

may, no doubt, have one, but under the practice which obtains in Great Britain, it has a right to have none. Such is the doctrine professed by Todd in his work, "Parliamentary Government in England," vol. I, pages 415 and 417; I earnestly call the attention of the hon. gentlemen opposite to this opinion in connection with constitutional law:

The opposition exercise a wholesome influence upon parliamentary debate, and upon the conduct of the Crown in Parliament, for they are constitutional critics of all public affairs, and whatever course the Government may pursue, they naturally endeavour to find some ground for attack. It is the function of an opposition to state the case against the administration; to say everything which may plausibly be said against measure, act or word of every member of the ministry; in short, to constitute a standing censorship of the Government, subjecting all its acts and measures to a close and jealous scrutiny. * * It is an old maxim, that the duty of an opposition is very simple: "It is to oppose everything, and propose nothing." And in the same spirit, Sir Robert Peel used to say that "he declined to prescribe until he was called in." The peculiar office of the opposition is, doubtless, "to watch with keen eye the conduct of the government they oppose, to see if anything be wrong or blamable, or liable to criticism therein—to trip them up before they fall—at all events, if they stumble, to mark their stumbling, and call upon them to set things right again." The originators of measures and inventors of a policy, the individuals who come forward with their schemes and suggestions for public approbation, are not the opposition, but the ministers of the Crown; we (the opposition) stand here to criticise the suggestions and schemes which they bring forward, and which are founded on knowledge wherein we cannot share, and inspired, no doubt, by the feeling of responsibility under which they act. But it is quite compatible with these functions, to coincide with the policy of ministers and to ground their attack upon the weakness of the administration in carrying out principles which the sense of the country has approved.

Todd here quotes the opinions of Palmerton and Disraeli. Moreover, it was the doctrine supported by Sir John A. Macdonald when he was charged with failing to define with sufficient clearness his policy in the resolution he brought before this House on the 7th March, 1878. This doctrine was acknowledged as sound and constitutional, and here is what he stated at that time. I quote from his speech as reported in "Hansard," vol. I, page 853:

But, in the position I now hold, I think it is well that, at this stage of the debate, and in order to reduce the stream of discussion, which has been widening, into a narrower channel, I should lay before this House a resolution in amendment to the motion, which will be expressive of the policy of those with whom I am associated, and, I believe, the policy which will be acceptable to the country. In bringing forward this resolution, I am doing what, perhaps, I am not called upon to do. The hon. the First Minister very truly said, some years ago, that they, the Opposition, were not called upon to find a policy for the country; that the responsi-

bility of finding such a policy rested with the ministry of the day; and that the constitutional duty of Her Majesty's Opposition, the constitutional duty that was thrown upon them was to criticise the administration and legislation of the Government, to hold them in check, to warn them when they were going wrong, to censure them when they had gone wrong, and generally criticise and observe upon the course of administration and legislation. If the Opposition chose to take a further step, they might do, certainly, but it is not forced upon them, and it is not forced upon them in reference to any subject.

Thus, Mr. Speaker, the Conservative party, which is unceasingly charging us with having no platform, ought in the future not to ignore the constitutional principle professed by Sir John Macdonald in 1878, when he was leader of the Opposition. Moreover, we have a platform, and what proves it, is the fact that the hon. gentlemen opposite, while contradicting themselves, are always impugning us in connection with that very platform. In order to show its advantages, I intend to evidence each statement set forth in it, by showing the disastrous results of the National Policy, just advocated by the hon. member for Victoria (Mr. McDonald), since our platform is the counterpart of the National Policy and its condemnation alike. The first thing this policy was to achieve, in 1878, was to put a stop to the commercial depression then prevailing and to prevent its recurring in the future. This depression of 1878 has passed, no doubt, but at the present time, this policy advocated in 1878 has given rise to another one, and a more severe one, as I will show in a moment. The National Policy was to put a stop to emigration, and to increase our population. The result was totally different from the anticipation of its fathers. The figures, in their brutal eloquence, contradict the promises which the then Opposition, through its leader, Sir John Macdonald, made to the country. From 1881 to 1891, under the protective system, the population of the province of Quebec, that French race, so vigorous and so strong, which, in 1760, only included 76,000 souls, only increased by 129,508, or 9.53 per cent; while, from 1871 to 1881, under a tariff for revenue, it had increased by 167,511, or at a rate of 14 per cent. In Ontario, the increase, which had been 306,072, or 18.6 per cent from 1871 to 1881, only was 187,399, or 9.73 per cent from 1881 to 1891. In Nova Scotia, where the hon. gentleman who has just spoken before me to-night is living, I think, the increase had been 52,572, or 13 per cent under a tariff for revenue. Under the so eminently protective system of the National Policy, that progressive policy, the policy of industrial growth, according to the hon. gentlemen opposite, from 1881 to 1891, its population only increased by 9,824, or 2.123 per cent. But the figures relating to New Brunswick are still more disheartening. From 1871 to 1881, its population had increased by 35,639, or 12.4 per cent. Under the so beneficial system of the