

undertake to bring about reciprocity with the United States. On another occasion, later on, my hon. friend extended the time one year—he only wanted three years to bring about a reciprocity treaty. Well, we have had eighteen years of the National Policy and I am sure my hon. friend will not dissent when I say that in the last year of the Conservative term of office, they were farther away from reciprocity than they ever were during any previous year of their existence.

I think that the National Policy may very properly be tested to-day in the light of all these promises. But there was another promise made which was of greater importance. I think that the strongest argument used by my Conservative friends in advocating the National Policy was that it was going to increase the population of our country. I think that this test of population, which has so often been applied before, may well be applied for a few moments again, because I think the lesson is full of importance and cannot be applied too often. The policy which was inaugurated in 1879, and which had been previously known in 1870, for a short time, as the National Policy, told the people in very glowing terms what it would accomplish and lead to. It was to remove distress whether in agriculture or manufacturing,—and distress did exist, as had to be acknowledged, during the period that Mr. Mackenzie was in power—and it was to lead to great prosperity and the rapid up-building of the country. Immigrants were to flow in and employment was to be furnished for all. The present leader of the Opposition (Sir Charles Tupper) said that this was the supreme test of prosperity:

If we are to have a country at all,—

said he, as reported in the "Hansard" of 1877, page 167—

—it must be by bringing people into it. It is our policy to bring people into our country and to furnish employment for them when here, and that is the only policy by which Canada can hope to attain any position of importance in the world. We must have a large and extended immigration and give work to people when they come here.

Taking population as the test of prosperity, the results of the census of 1891, the last official figures to hand, were certainly disappointing. I have here the official figures. In the province of Ontario, in 1871 the population was 1,620,851. In 1881 it had increased to 1,926,922, an increase of 18·6 per cent. In 1891 the population had grown to 2,114,321, an increase of 9·73 per cent, as compared with 18·6 per cent in the previous ten years. In the province of Quebec the increase of population from 1871 to 1881 was 14 per cent, and from 1881 to 1891, 9·53 per cent. In the province of Nova Scotia the increase in the first period was 13·6 per cent, and in the second it was 2·23

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per cent. In the province of New Brunswick, from 1871 to 1881, the population increased 12·4 per cent, and in the next ten years it increased 0 per cent. In the province of Manitoba the increase from 1871 to 1881, was, of course, very large, as this was in the early history of that province. The increase in those years was 247 per cent. In the next ten years the increase was 144 per cent. Of course, I do not think the same force would attach to this comparison, because the country having just been opened up, the rush of population would naturally be somewhat larger than afterwards. But I am sure that even in regard to Manitoba the census returns must have been sadly disappointing. The province of British Columbia increased in a larger degree from 1881 to 1891, than in the previous decade, the increase for the earlier period being 36·4 per cent, and for the later, 98·49 per cent, a large increase in that province, as we should acknowledge. In Prince Edward Island, the increase from 1871 to 1881 was 15·8 per cent, and from 1881 to 1891, it was 0·17 per cent. In the Territories the comparison is not given so closely, and I cannot give the percentages. The increase disclosed by the census of 1881 for the whole Dominion was 18·97 per cent, and by the count of 1891 it was 11·76 per cent, a decrease in progress of a little over 7 per cent. The growth of the country, therefore, in point of population was much slower under the National Policy than it was during the period before that policy was put in operation. Eliminating the new portions of the Dominion, and considering the provinces of old Canada, which include the whole population except about 400,000, the results are still more disappointing. According to the census figures that I have given the increase in these provinces was exceedingly small. In point of population the growth of the older provinces from 1871 till 1881 was more than three times as great as it was during the decade spent wholly under Conservative rule and wholly under a protective tariff. The population of the maritime provinces in 1871 was 767,000, and in 1881 it was 870,000, an increase of 103,000. In 1891 the population of those provinces was 880,000, an increase of only 10,000 people in ten years. At the rate of 2 per cent per annum, the natural increase of 870,000 persons would be 174,000, instead of the actual increase which we find. In other words, the increase for ten years in the maritime provinces was less than the natural increase for one year. The aggregate population of the three chief cities of the maritime provinces, Halifax, St. John and Charlottetown, in 1881, was 73,712. In 1891 it was 74,113, an increase of 400 souls in ten years. This National Policy was to do great things for the farmer. The number of farmers and farmer's sons engaged in farming, by the census of 1881, was 656,712, and, by the census of 1891, it