

a falling off. Our estimate for the current year, however, is that there will be a slight increase of some \$40,000 or \$50,000. Whether we will realize these expectations or not remains to be seen. The operation of the succession duties act has been very satisfactory, and, although it met with some opposition in certain quarters when first imposed, I think practically all opposition is now withdrawn. It does not tax the poor man's estate; it does not tax even the estate of the man of moderate means; it reaches those large accumulations which sometimes have been made through what has been called the profits of the unearned increment, and from savings or investments that are made by the growth of large cities and by the change of centres of population.

Receipts From Revenue Act.

We derived last year a somewhat substantial revenue from the revenue act, which was so long debated in this House, and which received so much consideration from both sides of the House. The total revenue from all sources was \$217,059.94. When that act was imposed we contended that the public necessities required additional revenue, and we thought it was most reasonable that large corporations should be made to contribute some-

thing to the Provincial Treasury for the moneys they had received and the investments which they had made through the construction of railways, the improvement of highways and methods of transportation, the development of agriculture and all such items as these. No corporation can thrive in a poor country, and if by the expenditure of one hundred millions of money which we have made since Confederation we have added to the general wealth of the country, and to the wealth of corporations in particular, by giving them such advantages as that expenditure necessarily involves, it was but reasonable that we should ask them to contribute something in return.

The Provincial Expenditure.

Now, to pass on rapidly, I will refer to the expenditure of the Province. In 1898 our expenditure was \$3,803,081.38. In 1899 it was \$3,710,420.82, or less by \$92,660.56 than the expenditure of the previous year. In that expenditure let me notice two or three circumstances worthy of attention. In 1898, instead of paying our railway certificates out of revenue, we sold annuities, and they were paid in that way. In 1899 we paid railway certificates out of our ordinary revenue account, and we paid out for this purpose \$236,576.32. Had it not been for the increase of revenue that we received we might not have been able to do that. I think it is well that the revenue of the country should be maintained if possible, leaving margin enough to enable us to pay these railway aid certificates as they become due. Our expenditure, therefore, I am sure, will be satisfactory to hon. gentlemen opposite. On education there was a slight increase in the expenditure as compared with the previous year; in fact, in almost every instance where the expenditure was for the mainten-

ance of some great public service there was an increase. For instance, in hospitals and charities there was a slight increase of about \$15,000. In agriculture there was an increase of about \$15,000 also. In public buildings there was an increase of about \$14,000, the increase in that connection being caused by the erection of a Normal School at London and by some other changes necessarily imposed upon us. We think that civil government in Ontario has always been carried on at very reasonable expense. We propose a slight increase this year, but under that head I think no reasonable criticism will put the Government to shame, either in the salaries paid to our public officers or in the contingencies required for the public service. In the administration of justice, of course, there is a growing charge. Every new township, or block of townships at all events, added to our territory imposes a charge upon the Department of Justice. We have to build lockups in the small towns in the north; we have to appoint Police Magistrates or Stipendiary Magistrates and constables; we have to preserve the peace; we have to make secure the person and property of every man who goes into the country, and as the country expands to the north, so will the expenditures of the Department of Justice grow.

Public Institutions.

The charge for public institutions, hospitals and charities last year amounted to over \$1,000,000. These items have furnished hon. gentlemen opposite for many years with material for criticism, which, I think, on the whole, was not very well founded, but which serves, at all events, to put the Government upon its guard, and to observe the greatest economy in the expenditure of such a large sum of money. It is evident that for all time to come, unless there is some radical change in the physical economy of our people, that the maintenance of our public institutions will be a heavy charge upon us. I think perhaps one of the most gratifying features of the methods of government which were adopted in this Province at Confederation is the fact that we have assumed the care of those who are helpless, sometimes the indigent and the sufferers from hereditary weakness, or from misfortune which leads to insanity and inability to take care of themselves. The grand total of admissions to lunatic asylums and idiot asylums and hospitals and charities since Confederation has been 369,376. In the four years from 1867 to 1871 the cost of inmates of our asylums was \$140.70. The cost in 1899 was \$124.05, a decrease of \$16.65 per patient. The per capita cost from 1872 to 1899—that is, the average of 27 years—was \$132.63, so that our cost in 1899 is less than it was in the four years from 1867 to 1871, and is lower by about \$8.61 than the average cost between 1871 and 1899. Now, if reduction in cost means anything it means that reasonable economy has been practised. Taking