

of something over 500, and the electors believed firmly that a policy of protection would be introduced by the Mackenzie Government. Their representatives told them that such a policy would be introduced, that although the Mackenzie Government were free traders, yet they could see what was for the interest of the country, and that they, as representatives of Hamilton, would have sufficient influence with the Government to induce it to concede the point. More than that, up to 1878, at every bye-election, the Government were being defeated, and the people of Hamilton thought that, as a matter of course, the Ministers would have sense and prescience enough, and were of sufficient ability as statesmen, to see what the demands and requirements of the country were, and that when the Session of 1878 came round the Finance Minister would, as a matter of course, come down with such a scheme for the readjustment of the tariff as would give the people what they so much required. They waited in vain; but, in the hope that their wishes and expectations would be gratified, they did, in some cases, enlarge their premises, and this was noted at the time in the public press. The Session of 1878 came and went. When the members of the Conservative party would meet members of the Liberal party and draw their attention to the fact that the country was going to the dogs for want of that policy which Hamilton had been so instrumental in propounding to the country, they were always met with the assertion: "Have faith in the Minister of Finance; he is the greatest Finance Minister that ever graced the treasury benches; he is no ordinary man." In fact, in comparing him with other financiers, they spoke of him as a "mountain" compared to "a mole hill." They considered him the great "mountain of finance," as a man whose ability was so great that he could only be compared for a moment with any of his predecessors! Well, the time came; the "mountain" was in labor and it was expected to bring forth something more than a mouse, but it did not bring forth even "a mouse;" it was a "fly on the wheel." Of course there was great depression then. The people saw that nothing could induce the Government of the day to grant that great panacea which they all desired so much. Shops and manufacturing establishments were either shut up entirely, or were working on half time, or at half their capacity; mechanics who should have been earning \$2 or \$2.50 a day, were turned out into the streets, and those who could not afford to leave the country and go to the United States or elsewhere, for the purpose of earning a livelihood, were obliged to remain in Canada and work for the corporation at 75 cents per day. Are there any such scenes witnessed to-day in Canada? Or anything approaching them? Yet the hon. gentleman has the hardihood to say that "the progress of manufacturing industry was greater from 1873 to 1878 than from 1878 to the present." Hamilton is, as I have said, almost entirely a manufacturing city, and, except so far as manufacturing industries are concerned, her commercial importance is not so great. If, therefore, what the hon. gentleman has said were true, the population of the city would have decreased, and the value of property would also have decreased. But what do we find? I have it from the best authority, and although I would be very loath to quote any paper from the opposite side of politics in corroboration, yet one can go sometimes with profit into the enemy's camp for the purpose of obtaining evidence in support of his statement. In 1874, the population of Hamilton was 31,957; in 1879 it was 34,268, or an increase in five years of 2,311, making an increase of 462 per year. In 1883 the population had increased to 38,196, an increase of 3,928 in five years or 786 per year. In 1884, the population had increased to 39,216, an increase in one year of 1,020. Since 1881 the increase has been more than double as rapid as from 1874 to 1879. In support of the progress of the city, as regards population, I refer hon. members

Mr. ROBERTSON (Hamilton).

to the *Hamilton Times* of the 18th March instant. A question of representation in the Local Legislature of Ontario is up before that House. I will not trespass on the good nature of the House by alluding to that in any other way than merely to mention that the hon. member (Mr. Gibson) who represents Hamilton in the Local House, is desirous that there should be two members to represent Hamilton, as he claims that city is entitled to two members instead of one; so Mr. Gibson has given notice of his intention to move that Hamilton shall be given an additional member. The *Times* newspaper goes on to say:

"His argument is that the population of Hamilton is now about 40,000 and that the population of the city increases more rapidly than the population of the Province at large, so that in ten years hence there will be 50,000 or 60,000 within the limits, and that is quite true."

I think I have proved that part of my statement, at all events, by the facts as I have given them to you, as they have been taken each year by the assessors as they go from door to door, and subsequently by the assertion of the organ of the party, which the hon. gentleman opposite certainly will not say a word against, that "it is all true." Now, let us look at the assessed value of property within those periods. I think those things go to show whether a country or a city is progressing or is going to decay. In 1874, the assessed value was \$13,850,040; in 1879, it had increased to \$15,163,210, being an increase in the five years of \$1,313,170, or a little more than \$260,000 per annum; in 1883, it had reached \$17,713,150, an increase of \$2,544,940 in five years, or rather more than \$500,000 per annum; in 1884, the year just expired, it has increased to \$18,818,330, showing an increase in one year of \$1,105,180, or more than four times the rate of increase between 1874 and 1879. Yet the hon. gentleman says that "it is well known that the manufacturing industries of Hamilton have not prospered so well between 1878 and the present hour as between 1873 and 1878." Now, there is no doubt that, as between 1882 and 1884, there is a difference in favor of 1882. We all know that 1881 and 1882 were years of wonderful activity in trade and business. That every manufacturing interest was then driven to its utmost capacity. We know that there was not an establishment—and I am speaking now from a local point of view—in the city of Hamilton but was working over hours and could not even then fill the orders fast enough. The time did come when there was a slacking up. The great excitement that extended to the North-West began to die away, and the manufacturing interest began to flag, and therefore, of course, business is not so brisk in 1884 as it was in 1882. But, nevertheless, there are more men now employed in the aggregate and higher wages are paid than at any former period in the city's history. Why, at this day, although you hear people complain about the want of work, and the impossibility of getting work for the laborers to do, you cannot employ a man in the city of Hamilton for less than \$1.25 a day, and many of them ask \$1.50. But then we must take into account that this is the winter season, and hundreds of laborers can only find employment when the snow is off the ground, and the weather is more seasonable. There is never so much work going on in a city or in a country, if I might so speak, in the winter season, as there is in the other parts of the year. But we have no mechanics, unless brick-layers and stone-masons, out of employment. We have no man who is able to earn \$2.50 a day coming to the offices of the city hall and begging the mayor to give him work at 75 cents a day as a digger, or scraper on the streets. We have no such characters as these. They are all employed one way or another, or, if they are not employed, they have the money lying by in the savings bank which they can draw on for the purpose of keeping the wolf from the door, a thing they could not do in 1878. Now, a good deal has been said about the report of the