

into debt, it is our duty in such a case to carefully examine into our situation and consider in what way we may remedy the errors of the past, and avoid them in the future, by increasing our revenue as much as we can without unnecessarily burdening the people, and by cutting off at once any expenditure not absolutely required for the public service.

If, on the other hand, as I believe is the case, we are gradually increasing our revenue, and are thereby enabled to expend more for the promotion of public improvements and in promoting efficiency in the public service, we are not on that account to be careless of our resources or to recklessly spend them. Nor because our cash balance in the Treasury is gradually augmenting from year to year, are we to launch into extravagance in our expenditure; on the contrary, we ought to be on our guard the more against too-lavish expenditure in order that we may be able to provide for unforeseen contingencies that may arise, and that we may to a greater degree assist in such enterprises as will develop the resources of our Province, retain our present population and increase it from other countries—provide education for the rising generation, and generally promote and advance the prosperity and welfare of the people at large.

I trust that the public accounts submitted to the House will be found clear and satisfactory, and show that our funds have been judiciously expended in the public interest, and in accordance with the express sanction of Parliament.

While giving a summary of our receipts and expenditure of the past year, I do not intend going so minutely into explanations of the various items as I have done on former occasions, but shall confine myself principally to those items which seem to me to require more information than a bare perusal of the published accounts will give. Before, however, Mr. Speaker, proceeding to this, let me refer in as brief a way as possible to an important question, which has been alluded to on every similar occasion, more or less, since Confederation, and which I am happy to say is now in a different position from what it has heretofore presented, and which, I have no doubt, will afford the House much pleasure.