

## The Conservative Attitude.

The Conservatives have made a great deal of noise in Parliament and out of it in regard to the additional expenditure, but their criticism has been as weak as the merits of their cause. As a rule, they have confined themselves to totals, and they have carefully refrained from fair enquiry into the particulars. It has sufficed them, in the main, to point to the aggregate expenditure, and pretend to be greatly alarmed and shocked. As has been shown in this article, the expenditure has grown for good and proper purposes, but it does not suit the plan of campaign of the Conservatives to take cognizance of the reasons. They have often admitted that the country has been highly prosperous in recent years, and that it has made great strides in almost every direction, but, it would spoil their argument to the people to admit what all fair-minded men believe, namely, that increased development, increased business, and expansion of civilized territory, involves increased national expenditures.

They have, moreover, been singularly inconsistent, inasmuch as, while criticising the growth of expenditure in the main, they have not been slow to criticise the Government, in particular cases, for not spending more money. For instance, take their record of last Session without going further back. They blamed the Government then for not offering a much greater amount than \$750,000, now offered on the Statute Books as a subsidy for the East Atlantic Services, and they found fault with them also for not making a substantial allowance towards sending Captain Bernier to find the North Pole. As an alternative to the Government policy in respect to the Grand Trunk Pacific, they brought down a policy which is generally admitted, would involve a far larger expenditure. A prominent Conservative from the Maritime Provinces abused the Government for what he termed the niggardly paltry railway subsidies brought down, and a prominent member of the party from Ontario advocated a bounty on Beet Root Sugar. Session after Session the Conservative members from Toronto have appealed for more financial assistance towards the public works of that city. Almost without exception, the leading Members of the Opposition last Session advocated a substantial increase all round in the salaries of judges.

The Public Accounts Committee is the medium for investigating expenditures, but, as the Liberal Finance Minister showed in a speech delivered