

colonies, the rate in Canada is low enough; but taken *per se*—considering the fact that a population of scarcely four millions are obliged to raise every year \$23,000,000 or \$24,000,000, to defray the expenses of the Dominion Government alone, irrespective of what they must contribute for municipal purposes—we must be very cautious how we increase the burden further. Every family in Canada has to pay from \$25 to \$30 toward meeting the expense incurred in their behalf by this Legislature. That represents something not very far from the value of a month's labour, and that, though it can be borne, is a severe drawback on the productive power of this country. I am cautious enough—conservative enough, if my hon. friend likes—to regard every increase in taxation as a positive evil in itself. If we have to impose additional taxation, it must be for the benefit of the whole country, for the purpose of maintaining the public credit, or carrying on the public works in which we are engaged. This is practically a question of cost and come to, and it is also, to a certain extent, a question of convenience. Theory apart, there are very few of us who would object to a moderately low rate of duty, or would care much to be found opposing a tariff, though in defiance of free trade theories, which would bring a large addition to the population of the country at a very moderate cost to the remainder. On the other hand, there are very few, I think, so enthusiastic that they would be willing to submit to a high rate of duty if it was demonstrated to them that it would make but a small addition to the number of the people. What the country needs at present is more time. It is undoubtedly in a depressed condition, but a condition which, I believe, unless some further disaster overtakes us, will be only temporary. I have pointed out that there were numerous causes for that state of depression, and that they were causes over which the Government had no sort of control. I have pointed out that those causes have largely contributed to bring about the present distress, and I may add that had we been more cautious in the past, had we refrained from anticipating all our resources and throwing valuable reserves away, we might have been in a position to try more experiments in legislation than we can afford to do just now. I say this is no time for experiments. This country requires all the revenue its people can contribute, and it would be a dangerous thing for us to enter upon a policy the issue of which no man can at the present perceive.