

stance; but, making the most liberal allowance, is it possible that from the extent of the improvements indicated by these figures, a large amount in payments on land, taxes and revenue, can be realised from the settler in the very early days? These figures, as to the acreage of improved lands, adding what amount in reason you please for differences of condition, show that the returns cannot, in the early years, be very large, inasmuch as what the settlers pay must consist of surplus profits after building houses, barns, and fences, getting their lands into cultivation, and maintaining their families. I affirm that the figures I have mentioned do not justify the calculations of the Government. But whatever you may think as to the calculations considered up to this point, I hold it to be clear that the estimates of the cash to be realised from land sales are still more extravagant. The Government expect to receive in cash \$38,600,000 in eleven years, which would, exclusive of interest, be less than half the cost, a balance of over \$32,000,000 being payable later. The United States realised in the eighty-three years up to 1879, from its public lands, \$204,500,000, the average being \$2,460,000 a year. In the twenty years preceding 1879 they realised \$30,350,000, or an average of \$1,500,000 a year, which for eleven years would make \$10,500,000. But this Government expects to realise \$38,500,000 in eleven years! Of course the lands sold by the Railway Companies in the United States are not included in this calculation. Making every reasonable allowance for this circumstance, and having regard to the conditions of the Canadian so-called railway belt, and assuming the average prices of the Government to be correct, the figures justify no such expectation. But the Government's calculations, made "by the highest authority," are wholly fallacious. The railway lands are divided into five belts, and the prices are, in each belt, \$5, \$4, \$3, \$2 and \$1 respectively, which, taken together, makes \$15, and divided by five, the number of the belts, does, indeed, produce an average of \$3 an acre, which is the estimate of the Government. But this, though a very simple, is not a scientific or accurate method of arriving at the true average price, because the various belts differ in width. In the first and

highest-priced belt the width is but five miles; in the second, fifteen; in the third and fourth, twenty, while the width of the \$1 belt is fifty miles. The true average—assuming as the Government does, the lands to be taken up according to their relative value and attractiveness, and that the lands will bear the enhanced prices put on them, according to their proximity to the railway, instead of being \$3 for these railway lands is, when you allow for the varying widths of the belts, but \$2.12½. This single error, of course, reduces the receipts from these lands nearly one-third, or by several millions. But the calculations as to the preemptions is still more amusing. The Government calculate according to the first Minister's statement that for the land preempted they will receive the same average of \$3 per acre, whilst the highest price payable for any preempted land is but \$2.50 an acre. This is the price for the first three belts. The fourth belt is \$2, and the big belt, which nearly equals in width all the others, \$1 only, and consequently, the average price for these lands is \$1.75, or not much over one-half the estimate made "on the highest authority," which, by the figures given, would seem to be calculated at \$2.50 an acre. I have thus pointed out how little this House can depend on the Government estimates. The general result of those two errors is, that instead of \$38,500,000 being receivable from these lands in eleven years, only \$23,350,000 will, on the basis assumed by the Government itself, be received, or a difference of \$15,240,000. And correcting the same errors as to the sums remaining due at the close of the term, the estimate of \$32,750,000, for these sums remaining due must be reduced to \$21,620,000, a difference of \$11,590,000, making a total error of calculation of \$26,830,000 in the estimate presented to the House by the hon. the First Minister, and endorsed by the hon. the Ministers of Finance and of Railways, as the groundwork for our action. Under these circumstances I am not surprised that the hon gentleman should have felt it necessary to save the \$10,000,000 he economised last week. The extravagance of the estimate is shown in other ways. It seems that a purchaser will pay on railway lands \$1,219.70 for a lot, while the preemptors,