

duty faithfully and make no return which was not absolutely correct.

The Minister of Trade and Commerce deliberately asks the people of Canada to believe that you can find in this country, in every province, enumerators who are willing and ready to perjure themselves simply to serve the purposes of the administration of the day. I think that is the most monstrous charge that was ever made by any public man in Canada. Judging by the lengths to which the hon. gentleman had gone when in opposition in extravagant denunciation of his opponents, almost anything might have been expected of him, but this last outrage against the people is by far the worst of all, and the matter will not be allowed to rest there.

The hon. gentleman caused an investigation to be made in the province of Quebec into the taking of the census of 1891. Judging from the return which has been laid upon the Table, the government put it in the hon. gentleman's power, or the power of the commissioner who acted for him, to violate public confidence by disclosing private information given to the census enumerators in the belief that the confidential nature of this information would be respected. The evidence of this is to be seen in the documents placed upon the Table the other day. These schedules have been taken from the custody of the census officer and have been exposed to the public. I will read a paragraph from the one for the county of Bagot:—

The stuffing in the town of Acton Vale and in the parish of St. André of Acton, is still larger, and the evidence of it is absolutely undeniable.

Mr. J. E. Marcil, M.P., for Bagot, is residing in Acton Vale for the last forty years, and for forty years he has been engaged in business, either as a clerk or as a merchant. He has consequently, opportunity of knowing every one in the locality. Mr. Marcil examined in our office the schedules of 1891, and has pointed out to us the names of those who had left the town of Acton Vale for the parish of St. André of Acton many years previous to the census of ten years ago.

These schedules, collected by the census officers in 1891, contained information entrusted to them by the people of Canada under the seal of confidence. But, for party purposes, they have been hawked about and exposed to the gaze of all and sundry, in order to discredit the census of 1891. It will not do for the government to leave this matter where it is. If there is to be an investigation, it will not do to have that investigation held by an officer of the government; it must be held by a commission of men whose reputation shall be beyond reproach or question. And not only the census of 1891 must be inquired into, but the census of 1901 also. And, indeed, in order to a thorough investigation, perhaps

the census of 1881 and the census of 1871, if investigated, might yield valuable information. But, after the speech of the Minister of Trade and Commerce and the facts revealed by him in that speech and in the papers laid upon the Table, nothing will satisfy the people but a searching inquiry into the census of 1891 and 1901 as well. It was not necessary for the Minister of Trade and Commerce to go as far as he did. I suppose these Star Chamber inquiries might have been made, perhaps are made frequently—and if the matter had been kept quiet, if it had not been so trumpeted abroad, if the Minister of Trade and Commerce had not been given this opportunity of showing his eloquence, his bitterness, and his capacity for going beyond all reasonable length in attacking his opponents, the present position need not have been reached. But the hon. minister has brought these matters forward deliberately; and I maintain that it is incumbent upon this administration to set at rest, as far as they can, this question as to the honesty of the enumerators, as to the motives that influenced the different administrations that held these censuses as to the instructions they gave their officers, as to the good faith in which the information, given in good faith by the people of Canada in these decennial censuses, has been received and treated. Now, the Minister of Trade and Commerce, apparently to serve his own purpose for the moment, discredits the census of 1891. He maintains that the number of the people returned by that census was altogether too high. The hon. gentleman knows—no man better—that the census of 1891 was taken under precisely the same conditions, precisely the same instructions to enumerators, as was the census of 1901, which has just been taken by the government of which the hon. gentleman is a member. More than that, the hon. member must know that, if there were any error at all, it was not likely to be found by searching through the census of 1891. If he remembers the debates in which he took part in the House of Commons from 1882 to 1885, he will remember that it was admitted at the time that the census of 1881 was, probably, largely inaccurate and represented the people of Canada as having a larger population than was actually living in Canada at the time. There can be no question about that. Not the census of 1891, but the census of 1881, was the census that was exaggerated—and, probably also the census of 1871. In the discussions engaged in by Mr. Blake and the hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright), Mr. Blake stated in most explicit language that the census of 1881 was stuffed largely with the names of people who had not been resident in Canada for ten, fifteen or twenty years. He states that most clearly in a discussion which took place in the House, in which he shows