

gentlemen 'opposite reminded him of the story of Rip Van Winkle, who, tradition said, after sleeping for several years, woke up one morning to see things very much changed. Those hon. gentlemen went to sleep ten or fifteen years ago, during the palmy days of Protection; they had woke up, but had not examined their bearings yet, or observed what the results of the system had been. He did not know whether the hon. member for Niagara (Mr. Plumb), when he was in the United States, was a barn-burner or an old hunker Democrat; but, whichever he was, he was a Free-trader. Though under a Rip Van Winkle spell now, those who felt anxious about his safety might reasonably hope that he would awaken some day and return to his old faith. (Laughter.) Hon. gentlemen opposite were proposing to give this country the Protection system of the United States, to re-enact the English Corn Laws that were abolished thirty years ago, and to confer at one and the same time the blessings of dear corn, dear coal, dear salt, and dearer goods. They proposed to seek the prosperity of the agriculturist, the miner, and all other interests in Canada by a process of depletion, of bleeding, of taxation, by robbing one to enrich the other, and then taking from the other to enrich the one, by a process of plunder, and passing the spoils from hand to hand. They were going to adopt a policy which would enrich the country very much as an old Yankee once said that his boys made money on rainy days when he averred that each one, with a jackknife, a top and some odd trinkets, would commence trading with the others, and before night, such was their 'cuteness, each would be found to have made ten dollars, though

they had no more knives, tops and trinkets among them than when they first commenced this system of domestic commerce on a small scale. That was very much the system of political economy that hon. gentleman opposite proposed to introduce into Canada. (Hear, hear.) He had only to say that the policy was a disastrous one, that its practical results were before their eyes, that it had been tried in the United States under most favourable auspices; a country with a vast extent of fertile soil, with great variety of climate and production; a country enriched with the boundless endowments of prodigal nature, and comprising in its vast range of resources a miniature world within itself, and yet, under these favourable circumstances, the system of Protection had completely broken down, and had illustrated the fact that its practical results were disastrous, and could only be disastrous in the extreme. The intelligent people of Canada had but to have these facts placed before them for consideration, and they would reject this political scheme of the Opposition, which was adopted by them, not because they truly believed it to be a policy that would benefit Canada; not even because they expected to reconcile conflicting interests and reduce their absurd theories to practice if successful before the people; but because they believed it would be a specious and delusive cry which would catch the popular ear with its vague generalities and loud promises, and might serve to give them a temporary advantage, and lead them to that goal of their prayers and ambition—the loaves and fishes of office—to reach which, they were willing to travel by any road and to profess any principles. (Loud cheers.)