

a measure which, he trusted, would meet with approval of the House and the country. The Provincial Treasurer was followed by Mr. Matheson, who made an attack on the Government's financial policy, suggested the issue of 3 per cent. Provincial securities and denounced the officials for interfering in the bye-elections.

The Budget Speech.

When Hon. Richard Harcourt rose to deliver his budget speech he was greeted with loud cheers from the Government benches. He was in fine form, and his exposition of the position of the financial affairs of the Province was masterly and convincing. After a few brief remarks of a congratulatory nature, he took up the question of finance and said:—

There are very manifest reasons, Mr. Speaker, why I need not discuss the finances of the Provinces at any great length on the present occasion. For weeks prior to the last general election, from one end of the Province to the other our finances were minutely discussed from a thousand platforms. The newspapers of the Province, reaching each day tens of thousands of readers, joined in the discussion and gave valuable space and much intelligent attention to the same subject. Ordinarily a lull follows a general election, and these much-discussed topics, no matter how interesting or important they may be, are, between sessions at any rate, kept in the background. But, Mr. Speaker, recent political happenings have been quite exceptional and far from ordinary. We have not experienced the usual lull in political discussion. A special session of the House has been held since the general election of March last, and following the special session we have had nine bye-elections in different parts of the Province, and the earnest discussion of these party issues has, therefore, been ceaseless and continuous up to the present moment. The discussion has been prolonged, thorough and exhaustive. The case has gone to the jury and a verdict has been given. The sovereign people, after fullest inquiry and investigation, have pronounced upon it. The Government confidently expected a favorable verdict, and has not been disappointed. Further, Mr. Speaker, in no less than nine of our important counties there has been a complete rehearing of the case, there has been a second trial, so to speak, all the evidence has been gone over in minutest detail a second time, the arguments have been repeated and a second verdict rendered confirming that given on the 1st of March.

I allude to these facts, sir, in these general terms simply and only as giving a good reason why I should not be expected to speak at any great length this afternoon. As usual, Mr. Speaker, I will first refer to the receipts of the Province for the year 1898, and speak briefly of our leading sources of revenue in the order of their relative importance.

Receipts Exceed the Estimates.

Our total receipts for 1898 amounted to \$3,647,353. In December, 1897, when addressing the House, I estimated that we would receive \$3,313,372. We have, therefore, an excess of receipts over the estimates amounting to \$333,981. (Cheers.) In 1897 we also had an excess of actual over estimated receipts amounting to \$722,087. In 1896 the excess was \$192,000. This constantly recurring large excess of actual over estimated receipts helps to explain the de-

lusion my hon. friend from South Lanark delights to indulge in, when he from time to time gleefully announces that we are to have a large deficit in some particular year. My hon. friend invariably quotes for purposes of calculation the estimated receipt instead of the actual receipt, although no one knows better than he that the latter invariably exceeds the former by hundreds of thousands of dollars. Recent occurrences in Provincial politics, to which I need not more definitely allude, amply prove that the electors and the public generally do not take my hon. friend very seriously. The delusion seems to please my hon. friend; it deceives no one, and therefore I need not further refer to it.

I will, Mr. Speaker, now very briefly refer to some of our most important receipts. The amount of the annual subsidy received from the Dominion Government, of course, remains the same as heretofore. We received under the head of interest in 1893 \$364,983. The corresponding receipt last year was \$247,435. In 1896 it was \$260,544. This large interest receipt each year is composed almost exclusively of three items, viz., interest on capital sums due us from the Dominion, interest on our special deposits in the banks, and interest on our drainage debentures. In 1898 we received \$17,530 as interest on our bank deposits, \$13,631 interest on our drainage loans, and \$272,414 interest received from the Dominion Government on the moneys it holds in trust for us. In 1897 we received from the Dominion as interest \$212,411; in 1896, \$214,528; in 1895, \$262,274. In 1894 we received \$310,020.

We received in 1898 as Crown lands revenue the large sum of \$1,112,582. (Cheers.) This receipt is \$162,000 beyond our estimate. (Renewed cheers.) Our average Crown lands receipt from 1867 to 1897 inclusive is \$949,521, so that the receipt of 1898 is considerably above the average. We received last year from the woods and forests \$981,186; as rent from mining lands, \$63,945; from sale of Crown lands, \$42,503. These are the largest items in our Crown lands