

in leading-strings, instead of being allowed to go free. If they entertained free trade views they should have been allowed to express them freely and fully, for there was nothing to conceal in a visit of intelligent gentlemen from the old country; but they were kept in leading strings, they were not allowed to freely express their views in opposition to the trade policy of the Government; and above all the Government committed an error in keeping back the report which we know was sent to this country, and which the public have not yet had an opportunity of seeing, and in this way the Government have created a suspicion which might not otherwise have existed. They were possibly afraid that the sentiments and statements of these delegates would have an injurious effect upon the fate of the Administration itself. Another error is the suppression of the report. I think the Minister of Agriculture can only escape the strong censure of the House for having returned this report without reading it, upon the plea that he was then in ill-health. That, however, is not a sufficient excuse for his not having sent this report to some other member of this Government to be revised and published. We are still in ignorance as to who these gentlemen met in Canada, the places they visited, their impressions as to the resources of this country, and of the effect of the fiscal policy of the Government upon intending immigrants. I quite agree with the remarks the Minister of Militia has made, that if the report is hostile to the immigration interests of the country, the Government would be justified in declining to send it abroad, but all that is no excuse for refusing information to the people of the Maritime Provinces, and to the Dominion generally, as to the impression made upon the minds of the delegates. They visited the Maritime Provinces at a period of the year when everything presents its most favourable aspect, and had they been taken to the right portion of the provinces, I am certain that they could view scenery unsurpassed in the Dominion, and meet people unsurpassed in the world for qualities which go to make up good citizens, good neighbours, intelligent and enterprising agriculturists and labourers in every sphere of life. As was stated here the other evening, the people of the Maritime Provinces do not fear comparison with any people on this continent. We have not the broad acres that they have in the North-West, we have not the teeming population of the great Province of Ontario, but we have resources which they have not. We have enormous fishing capabilities; we have great mining resources, splendid lumbering and forest resources, and fine agricultural lands wherever agriculture is cultivated. Were it not for the policy of the Government which makes the conditions of life to our people hard, we might be a happy and prosperous people. We have learned another strange thing during this discussion; one which members on this side of the House had suspected for a long time, and which now comes almost in an official form. That is, that the action of the Administration at Ottawa is to a large degree controlled by the influence of the High Commissioner in London. We have it almost as plainly admitted as if the statement was broadly made, that the High Commissioner in London has dictated the action of the Government in regard to this report. Why was it hurried back to London with such indecent haste, why has he had up to the present

Mr. FLINT.

time control of the document: and, if public rumour is to be relied upon, why has he had consultation with some of the delegates to induce them to make alterations in their report before it is sent back to Ottawa for presentation to the public here? We have been made aware during the last few days, by private information as well as publications in the press, that these delegates are freely expressing their opinions in the old country as to how the fiscal policy of the Government affects the people. They are men of standing who are called upon to address agricultural associations and public meetings of intending immigrants and others, and they are ventilating the opinions which they gathered during their hasty and unsatisfactory visit to the Maritime Provinces. If there are representations in that report which are injurious to the interests of the Maritime Provinces, we must hold the Government and their agents strictly responsible for it, because we must come to the conclusion that any views hostile to the interests of the Maritime Provinces have been created by the lack of opportunities placed within the reach of the delegates sent out by Sir Charles Tupper. We are convinced that a full and fair examination of the resources of these provinces should not produce any other than the most favourable result which the visit of the Press delegates from New England created. It would be a pleasure to read to the representatives of the people of other portions of the Dominion the glowing accounts these gentlemen gave of the Province of Nova Scotia as they saw it in August last. If the farm delegates have reported differently, they can have only done so upon one or two grounds. They can only have done so because of their opinion as to the effect of the trade policy of the Dominion Government and upon its injurious effects on the people, and its preventing their progress and increase in wealth and happiness by the exercise of their talents as agriculturists, labourers, mechanics, miners, fishermen or any other occupation. The proof, to a large degree, that such an opinion of the delegates was correct, is furnished by the enormous emigration from these provinces during the last seven or eight years, and which is going on in increased volume at the present time. Every letter which we receive from the Maritime Provinces shows that the exodus is not diminishing, and that, notwithstanding the resources of the country, and the misguided efforts of the Dominion Government with its tariff policy, to promote the prosperity of that portion of the Dominion, we find that the young men, the bone and sinew of the country are leaving it as fast as they can get the opportunity. It betokens some frightful mistake and some dreadful blindness on the part of those who are charged with the government of the country; that, with our very great resources and with the character of the population which I have described, our people cannot find an opportunity for progressing in wealth in these provinces, and that they have to seek for it abroad. No people in this Dominion are more fond of their homes, or more loyal to their provinces, than the people of the Maritime Provinces; and yet, notwithstanding this love of home, and those favourable circumstances surrounding them, they are so pressed upon to solve the problem of life that they are fleeing to a foreign country to seek for opportunities which their own country has denied them.