr. Mackenzie inherited those obligations, it is rather remarkable for a gentleman who pretends to be versed in the political history of Canada to entirely ignore that fact, and to say that the Mackenzie Government heaped up the public debt, having inherited no responsibilities and being in no degree liable to the people of this country to carry out the obligations of their predecessors. I have always understood that a government, to a certain extent at all events, inherited the policy of its predecessors, not altogether, not absolutely in every detail; but certainly when a country has committed itself to a particular policy such as we did in regard to British Columbia, those gentlemen who dissented from the terms and considered them entirely too sweeping, when the treaty was signed and British Columbia came in, felt themselves bound to comply with its terms, provided that Canada was not absolutely sunk in the attempt to carry out the treaty. But aside from that, if the hon. gentleman will look up the figures, he will find that in the year 1873 our annual liabili-