

Well, I must say that, after reading the speech of the hon. member for Brant in 1876 two or three times, I should claim him, though he calls himself a Free-Trader, as one of the soundest Protectionists in the Parliament of Canada, taking his speech as a criterion, and nothing could be stronger than the way in which, in the extract I read from his speech to-day, he justified the then Finance Minister in imposing an increased duty on cigars, which he stated had an excellent result. But I say to him, and to all such, but especially to him, that, if he takes exception to 35 per cent. duty on a limited number of articles, he must not forget that the Finance Minister, to whom he appealed in 1876 for further concessions, did in 1878 change the Customs duties on cigars and cigarettes. The returns for 1878 shewing the duty collected on 21,050 German cigars, valued at \$10,680, as \$12,687.10, or nearly 120 per cent. The Excise duty on this quantity of cigars would have been \$3,423.60 at that time. The protection given to the manufacturer was \$4,263.50, or 40 per cent. The hon. member was grateful for a little less protection than that, and in a year or two afterwards he obtained 40 per cent. protection, and it he says produced wonderful results; it brought a thousand people, even before the change was made in 1878, into the country, and the article manufactured cost the consumer no more than it did before. Still, the hon. member will, I presume, here as elsewhere, denounce the present Government for putting 35 per cent. duty on any articles of imports. The general objections that have been taken with reference to this Tariff have been largely met by the results. The results have been, in most cases, to decrease the cost of the article to the consumer, and in many cases the increased duty that has been imposed upon it has enabled the producer, having the market to himself, to give to the consumer the article cheaper than he could have done under other circumstances, and cheaper than he ever had it before. And so, while exception may be taken to the policy which has for its object protection to the industries of the country, still our friends will be found sometimes even denouncing a policy that is doing just exactly what some of the hon. gentlemen opposite sustained, supported, defended, and spoke of approvingly. Now, Sir, we come to the question of the general depreciation of the country. Let us see what evidences we have of that. I admit, Sir, and I regret that it is so, that the wheat crop of Canada as a whole was less last year than it has been for some years previous, and this circumstance has no doubt affected, to some extent, the business of the country during the autumn and the pre-