

"That the total taxation collected in the same year was..... 17,841,938

"That the total ordinary admitted expenditure in the year 1889 was..... 36,917,834

"That the total taxation collected in the same year was..... 30,613,522

"That over and above the amount of the taxes actually paid into the Treasury an immense additional sum is annually taken out of the pockets of the people and is paid over to certain private individuals and corporations under pretence of protecting and encouraging certain special industries.

"That in the decade terminating on the 1st day of July, 1889, the sum of \$262,812,378 has been raised in the way of taxes actually paid into the Treasury, independently of an immense additional amount extracted from the people for the aforesaid purposes.

"That the said taxation is enormous and oppressive in its incidence, and that it is so imposed as to diminish the value of lands used for agricultural purposes and to increase the indebtedness of the agricultural class in especial.

"That in fact the values of farm lands have greatly diminished and the amount of mortgages thereon have been much increased throughout a very large portion of this Dominion since 1879.

"That the additional taxation which it is now sought to impose will still further increase the burthens of the people and is likely still further to aggravate the distress unhappily existing among a large portion of the farming population of this Dominion, and that under such circumstances it is the bounden duty of this House, instead of adding to the existing oppressive taxation, to apply itself to the reduction of the burdens now impeding the progress and prosperity of the principal producing classes of the Dominion, and for this purpose to abolish or reduce the taxes now imposed on articles of prime necessity to farmers, miners, fishermen and other producers."

Mr. FERGUSON (Welland). Rumor has it that the hon. member for South Oxford was in Washington at the time the McKinley Tariff was proposed, and I should like to give the hon. gentleman an opportunity to state to the House whether or not that rumor is true?

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I know nothing whatever about the McKinley Tariff. I never was consulted about it, or had a word to say about it.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. That is not the question.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I have answered the question. I know nothing whatever about it.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. Who was there?

Mr. COLBY. The House is fatigued, and I am fatigued, and if the task, which I now propose to undertake, was a very heavy one I should certainly not undertake it at this hour. I have listened with a good deal of attention to the remarks of the hon. gentleman who has just taken his seat. That hon. gentleman is always listened to with attention, whether he makes a Budget speech or whether he criticises a Budget speech. His long experience, his experience as Minister of Finance, his special course of study, qualify him perhaps better than almost any member of this House to discuss these fiscal questions with great ability, with great ingenuity and with very considerable effect. I have listened to him many times, but I have never listened to him—the hon. gentleman must excuse me for saying it—when he seemed to have accomplished so little as he has done in his criticism to-night. The Finance Minister proposed changes in the tariff. For some reason or other the hon. gentleman in the course of his speech made hardly a reference to those tariff changes. That hon. gentleman approved of the Finance Minister's calculations of revenue and expenditure and his estimates for the

coming year, and the criticism he addressed to the very able, direct and unadorned speech of the Minister of Finance, was not, by any means, a searching one. The whole effort which the hon. gentleman seems to have made was to impress the House with the idea that the farmers in the Province of Ontario are in great distress. The hon. gentleman entered into that feature of his statement with very great care, and I might almost say with apparent satisfaction; but I do not understand the hon. gentleman to propose any particular remedy for that distress. I am not uncandid enough to say to this House that I believe the condition of agriculture anywhere on this continent of America is in a prosperous condition to-day. I do not think that agriculture in the civilised world is in a prosperous condition to-day. There are causes beyond the control of any Government, beyond the control of any fiscal policy, which go a long way to determine the prosperity or the failure of the agricultural class in any and in all countries. Happily for humanity we have been for many years at peace; peace has prevailed in the world for a considerable number of years. We have been free from the destruction and devastation of war. There has been no extraordinary waste or consumption of agricultural products or of the energies which are devoted to the creation of agricultural products. There have been for a series of years fairly good harvests, and in many sections of the world most abundant harvests. I think, so far as the productions of the soil are concerned, we have hardly a record of a more uniform abundance than has prevailed over the civilised world for a few years past. New agricultural fields are being developed in various parts of the world, the products of which come into competition with those of the older sections. These causes, apart from any fiscal policy whatever, have occasioned a depression among the agricultural class the world over. But I venture to say that the hon. gentleman may examine the condition of the agricultural class in any State of the United States, in any part of the Continent of America, or in any other country with which we are familiar, and he cannot find a record of so much prosperity and so little suffering as there is in the Province of Ontario to-day. The hon. gentleman blames the Government for not obtaining statistics, and yet when Governments do obtain statistics he, with his superior knowledge, attempts to explain them away. He is not content with the information obtained by Mr. Blue, statistician of the Province in which he lives, and appointed by the Government towards which he is well affected; he is not content with the representations made by Mr. Blue with respect to the agricultural condition of the country, but he goes back on Mr. Blue entirely; he makes private and individual and personal enquiries of his own, and gives this House the result of his own private information, gathered in certain selected counties, and on a basis which is peculiar to himself, and intended, if possible, to illustrate his views. I shall expect that intelligent members from Ontario will point out the fallacy, the absolute impossibility of the correctness of the figures with respect to mortgages which the hon. gentleman has made on his own private investigation. The hon. gentleman's statement shows that fully one-half of the Province of Ontario is mortgaged for more than it is worth, a condition of affairs