

is very serious, and it is not to be accounted for by the crop. It is due to other circumstances more in the control of the Administration than is the crop. I have observed on former occasions, that while hon. gentlemen opposite, addressing the people in the country, would not absolutely tell a farmer that the crops were in their own hands, that they could cause the sun to shine, and the rain to fall, and the crop to grow, they had yet said—and the hon. gentleman who is now laughing has himself said:—after all, you had better vote for the Government that the sun shines on; Providence is kind to us: support us. “When the Grits come in,” said the hon. First Minister, “the weevil will come in with them.” Thus they have told the poor people of the country who have, some of them, confided in them, that there was some sort of high compact and alliance between them and the supernal powers under which, by means not to be disclosed to vulgar ears, yet none the less effective, good crops were coincident with the existence of a Tory Administration. I do not suppose they will take credit for that any longer. Even although they have failed so slightly, even although the crop has not been so very bad, I believe they are now much more disposed to attribute the alternations of prosperity and adversity to conditions beyond their control, and a crop beyond their control, than they were in former days. But I deny that the change in affairs is to be mainly, though to a considerable extent it is, to be attributed to such causes. It is to be attributed to the policy of the Administration—a policy, in the first place, of extravagant expenditure under which they took and spent; a policy, in the second place, of extravagant collection under which they took what even their extravagance could not enable them to expend, under which they determined to abstract from the people of the country, in these years that have lately passed and the current year, about \$20,000,000, which will cost the people of the country—the consumers—by the time they pay it, something approximating to \$30,000,000, and which they used in order to pay for this same Canadian Pacific Railway that once more dresses the Speech from the Throne; a policy, under which, instead of borrowing at four per cent. the \$20,000,000 they wanted, they have caused the people to pay \$30,000,000 at something like seven or eight per cent. They thus abstracted from the people, at the period they wanted it, something which made the difference between a good and a bad crop. In addition to a partial failure of one crop which we suffer from Providence, they have brought on us what is equivalent to the failure of another crop. They took what they did take unjustly and unequally. They did more. They invited and encouraged over-speculating and over-trading. They fomented the North-West speculations by the land arrangements which they made. The hon. Minister, instead of being a prudent pilot, told his crew that if he were only as young as they and in trade he would clap on full sail for a period of ten years of assured prosperity and then take in sail. How many of his crew have taken in sail since, although the ten years have not elapsed? How many of his crew have gone down under the sail which he told them to hoist and keep up for a ten years' voyage? They unduly stimulated every pet industry. What of the cotton industry? the sugar industry? the iron industry? and the glass industry? and a half a dozen other things I could mention which hon. gentlemen placed under their hot-bed system, and in respect of which they brought up numerous plants, and which have now largely withered. Their policy resulted in over-investment in manufactures, over-production, over-trading, over-importation; and had not others been wiser than the hon. Minister of Finance; had not others set that caution signal which he declined to set, the consequences would have been much more serious than they actually were. If they were not more serious it is due to this circumstance. I trust that the

Mr. BLAKE.

check which was administered by some leading men, who had a better knowledge of the signs of the times than the hon. gentleman, who were better able to judge the course of events than he—I say, the check they endeavoured to give the administration one and a half years ago, and have been repeating ever since, has mitigated the disaster which might otherwise have occurred. I trust it is limited to a period of stringency and dullness without being advanced as it would have been to a period of crisis and collapse. If it be so, it is due to others and not to the Finance Minister; and even as it is, it is bad enough. It was only last Session that the hon. gentleman who moved the reply to the Address adverted to the list of bankruptcies as an indication of the continued prosperity of the country. I pointed out to him that I thought he had not referred to the authorities or he would have followed, by anticipation, the prudent course which has been taken on this occasion and omitted reference to the subject. Although there was last year an increase instead of, as the hon. gentleman supposed, a diminution, still the amount was moderate. Though enough to warn people and cause them to be cautious, it was not enough to indicate a then existing condition of a very serious character. What is the roll call to day? You find that the number has enormously increased, about doubled, if I remember aright. You find that the amount of liabilities is between two and three times the amount of last year, according to one of the commercial reports, and between four or five times as much, according to the other; you find that, comparing our condition with that of the neighboring Republic, we have nearly twice as many, in proportion to those engaged in trade, who have succumbed under the excessive load which they were carrying under the hon. gentleman's advice, as they have on the other side. The hon. gentleman has adverted on former occasions to the bank stocks as an indication of the prosperity of the country. He said the other day, out in the country, that he did not do so during his Budget Speech last year, because he thought they were rather high. What does he think now? What does he think of the loss of some ten or twelve millions at least—I have not actually counted the figures, but that at least—in value since they touched that point? What does that indicate in relation to the condition of the country? What did a rise in stocks indicate? He said advancing prosperity. What does a fall so serious indicate? I leave it to him to answer. And then we might make an enquiry as to the condition of the pet industries. Pride and rejoicing were manifested in past years on the ground of their vigour and prosperity. The hon. gentleman spoke of them as things of which the country ought to be proud. It is true the people might be paying a little more, though they disputed that, but what was that when you found men engaged so vigorously in home production, and employing so many hands, and paying such liberal wages, and giving such constant employment, and making such large donations to charitable objects, and generally prospering so much? What is the condition of the pet industries to-day? Has that unhealthy stimulation which we said would take place under the hot-bed Tariff of high prices, done good or harm? Has it not had the result we predicted, and are we not reaping at an earlier day than even we predicted, and at a much earlier day than he expected, when he made his prophecies, the bitter harvest of his policy? What is the condition, under the National Policy to-day, of the great industry of flour-milling in Canada? How does it stand? How does the Tariff affect it? Has the hon. gentleman accommodated his little difference with the millers? Is he about to relieve them from the difficulties under which they say they labour and which prevent them, they say, from grinding American flour in Canada? Has the result of this Tariff proved itself to be a result sound and just as applied to this country in that regard? How is it with