

(Sir Richard Cartwright) laid great stress particularly on the statements prepared by the school inspectors, in order to show that the population of Ontario had decreased. These incomplete and inaccurate statistics give a false idea of the situation. I want no other proof of that fact than the article published by the *Globe* on the development of the population in Ontario, which article was quoted the other night by the member for Brockville (Mr. Wood). Well, according to these same figures, the city of Ottawa had last year several hundred children attending school more than it had the preceding year. Another good way of finding out the situation of the city and the misery which may prevail within its limits. Each year, in our city—and I suppose the same thing is done elsewhere—a certain amount of taxes is remitted to the rate-payers, who are too poor to pay them. Last year the amount of taxes which were remitted to the poor rate-payers was \$2,000 less than in previous years. And if another proof was wanted, I might appeal to—I will not say an authority, for I do not accept that newspaper as an authority—but I might appeal to the statement of a newspaper which is not disposed to show in bright colors whatever it can show in dark colors; I refer to the *Free Press*, the organ of the Liberal party in this city. Here is what it said on the 25th of December, 1884, with regard to the city of Ottawa:

“Ottawa is to-day the fastest growing city populously in the whole Dominion—it is growing twice as fast proportionately as is Toronto. That growth appears to have increased since the municipal census was taken a few months ago. Strangers who recall Ottawa as she was four or five years ago, and contrast the rush and bustle on our streets to-day are agreeably surprised. All her vacant houses are now filled up and new ones are being erected on every hand—the coming summer promises in house building to be the busiest the city ever witnessed.

The detractors of Ottawa had better hurry up, for their day will soon be gone. Ottawa's advantages are now no longer hidden. Ottawa is the best distributing point for manufacturers in the whole Dominion and offers most abundant and cheapest motive power. Ottawa is nearer by a hundred miles the whole Canadian sea board, Maritime Provinces and Quebec, than is Toronto; she communicates directly with the Inter-colonial and Grand Trunk systems to the New England States and the Canadian Maritime Provinces. The Canada Atlantic gives her a short road to Boston, the most important market for Eastern Canada; the St. Lawrence and Ottawa gives a short road to New York, and the projected Ottawa and Waddington Railway a shorter road still. The Ontario and Quebec and the Grand Trunk connect Ottawa with the Western States and Western Ontario, the former direct, the latter by a short line. The Canadian Pacific main line places Ottawa as near Winnipeg by rail as Toronto is, and much nearer that the whole peninsula of Western Ontario; besides, Ottawa is on the main line, whereas Toronto is on a siding. Under these circumstances, in a few years' time, Ottawa naturally expects emigration of the Western Ontario manufacturers to this city.”

There is what the opponents of the protective tariff are forced to admit; here is what is said by these newspapers which are systematically and almost daily underrating the great benefits which have been the result of the great fiscal revolution, of the great economical revolution, which has been created under the auspices of the Conservative party. Up to this moment I have only spoken about cities; let us now speak about the country places. The other day the hon. member for West Elgin (Mr. Casey), in the speech which he delivered in this House, has told us that the condition of the agricultural class was all that could be desired, except that the prices had fallen—that the farmers were in a thriving condition. I believe that by making that admission the hon. member gave up the whole case of the Opposition, and that by so doing he has unwillingly paid a solemn homage to the policy of the Conservative party. However, this admission should not surprise us. I do not think that the economical situation of the Province of Quebec has ever been any better than what it has been for the last few years. All that we can complain of is that our granaries are crammed with grain that has not been sold. One would think that we were living at the time of King Pharaoh, when Joseph was filling up the granaries of Egypt. The situation leaves so little to be desired that it seems people have solved the

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problem of making agriculture a paying business, of having it recognised as the most free, the most lasting, and the most independent of callings. The Canadian farmer begins to understand the importance, or rather the necessity, of giving up the old hackneyed practices, diversifying his culture and of undertaking cattle raising on a larger scale. As a consequence, the exportation of cattle, as well as the exportation of butter and cheese, has increased of late years. Notwithstanding what was said by the member for West Elgin, it was the Conservative party which was the first to protect cheese, by putting a duty of 3 cents on it. Hardly five years ago usury was one of the great plagues in our country places. Well, since the last few years, that canker has almost completely disappeared. To-day the farmer who can offer fair security can obtain money at a comparatively low rate of interest—5, 6 or 7 per cent.—whereas formerly they were paying 8, 10 and 12 per cent. I have taken the trouble to examine the reports published by loan societies and building societies in the Province of Ontario, for the year which has just ended. And what do we find in these returns? Several of these societies have each loaned, on real estate in the Province of Ontario, amounts as high as two or three millions; the value of the soil is increasing; they have lost but very little on their investments; they have paid large dividends to their shareholders; there was but very little arrears in the reimbursements of the loans they have made. I may say as much about the Credit Foncier, which has already lent a million dollars and has only suffered a few insignificant losses. This is certainly the best criterion of the agricultural prosperity which exists in the country. Now, Mr. Speaker, a great deal has been said about bankruptcy; a great deal has been said about failures which have taken place in the country. No doubt there has been a great number, and I am sorry the number is so large; but we must not forget that the number of failures in the country is a great deal smaller than it was during any one year under the Mackenzie Administration. In 1884 failures in Canada only reached the amount of \$18,000,000, while in 1875, under the Mackenzie Administration, it was as high as \$28,843,000. Between 1875 and 1879, 9,000 persons have stopped payment, and their liabilities amounted to \$13,500,000; while, from 1879 to 1884, 5,000 persons stopped payment and their liabilities amounted to \$57,000,000, which makes, in favor of the present Administration, a difference of \$76,000,000. I know very well that the hon. member for South Huron, in a speech which he delivered at Napanee, in December, 1883, has stated that that year was the year in which there was the greatest number of failures. Here are his own words:

“The list of bankruptcies began to swell to such proportions that the list for 1883 would prove greater than that of the worst year of the depression, when Mr. Mackenzie was in power.”

It is very evident that the hon. members opposite forgot to speak to us about a certain industry. I said a while ago that there were only two thriving industries under the Mackenzie Administration, and that these were the soup-kitchens and official assignees. I beg your pardon, Mr. Speaker, but there was a third one: it was the coal oil industry. I do not know for what reason, but the Liberals have a great love for petroleum. I would not wish to insinuate that they are in alliance with those who were called *pétroleux* in Europe; I only notice that they have a particular affection for this inflammable matter. Was it because the oil wells were situated in the county of Lambton, which was represented by the then First Minister, who is still one of the leading members of the Liberal party?

An hon. MEMBER. Yes.

Mr. TASSÉ. My hon. friend says, yes. I am glad to hear that expression, because, while the Liberal party refused protection to other industries they extended it to coal oil.