

Hon. Ed. Blake on Protection & Free Trade.

(From the *Canadian Manufacturer*.)

EIGHT years and three months ago a considerable majority of the people of Canada declared themselves to be in favor of a National Policy of Protection, not only for Home Manufactures, but for Home Production generally. Mr. Alexander Mackenzie, the former leader of the Reform party, has been a pronounced Free Trader all his life, and his views on the trade question have never been matter of doubt or dispute with anybody. Ever since Mr. Blake became leader the public have felt greatly interested to know what his views are on the same question: but somehow or other the same *certainty* has never been obtained as with regard to Mr. Mackenzie. It was not considered extraordinary that Mr. Blake, being a lawyer, should speak mostly on questions political and constitutional, rather than on questions economical, leaving the latter to be dealt with by an ex-Minister of Finance—Sir Richard Cartwright. At all events it is a fact that he spoke very little on questions of the latter kind; and it is another fact that even since 1878 much uncertainty as to what his views on commercial policy were, has prevailed. The most definite statement the public have yet had from him was made on the occasion of the meeting of his supporters which was held in Toronto some weeks ago. What he said then has already appeared in our columns, having been taken from the *Globe's* full report: but let us repeat. He said:—

“I desire to refer very briefly to the attitude of the Liberal party upon the question of the tariff. It has been grossly misrepresented. In 1852 I stated my views upon that subject in the most formal manner, by means of the address I issued to the electors of West Durham as a manifesto to the country: by the principles then laid down I still abide. I said:—

“You know well that I do not approve of needless restrictions on our liberty of exchanging what we have for what we want, and do not see that any substantial application of the restrictive principle has been or can be, made in favor of the great interests of the mechanic, the laborer, the farmer, the lumberman, the shipbuilder, or the fisherman. But you know also that I have fully recognized the fact that we are obliged to raise yearly a great sum, made greater by the obligations imposed on us by this Government; and that we must continue to provide this yearly sum mainly by import duties, laid to a great extent on goods similar to those which can be