

"Factories which were in existence some years prior to 1878, but were closed down in 1878, are given as new industries."

The man confesses that himself! He gives as new industries in this list, factories that were in existence previous to 1879, but were then temporarily closed down:

"Such for instance as the sugar refineries in Montreal, the bridge works and rolling mills at Hamilton."

And yet, Sir, the supporters of the Government will be quoting these figures throughout the country showing the great increase of prosperity, the increase in the sugar business, and in regard to these works at Hamilton, and others, without telling the people that Mr. Blackeby himself confesses in this report that these industries had been in existence years before. Why, Sir, he does not even pretend to give full information of the industries which were in existence in 1878. He gives a list of each town and what industries were there in 1878, and what have been established since, but he does not pretend to tell us how he got at those that existed in 1878; but judging from the cases in which we can track him I believe he has only put down, of the industries existing in 1878, those that are in existence now. If there were in a town in which eight existed in 1878, and still exist, he would put down eight in 1878; but he made no effort to find those that were in existence then but have failed since. I know that must be so with regard to St. Thomas, the county town of Elgin. We find that he groups together Aylmer, Simcoe, St. Thomas, and Tilsonburg, and he says the whole four towns had only five industries between them in 1878. The statement is perfectly absurd. It is a statement that he must have known would seem absurd, on the face of it, to any resident of that county. The Town of St. Thomas at that time had, to my knowledge, at least twelve or fifteen establishments which must be classed as industries. I do not pretend to know the names of all of them, but I am sure there were that many that I know of myself, and there must have been more that I do not know. But he returns the industries in the whole of these towns now as only thirteen. Why, St. Thomas alone had more in 1878 than he returns for the whole group now, and I am sure the whole number now is considerably greater than he states. He does not know how to make the best of his case. He has not returned the towns now as being as prosperous, some of them, as they really are, though he has taken good care to put them down as much less prosperous in 1878 than they really were. Take all the western part of my constituency; take the towns of Ridgetown, Highgate, Duart, Rodney, Dutton, Bismarck and Fingal, which do a large milling, manufacturing and foundry business; he has not visited them at all. He has tried to make out the case he was sent to make out, but he has not known how to do it. In the Town of St. Thomas again he puts down a foundry and iron works as having started in 1882, whereas it was in operation before 1878, but the property changed hands in 1882, and therefore he put it down as a new industry. That is enough, perhaps, of Mr. Blackeby's report. If the Government wanted to obtain correct statistics of the industries why did they not adopt the plan which has been followed with such success in Ontario? Why did they not establish something like the Bureau of Industries which is in constant correspondence with every industry and every farmer throughout the Province, collecting from month to month, as well as from year to year, careful statistics of the progress of the country. Why, Sir, the hon. member for Montreal Centre (Mr. Curran) the other day paid these statistics the compliment of quoting them in preference to the statistics of the Dominion Government because they were fuller, and more accurate, and more straightforward, I must say, than the returns from which I have just been quoting. I shall refer, perhaps, to these returns at a later period. In regard to the prosperity spoken of in Mr. Blackeby's

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report I am reminded of an article which appeared on Monday last in the *St. Thomas Times*, a Conservative organ; and I must pay it this compliment, that it is one of the ablest Conservative papers published west of Toronto. It ranks among the first Conservative papers for independence, honesty and straightforwardness. It is a strange coincidence that this article appeared in the next issue after the hon. member for King's, N.B. (Mr. Foster), visited St. Thomas. I can only hope that he had a conference with the editor of that newspaper, and that the very correct ideas as to the state of the country which are expressed in that article were inspired by the hon. member to whom I refer. If so, it shows that he acquired a truer opinion of the state of the country than he had when he addressed the House. The *St. Thomas Times*, of March 16th, says:

"We read, from time to time, in American papers, of large numbers of men in manufacturing districts out of employment; so of miners in the coal mining districts. We are told that there has been over-production and hence mines and factories have to be closed and hands turned out of employ. While this has been largely the case in the United States it has been the case in some districts in Canada. * * * It does not, however, appear so plain why tens of thousands of the people of the United States should remain in idleness while they have millions of acres of untilled lands in the south and in the west and in the north. * * * The same is true of Canada; we have room for millions and support for millions in the North-West. We employ immigrant agents and send them to Europe. We offer inducements to get men to take our lands for nothing, or at prices within the reach of the poor. Why should not means be taken to get the poor and the idle from our own cities to occupy the land that would afford the industrious at least a comfortable living?"

Here is a Conservative paper, a well informed newspaper, published in a city which has, perhaps, retained its prosperity during the present depression better than any other in Canada, declaring that it is a very strange state of things that people should be lying idle in cities while we have millions of untilled acres of fertile land. It continues:

"Why should not the unemployed be assisted to go and cultivate the soil? Why should they spend months doing nothing, waiting for the fitful employment that the factories afford?"

This is a very strange contrast to the report of Mr. Blackeby, who says that men are earning higher wages, that more men are employed, and that each man is getting a fair day's wage for a fair day's work. Does this mean that our workingmen are getting a fair day's wage for a fair day's work? Would a Conservative organ confess to such a state of things existing if it were not satisfied that there are thousands idle, and that there are men who cannot get a fair day's wage for a fair day's work? It continues:

"If some of the means spent on immigration agents to the old countries of Europe were applied to helping off some of the unemployed in our cities, it would be quite as good an investment, perhaps better. There should not be want and destitution in countries that possess millions of acres of productive lands lying waste."

The editor admits there is want and destitution. He says there should not be. Again:

"It is not necessary that thousands of a reserved force of workmen should remain idle in our towns for three or six months of the year, waiting for a boom in the factories."

Are we not told that the factories are booming all the time? Can we believe there is a boom among the factories at the present time? The *St. Thomas Times* says there is not. The article continues:

"That is how the dangerous classes are manufactured. Let as many as can find regular work stay, and let the others be assisted to go where they will become independent."

If you read this in connection with some of the promises and pledges I heard the other day from the lips of the hon. Premier about the coming prosperity, independence and riches of the workingman, of the coming time when he would be able to pay far higher prices for everything the farmer had to sell, you cannot help smiling; but I confess it is a sad smile, not a smile of pleasure, but a smile of pity for those poor men who have been duped by those promises into voting for the introduction here of a so-called national