

I am very sorry for the hon. member for East York, but he has been trying to explain his downfall by a thoroughly imaginary cause. It is not true that there had been a series of bad crops from 1873 to 1878. And, for the moment, I want no other proof but the words which he, himself, then First Minister, was putting into the mouth of His Excellency at the opening of the Sessions of 1874, 1876 and 1878. In 1874, the Speech from the Throne contained the following:—

“Notwithstanding the commercial depression which, owing to exceptional causes, has prevailed to a certain extent during the year, we are glad to know that the general prosperity of the country has not been seriously affected thereby.”

In 1876 similar language was used:

“We have reason to congratulate ourselves on an abundant crop.”

And in 1878:

“I am happy to congratulate you on the abundant crop which has been gathered in all parts of Canada.”

Is not that sufficiently conclusive? So much for speeches from the Throne. In 1875 there was nothing said about crops in the speech from His Excellency, but the Minister of Finance (Sir Richard Cartwright), stated, in his Budget Speech, that the crops had been abundant. Let me quote the following:—

“The excellent crop with which we have been favored last year will have a very favorable effect on the population, both commercial and agricultural.”

In 1877 the then Minister of Finance (Sir Richard Cartwright) held opinions which were quite the reverse of what was said by his late chief, the hon. member for East York. He said:

“The five or six years which have elapsed since we last took the census, with the great exception of the last, were years of prosperity.”

In 1883, however, the hon. member for South Huron was very far from singing to the same tune. Really, such frequent contradictions can neither be explained or excused. What did he say?

“The Mackenzie Government were condemned because the country was not so prosperous as they would have desired it to be during the last years of their administration. That was the common fate of all politicians.”

On the one hand, we find the hon. member for East York (Mr. Mackenzie) saying, in Scotland, that if he had lost power at the general elections of 1878 it was due to the bad crops which we had during the three or four years which immediately followed his Administration. And on the other hand, we see his Minister of Finance stating exactly the reverse. We find the speeches from the Throne in 1874, 1875, 1876 and 1878 stating quite the contrary. Therefore, when it is stated that, if the Mackenzie Administration had lost the power at the elections of 1878, it was because there has been in the country a succession of bad crops, we may say that such a statement is false, for these bad crops have never existed. Why seek difficulties where there are none? Mr. Mackenzie has lost power: First, because he has badly administered the country, and secondly, because he refused to establish protection, for which the electors were clamoring. If I remember well, it is a fact that at that time the industry of the country was in such distressful straits, that only two industries—if it is possible to give them such a name—were in a thriving condition. They were the soup-kitchen industry and the official assignees' industry. These two are about the only industries which have thrived under the Liberal Administration. Well, Mr. Speaker, what has happened since? The Conservative party, so ably presided over by the right hon. leader of the Government, made a promise to the country while they were occupying the Opposition benches, and they formulated a complete political programme. They promised if they came to power to adopt a policy of protection to the agricultural, manu-

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facturing, mining and other interests. That is just what has been done. We went before the people in 1878 with that policy, and the people were so fully satisfied, so fully convinced that a radical change in the economical condition of the country was needed, that they elected the Conservative members by an immense majority; not only in one Province, not only in one particular section of the country, but in all the Provinces from east to west, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. In 1879 the protective tariff was established in its broadest form, and since then we have been ratifying it from Session to Session. A few changes have been effected, but every one of them was inspired by the protective idea. If it is important to give to our system all the stability and the permanency which is consistent with our fiscal system, on the other hand, we must know how to adapt it to new wants, to new circumstances, which may arise. In such a matter as this, expediency may, with advantage, play a great part. For the second time, in 1883, we have consulted the electorate. Have the electors told us that that policy did not suit them; that it was such as to cause prejudice to the country? Not at all. The electors have come to the same conclusion, and that was, that the protective policy was just what was wanted by Canada. Most of the old Conservative members who had occupied seats in this House from 1878 to 1882 were re-elected by large majorities. And since that time I am not aware that our opponents, the members opposite, have made much headway. To-morrow even, if a plebiscit was to be submitted to the people on that one question of the tariff, eight-tenths of the population would pronounce in favor of the maintenance of the protective system. What the Conservative party then proposed, that is to say, to throw off the yoke of the foreigner, of our American neighbors, that result has been obtained, and the statistics laid before the House point out that there has been a great revival in the industry of the country. Indeed, if we examine a few figures, and these statistics are far below the exact truth, we find that the number of manufactures during the first five years which have lapsed between 1878 and 1884 has been increased by 595; that the number of operatives which have been employed has increased by over 34,000; that the aggregate of wages paid yearly has increased by over \$10,000,000; that the industrial production has increased by over \$52,000,000; that the amount of capital invested in the various industries of the country has increased by over \$29,000,000. And these statements, which have been prepared by commissioners duly authorised by the Government, let it be understood, only apply to about two-thirds of the manufactures in Canada. The hon. member for Lotbinière has mentioned a few cities, in order to prove that he is right in stating that the country is suffering from an industrial crisis, and he said to us: Why, look at Montreal, look at Hamilton, look at St. John, look at Halifax: you will find there traces of a great crisis, of a great depression. In the first place, neither Halifax nor St. John are industrial cities, properly speaking; they are rather maritime cities. However, Halifax has a good number of thriving industries, and the city of St. John is recovering as rapidly as could be expected from the terrific conflagration which came very near destroying it in 1877. Let my hon. friend consult the report which I have just mentioned, and he will find it to contain very reassuring statistics on that point. Carried away, as he was by party spirit, I am surprised, however, to see that my hon. friend has not included Toronto in that list, and I am convinced that our friends from Toronto will feel greatly slighted when they hear that they have not been put on an equal footing with the city of Montreal, for we all know that the capital of the Province of Ontario has the ambition to follow in the footsteps of the great city of Montreal, and strives to become its equal, if not its superior. But I understand why Toronto has not been mentioned; it is because not very long ago the hon. leader of the Opposition