

an absolute saving to the people of Canada by giving them 50 per cent. more tobacco than they could formerly obtain for the same money. I think that is a proposition that even the hon. member for Bothwell with his fertile imagination and lack of information will hardly contradict. Now, it was stated by the ex-Controller of Customs (Mr. Wallace), who had apparently as little knowledge of the matter as the hon. member for Bothwell, that there had been a falling off in the consumption of tobacco in Canada, and that the cause of this was that we had raised prices and caused increased smuggling into Canada; and, strange though it may seem, that hon. gentleman holding a responsible position in this House, and an ex-minister of the Crown, carried the matter one step further and said that we had imposed those tobacco duties in order that increased smuggling would take place along the borders of Canada, for the sole purpose of giving jobs to our political friends as preventive officers. Now, I want to take this matter up, and while I do so I want the attention of the hon. member for Bothwell, because there is no man who demands the attention of every minister of the Crown when he speaks so much as that hon. member. I have noted it since I came into the House in 1896. If a minister of the Crown attempts to engage in conversation with his neighbor while the hon. member for Bothwell is speaking, that hon. gentleman stops and says, 'When the minister of so-and-so gets through, I will proceed.' Surely, if the hon. member for Bothwell is entitled to ask ministers of the Crown to give their undivided attention to him when he is speaking, the hon. member, a private member, should at all events give me his attention when I am discussing an article grown in his own constituency. I will go back ten years. On June 30th, 1889, the consumption of tobacco in Canada was 2.153 pounds per head. On June 30th, 1896, a few days after the hon. gentlemen were defeated, it had shrunk to 2.129 pounds per head, or .024 pounds per head less under the regime of the hon. gentlemen opposite. Then, if the statement is correct that greater smuggling went on, would it not follow as a natural sequence that the consumption would have fallen to a still lower point? But I turn to the population of Canada, as figured out by the statistician, Mr. Johnson, and I find that on June 30th, 1896, the consumption of tobacco had risen to 2.174 pounds per head, or an increase under the regime of gentlemen on this side of the House, of .045 pounds per head, and yet hon. gentlemen opposite try to base an argument on the erroneous statement that increased smuggling has gone on in Canada.

An hon. gentleman opposite and the press of hon. gentlemen opposite, and the hon. member for Richmond (Mr. Gillies), stated that no cultivation, no care, no expenditure of capital, no skill, no manufacture, would enable a class of tobacco to be grown in Canada, equal to the foreign leaf imported into Canada. But when an hon. gentleman on that side makes a statement of that description, he shelters himself behind the bald, bare statement, as these hon. gentlemen generally do, without one single fact or authority to support it.

When the hon. member for Bothwell (Mr. Clancy), said that the laboring classes of Canada, had been taxed \$1,050,000 on tobacco alone, I thought he would have gone on to show why we did not produce that tobacco in