

gentleman travelled over the whole continent of America, from end to end, for the purpose of picking up arguments to prove to the people of this country that they are worse off to-day than they were five years ago; but with all his industry he lamentably failed in the endeavor. Referring to the speech of the hon. member for King's, N.B. (Mr. Foster)—a speech which, to my mind, was a very eloquent effort, containing close reasoning and strong arguments—he said he had perused that long speech twice over and a part of it for the third time, and could find nothing in the whole speech to attract his attention, but the word *metropoli*. In that he reminded me of the story of the boy who was presented with a very fine book, but although that book contained some of the finest essays of Bacon, and some of the most admirable selections from the works of Socrates, and some of the finest efforts of the most eminent men of the day, a book which was one of the best contributions to the literature of the country, but who, on being asked what he thought of it, answered that he could not see anything in it but the picture of a kite on one of the fly leaves. The explanation of this was that the boy had been attending to his boyish amusement of flying his kite and could see nothing else. So the hon. member for North Wellington (Mr. McMullen) saw nothing in that speech but the word *metropoli*, because he was flying his kite all over the cities of this continent, to see if he could catch any arguments to be urged against the National Policy. He was dealing with millions, travelling from Bangor to Boston, from Boston to Illinois, and back, flying his kite from one great metropolis to the other, and therefore he could think of nothing else. With reference to the reduction in the price of cotton in England, the hon. gentleman said that during a period of twelve years in the history of England, where there was no National Policy, the price of cotton had not increased but had been reduced some 7 pence per yard; but he omitted to tell the House that the period was one beginning with the close of the American war, when cotton was perhaps at its highest point. I may tell the hon. gentleman that the price has been reduced in the United States, even more in proportion in the same interval; and that it has been reduced to a still greater extent during the short time that the National Policy has been in operation in this country. At the outset of his speech the hon. gentleman said that the country was not so prosperous as in 1882. Well, I admit that in some respects it is not; but can that falling off be attributed to the National Policy, or to the administration of this Government? I believe not; I believe it is mainly explained by the fact, as shown by the Ontario Bureau of Statistics, that there was a falling of \$26,000,000 in the crop of Ontario, for the year 1883, as compared with 1882. That is the reason why we experienced a temporary lull and an apparent want of prosperity in the country. True, we have had, the past year, a better crop, but a great deal of that has had to be used to pay the indebtedness of the previous two years; and, therefore, it is reasonable to suppose we cannot enjoy the prosperity we otherwise would have had. What is the line of arguments advanced by hon. gentlemen opposite? Each one seems to take his own view of the question, and to present to the House and the country his view from his own standpoint; and, strange to say, their views are as diametrically opposed to each other as day is to night. One endeavors to prove one thing, the other to prove the reverse. They remind me of the defence adopted by a celebrated barrister in the case of a client who was charged with stealing a kettle. In the first place, said he, we did not steal the kettle; in the next place, if we did steal it, it was our own; and in the third place, there was no kettle to steal. So, in the first place, hon. gentlemen opposite say the country is no better off than it was in 1878, on account of the present policy of the present Government; second, if the country is better off, and we admit it is

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better off, it is due neither to the National Policy nor to the railway policy of the Government; and third, they say that the present Government has no policy at all; that it is only proceeding by haphazard to suit the exigencies of any special class who may happen to wait on the Ministry from time to time, in order to advance their own individual or collective interest. I think we may reasonably ask, Is the country better off to-day than it was five years ago? Some hon. gentlemen opposite have used a large share of their time in the endeavor to prove that the country is no better off. The hon. member for North Norfolk (Mr. Charlton) said expressly that the country is worse off to-day; that there is a reduction in the value of the lands; that the people are undergoing greater hardships to-day than they were previous to 1878. The hon. member for Brant (Mr. Paterson) in the early part of his speech, introduced and endeavored to support the same grounds; but he went on after a while to say: We admit the country is better off, that there is a showing that the people are better employed and are receiving perhaps larger wages, but what is it attributable to? It is not attributable to the policy of the Government at all, but to causes over which the Government or the policy could have no control. And he cited to the House the fact that it was due to the increased export of the agriculturists, that it was due to the increased amount of money taken out of the woods and forests of the country, that it was due to the increased amount of money taken out of the seas and lakes of our country in the fisheries, and he gave this as an evidence that, although, as he admitted, the country was better off, it was better off by virtue of the large production in these various lines, and not by virtue of any improvement brought about by the National Policy. We may ask for a few minutes: Is the country any better off to-day? If it is, we may expect to find the people individually better off. What does represent prosperity in a country? Is it not wealth? Is it not employment for the people? Is it not the earning of sufficient wages to supply themselves with the necessaries and comforts of life? If these things are not an evidence of prosperity, then I do not know what is. If we look at the condition of the country, and we are asked: Is it any better off to-day; is there any increased value in the land of the country? I need only take up the return made to the Bureau of Statistics in Ontario, and deal with that part of the country with which I am best acquainted; and I may say, in passing, that I was surprised to find that most of the hon. gentlemen from Ontario travelled all the way down to the Maritime Provinces for the purpose of using arguments to prove to the people of Ontario that the people in the Maritime Provinces were worse off, but they left untouched the very arguments that were patent and apparent to every member in his own constituency at home, and left members from the Maritime Provinces to deal with them. That was, to my mind, a very unfair way of dealing with the subject. In reference to these statistics, an hon. gentleman has endeavored to discredit them, and goes on to show that they are not reliable. I can give him the opinion of the farmers of this country, as expressed through their Grange, a short time ago, and it will enable him to understand what value they attach to those statistics, and what they were believed to have proved. At the Provincial Grange meeting, held in Toronto a short time ago, the president, in addressing the association, said this:

"He rapidly referred to the centennial anniversary of the settlement of Ontario, and consequently the centenary of the birth of agriculture in the same; to the recent abundant harvest, and the low price of produce; to the increase in the number of live stock kept on farms and the improvement in the class of animals; to the improvement in farms and buildings noticeable throughout the Province; to the increase in value of farm property of over \$50,000,000 in a year; and to the efficiency of the Ontario Bureau of Industries, whose statements are so valuable."

They found that these statistics were valuable because they contained data and information that gave them an insight