

man remember that it is largely owing to the influence of these manufacturers that he probably holds his seat to day? Does he not remember the celebrated meeting that took place in 1882, in the Queen's Hotel, at which the First Minister presided? Does he not remember how numerous that meeting was attended, and has he forgotten the almost historic words of his right hon. leader, when the latter reminded the manufacturers that he was the monkey in the tree shaking the acorns and they were the hogs below eating it, and that they had to come down, and they did come down? What was the result? Why, in 1882, it is an open secret, which men who profess to know anything of politics in this country will not deny, that the manufacturers subscribed liberally to the election fund. Immediately after the elections, at the next Session, had we not the spectacle of these corridors filled with deputations of manufacturers from all over, and do we not know that at the solicitation of those men the Government were forced to increase the burdensome duties they had already put on the people. When it was proposed by hon. gentlemen opposite to inaugurate a system of high taxation in this country, contrary to the teachings of every eminent authority in the world on political economy, when they pretended they could make something out of nothing, when they pretended they could bring about prosperity by high taxation, did we not tell them the effect would be to wring from the consumers of the country a large portion of their earnings, to their detriment. We were answered with the statement that the result of the policy would be to bring about competition, and that the products of the factory would be lessened instead of increased in price. How has it turned out? We told those hon gentlemen then that, as soon as the manufacturers found they were not manufacturing at a profit, they would combine for the purpose of keeping up prices, and that the result would be disastrous. The policy of the hon. gentlemen opposite invited the investment of millions of money of the people of this country in manufactures, and the result was that when the times which we predicted did come, those men came back to this Parliament, and last Session we had the manufacturers again from all parts of the country seeking the reward for what they had paid out in the elections of 1882. The manufacturers as they had met in Toronto, met again in 1887, and we know the First Minister told them they would have to subscribe, and they did subscribe, to the election fund. Last Session, in consequence of this, the Minister of Finance introduced Tariff resolutions largely adding to the burdens of the people, and now, when the hon. gentleman who moves this resolution, remembers the past, does it not strike him that he is acting in a rather ungenerous and ungrateful manner towards the men who have done so much for him. He tells us we must legislate against these manufacturers, these combines and trusts. His simplicity is refreshing. Does he think these men are going to be suppressed by any legislation that can take place in this House? Does he not know that the true remedy for this great and crying evil is to reduce taxation, so that competition will come into play, and these men be compelled to sell at proper prices? These combinations have become a natural burden and a disgrace, and the Government and their supporters will yet have to answer to the people for permitting such a state of things to exist. Look at it. We have in this country, under this tariff, sugar combinations selling sugar to the people at double or nearly double the price at which it can be obtained in other countries. We have iron combinations, we have cotton combinations, we have rubber goods combinations, we have twine combinations, compelling the farmers of this country to pay over \$200,000 more for the twine they use in harvesting their harvest than they otherwise would. All these combinations are existing to-day, taking millions of dollars every year out of the people and creating a class of mono-

Mr. LISTER.

polists who are becoming enormously wealthy at the cost of the people of this country; and, as their wealth increases, so do these combinations increase; and the result could not be otherwise than to have the state of affairs in the business world such as we have never witnessed before. Hon. gentlemen may talk about the times we have to-day, about the favorable condition of things and the prosperity of the country, but no man who goes through this country to-day, no man who knows anything about the affairs of Canada to-day will say that the statements made by those hon. gentlemen are at all supported by facts. This has been a Government of monopolies from first to last. They have created railway monopolies, they have created monopolies in everything that is manufactured in Canada to-day, and they are grinding out of the great body of consumers the last farthing for the purpose of enriching these men. It is a startling thing to learn that one factory in one of the Lower Provinces should have been able in one year to make a profit to the extent of its whole capital, to pay an enormous dividend, and to pay all the liabilities which were against it; that another should have been able to make a profit of \$100,000; and we have the fact that the little Magog factory in the Province of Quebec required and obtained for the purpose of starting and supporting it an enormous duty on print goods, so that every old lady throughout the country must pay a larger price on the print goods she has to wear than she otherwise would. It is time that such a state of things as that was stopped, and it is time that the Government should take the matter in hand by offering the true remedy—which is not to prosecute these men for doing what the law permits, because those prosecutions are never successful—but which is to reduce the tariff of this country, and then these matters will regulate themselves.

Mr. SPROULE. I think it is one characteristic of the present Administration that, whenever an evil is apparent in the country that can be remedied by legislation, they are prepared to come forward and effect that legislation, and this present proposal will, I am sure, be endorsed by the people of this country. I was not a little surprised to hear the rule laid down by the hon. member for West Lambton (Mr. Lister), when he said that "these rings are the natural outcome of a high protective tariff." That hon. gentleman must surely forget that one of the worst rings we have ever experienced in this country was at a time when we had only a 17½ per cent. tariff—I mean the coal oil ring, and I might add the salt ring, and other rings which were just as bad as any we have to-day. I think that hon. gentleman has fallen sadly from grace in the last few months. If my memory is not at fault, I think last year he supported the Government very strongly when they proposed to keep up the duty on coal oil.

Mr. LISTER. The hon. gentleman is entirely mistaken as to the position I took on the coal oil duty. I said that as long as this pernicious system existed—

Mr. MITCHELL. You wanted a share in the plunder.

Mr. SPROULE. When the gentleman's own interests were at stake, he was ready to defend the action of the Government; he was classed at that time among those bloated aristocrats and manufacturers, because he was engaged in the trade.

Mr. LISTER. I am not engaged in the trade.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order.

Mr. LISTER. I have a right to correct the hon. gentleman. I am not engaged in that trade; I never was; and, if all your statements are as true as that, it is very easy to estimate their value.

Mr. SPROULE. All I can say is that I was informed at the time by some of his own friends that he was engaged