

others, actually called on the people of this country to sing pæans of praise to them, because they entered on the work of enlarging these canals promptly which their predecessors had so long neglected to the injury of the country. In relation, therefore, to the canals they were undoubtedly responsible, and solely responsible, for the expenditures. Then, Sir, as to the Canadian Pacific Railway. The Parliament of Canada had committed itself to the declaration that the Canadian Pacific Railway should be built by a company, aided by subsidies of land and money. That was the resolution that accompanied the contract with British Columbia. It was, in fact, part of the contract to all intents and purposes, and was accepted by the gentlemen who were here representing British Columbia; one leading gentleman from that Province, Mr. Trutch, declaring in a speech he delivered in the Russell House that it was part of the contract and that they were prepared to accept it as such. When those hon. gentlemen came into power it was for them to determine what they should do about the Pacific Railway. They arranged the policy. The hon. member for Lambton (Mr. Mackenzie) said in a speech to his own constituents that he proposed to go on with the work as a public work, because the country would then have the profits, instead of the contractors, in constructing the railway. And yet, after he had gone into the work, more as a matter of profit to the Government than of profit to the contractors, his friends now come down and say that they must not be held responsible for the expenditure, because, forsooth, the agreement that the Pacific Railway should be built was entered into before they came into office. More than that, we have had during the last three years, in every Session of this Parliament, declarations of the most formal kind—declarations recorded in the Journals of the House, which, if they mean anything, meant that that bargain was not binding on the people of this country; that it was a bargain to be executed or neglected just in proportion as the Parliament of Canada might consider it to be in the interests of the country to do consistently with the condition of its finances at the time. Surely, Sir, it was these same gentlemen who have thus formally interpreted the bargain for the construction of the Pacific Railway, who are responsible for the increase of debt involved in connection with it. That is the position in relation to this matter of the public debt; and I think, therefore, we might fairly say that on that question as in relation to the ordinary public expenditure, we can fairly claim that the policy of this Government, not as compared alone with the policy of their predecessors, but viewed simply by itself as a policy to be judged of in the interests of the country, is one that we can fully defend and one which the people of this country will amply sustain. Now, Sir, I come for a moment to deal with the National Policy. There is one fact, on which I think we may all congratulate ourselves, and that is, that with the exception of the particular surroundings of the hon. member for Charlotte (Mr. Gillmor), the condition of this country is everything we can desire. We find that every hon. member who has spoken on that side, from the hon. member for Lambton (Mr. Mackenzie) and through all the others that have addressed the House—and I do not say through all the others in any tone of disrespect—I say we find an admission that the condition of this country is eminently prosperous; that every branch of industry, every branch of commerce is in a condition in the highest degree satisfactory. We heard to-day from the hon. member for South Brant (Mr. Paterson) and I do not wonder that he was so good-natured, so pleasant-looking when he made the announcement, I do not wonder that it prompted his eloquence to such an extent, that, in his own particular business, this last year had been one of the best years in his experience. I think the

same thing may be said of almost every man, for whatever may be the condition of the country there will always be exceptional cases from exceptional circumstances of people who do not do as well as their neighbors. But I think we may fairly conclude that that is the opinion and that is the estimate of every man in this country in relation to the present commercial condition of the country. But, Sir, we are told—although the country is prosperous, although every industry is flourishing, although commerce is yielding a larger return to those engaged in it than it has yielded at any time in the past history of Canada, that this is not in any sense due to the National Policy—that this improvement is entirely due to Providence. Sir, I bow with awful reverence, with the profoundest faith, in the presence of that great mystery. I consider that now, as in all ages past, national blessings will follow national well-doing, and national curses will follow national wrong-doing. I am a profound believer in the over-ruling guidance of Providence; but I say the manner in which the hon. gentlemen have been dealing with this subject is little less than impious. It is a fatalist doctrine which they have proclaimed. They tell us, the sun shining and the rain falling will give everything that is required, and that nothing is left to wise fiscal laws or to the industry of the people. According to their doctrine men may fold their arms and drop on their knees and leave the rest to Providence; but if there is a doctrine of undoubted truth it is that Providence helps those who help themselves. In the very same breath in which they tell us that you cannot make men rich by Act of Parliament, these hon. gentlemen propose to make them rich by Act of Parliament, by changing this policy for another; their whole argument is that this policy is a bad one, an injury instead of a benefit to the industries of the country, and that if they were in office they would introduce an Act of Parliament by which they would promote the industries of the country and make men rich. Sir, we have great reason in this country to be thankful to Providence, but I think that in Parliament, dealing with questions of legislation, we may fairly confine our discussions to that legislation and consider its effects on the condition of the country, all of us recognizing how much we owe to Providence, without this perpetual invocation of that power as the one source of the increased prosperity of the country. I am sorry, Sir, and I say it in no irreverent mood, that this over-ruling power did not reach to the region of the hon. member for Charlotte, which seems to be the only place in the whole of Canada on which Providence frowns. I hope it is not a judgment on the people for sending the hon. gentleman to Parliament. Now, Sir, we are told that the whole of the increased prosperity is due to the fact that we have had better crops during the last year than we had before. What are the facts? The year 1877, for instance, was not a prosperous one in this country, but the very reverse. It was one of those years which hon. gentlemen opposite told us, happening to be a dull year in all departments of trade and commerce, paved the way for that great change which took place on the 17th of September, 1878. Now, what do we find with regard to the crops of that year? I hope that some day or other we shall have a Bureau of Statistics in Canada which will give us information on subjects of this kind. But in the absence of such information the annual crop reports, furnished by the Grand Trunk Railway, may be taken as official. According to them we find the state of the crops in 1877 and 1881 to be as follows: Fall wheat, there were 65 returns above the average in 1877, and only 45 in 1881, while below the average there were none in 1877, and 12 in 1881. Spring wheat, above the average, 53 in 1877, and 41 in 1881; below the average, 5 in 1877, and 9 in 1881. Oats, above the average, 56 in 1877, and 42 in 1881; below the average, 6 in 1877, and 3 in 1881. Barley, above the average, 47 in 1877, and 42 in 1881; below the average, 3 in 1877, and