

the vitals of the country to frame a tariff for this Dominion.

That, I think, must in some measure account for the tariff that has been constructed. I can only say, Sir, that the presence of that hon. gentleman in this House to-day, the speech made by him as the architect of this tariff, as the man upon whom the Government depended for its construction, and the declaration that he has made, all prove that the statements made by the Finance Minister (Mr. Fielding) that this was only an initial step, and that they were going straight on to redeem their free trade promises, were a mere delusion; for we now learn that the tariff is a finality, that for ten years, as the hon. gentleman promised the people of this country during the Centre Toronto election, no change was to be made in this tariff. And there is no doubt that he was warranted in saying so, because the right hon. the First Minister, on returning to the shores of Canada, stated, in the first public announcement that he made, that one of the greatest injuries that could be inflicted upon the country was the tinkering of its tariff, and that it must rest where it was. Now, I do not know whether that would quite satisfy the hon. members who sit behind the Government and who have been led to believe that the few reductions in the tariff, slight as they were, were only the entering wedge which was to be driven steadily in until a free trade tariff was attained. I do not know how these gentlemen will be pleased, but I think that the people of Canada will read with great satisfaction that there is to be no more tinkering with the tariff, and no further reductions made in it. They know that Canada has attained its present position under the operation of a tariff very much like that which the hon. member for Centre Toronto is in favour of; they know very well that Canada owes its present position to such a tariff; that by its means it was lifted out of the slough of despond into which it sank when those hon. gentlemen were in power before, at a time when poverty and want were stalking through this country until a protective tariff was brought forward. They know that under the protective tariff every industry in this country was re-invigorated, that hundreds of industries which it had been impossible to carry on previously, were brought into existence, that labour has been employed, and that money and wealth have been distributed throughout this country in virtue of that protective tariff. Therefore, I say that it is no wonder that the intelligent people of this country acquainted with those facts, were greatly dismayed at the promise made to implement the pledges that had been given to Parliament before those gentlemen came into power. Now, however, I think the people are becoming reassured. But what does the hon. gentleman say?

Does he mean to tell us that the tariff of the Conservative party was not sufficiently protective, because, as one of his first steps, he has had the duty on coloured cottons increased? If we are to understand that, it will be another evidence to the country of the power of that hon. gentleman, and another assurance to the country that while he sits in this House he will not permit of any trifling with this offspring of his that he is so proud of having brought into existence.

Now, Sir, I am unable to follow to any great extent the very eloquent address delivered by the hon. member for Temiscouata (Mr. Gauvreau). I understand that hon. gentleman is a poet, and although I was not able to follow his address in the French language as closely as I would like to have done, I understand that he attributed the existing prosperity of trade in Canada to the present Government. Well, Sir, they say that there is a license permitted to poets in dealing with hard facts which is not permitted to ordinary individuals, and I think the hon. gentleman must have been exercising largely his poetic license when he made that statement. The hon. member for Centre Toronto frankly stated that one of the chief causes of the present prosperity of Canada, at which we all rejoice, because we are all equally interested in it, was the bountiful crop with which Providence had favoured this country. I do not suppose that even a poet would consider it quite right to claim credit to the Government for what Providence had done for the country. But there is something else which was not referred to, and which has also had an important bearing on this question, and that is the high price of wheat, the fact that wheat, one of the great staple exports of this country has within the last year, doubled the price which it has commanded for several years previously. Does the hon. gentleman claim credit to the Government for that fact? Does he mean to say that they are responsible for the famine in India, or for the drought in Russia?—because, unless he does, he is not able to claim credit for the Government for the high price of wheat. Sir, there is no one branch of industry that owes one jot or tittle of its prosperity at this moment to any act of which this Government has been guilty.

Now, Sir, I propose to come to the Speech itself. I find that the first matter mentioned here, and to which allusion was made by the hon. member for Centre Toronto, was the loan recently negotiated by the Finance Minister in London. I do not hesitate to congratulate that hon. gentleman upon the success of his loan. We were all rejoiced to learn that the loan was negotiated on terms so favourable, that is a matter of common congratulation to the country. But I do not think that anything that has occurred in that connection warrants the