

ber that the hon. member for West York (Mr. Campbell) in moving the address last year stated that the greatest man that ever lived was the right hon. gentleman who leads the government. Our opinion of these hon. gentlemen is—

Mr. CLARKE. Don't say it.

Mr. HAGGART. Our opinion of this government is not exactly in line with that of their supporters. The right hon. gentleman may think that Providence is on his side in making the country so prosperous. It seems to me that Providence is kind to the country in giving us something to compensate us for having such a government. If we have a government so extravagant as this one is by the confession of its own members, if we have a government that continues customs taxes of so villainous a character that they bleed the farmers white, at least we have the compensating advantage that the country is prosperous in spite of the government. We are often told that Providence tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, and in this we have an example of it.

Now, I have already asked what legislation these hon. gentlemen have to pride themselves upon as being a contributory cause to the prosperity of the country? Do they attribute that prosperity to their revision of the tariff in 1897? That was a reduction of our protective tariff by less than one-half of one per cent. Will they say that this is the cause of Canada's prosperity? Sir, these hon. gentlemen have done nothing to assist the forces that have made us prosperous, as they have done nothing to carry out any single promise that they made to the people. Have we free trade as they have it in England? What has become of reciprocity with the United States? What has become of the preferential tariff with Great Britain? What has become of the economies of all kinds that we were promised? Not a single promise have they carried out. What new work have they initiated? The only thing they have initiated is this proposed expenditure on the new transcontinental railway. We have not heard from the right hon. Prime Minister whether the amount to be paid by the people of the country towards this work is to be increased. He told us that this scheme which was to do so much for the advancement of the country, which was to more than double our available resources and yield us inestimable benefits, was to be had for a total expenditure on the part of the people of \$13,000,000. Since then, a new arrangement has been made with the Grand Trunk Railway Company. Is that amount to be increased or decreased? Are we still to have this inestimable advantage of a new railway from the Atlantic to the Pacific for \$13,000,000, as promised by the right hon. gentleman, and as endorsed by the Finance Minister? (Hon. Mr. Fielding).

Hon. Mr. HAGGART.

Mr. CLARKE. He said \$16,000,000.

Mr. HAGGART. I believe he did. He seemed to think that the Prime Minister's estimate for the building of a road from Winnipeg to Moncton and assisting the building of a road westward from Winnipeg to the Pacific ocean was not quite large enough, and so he carefully put his estimate at \$16,000,000. That is another question on which the hon. gentlemen differ from the present chairman of the railway commission, Hon. Mr. Blair. That gentleman stated that the cost to the country, if it assumed these obligations, would be \$140,000,000. That is a difference, between the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance on one side and the gentleman who then occupied the position of Minister of Railways on the other side, of only about \$125,000,000 in the estimated cost of building this road. The remarks of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance on this point were made with apparent earnestness. And yet, I think, more childish statements never were made in this House. The right hon. Prime Minister must have thought that the people of this country—to use a word of his own countryman—were the greatest gobemouches ever known. I venture to say that the expenditure of the country in carrying out this enterprise cannot be less than \$140,000,000. We shall have an opportunity of discussing this matter when the alterations in the Grand Trunk Pacific scheme are presented to us. I would like to see the papers on the subject. The right hon. Prime Minister has promised that these papers shall be brought down before we are called upon to discuss the question. It is one of the most serious questions that has ever come before the people of this country—the expenditure at this time of an immense sum of money which might be spent in any of a hundred other ways far more to the advantage of the country.

The right hon. gentleman and his colleagues in this House are occupying a position which they obtained by false promises to the people of this country: not a single promise which they gave to the people of this country has been fulfilled. The people of the country are willing to forgive their change of face in reference to a protective tariff because nothing but ruin could come to the country had the hon. gentlemen carried out their principles. If they had adopted a policy of free trade or of levying taxes only on tea, sugar and spirits, permitting manufactured goods to come in free, they would have flung back the prosperity of this country fifty years. That change of face is to their credit and the people have forgiven them for adopting virtually the principle of protection which was enunciated and carried to its fruition by the gentlemen who preceded them. This country commenced to