

once raising his voice in their defence. We can understand the feelings of those hon. gentlemen a few years ago when the first desertions from their camp took place; two gentlemen, finding no support for their principles on this side of the house, crossed the floor. They took their places on the back benches, and we all remember how the tears rolled down the cheeks of the present minister that day, as he denounced the treachery that had occurred in his camp. It was very sad; his chief whip and the chairman of his caucus went back on him. But where does he find himself to-day? Where but in the arms of these gentlemen. He has now gone to the support of his chief whip. I would like to draw the attention of the house to one very significant fact, however. When those two deserters crossed the floor of the chamber they took their places on the back benches opposite, but my hon. friend the minister has got as close to the front as he can possibly get, and for what reason? Someone says for ten thousand reasons, but at least we know that he has entirely divested himself of the principles he espoused while on this side of the house.

Mr. MILLAR: May I ask the hon. gentleman a question?

Mr. ROSS (Kingston): I have not come to the hon. gentleman yet; if he sits down I will reach him in due time.

My friend the minister made another statement in dealing with the necessity for the existence of this independent wing. He said they were absolutely necessary to this country, and made use of the following words:

There will be no turning back; we have our faces to the rising sun...

Apparently it does not matter where the sun is now that the principles have gone. This budget is representative of a government composed of elements united for power alone; elements which have discarded their principles and which have divested themselves in a few short years of all conscious adherence to those principles which could possibly form the foundation of a national policy tending to develop the whole country into one great unit. The budget has nothing whatever to offer to the working man. In defence of the budget it has been said that there is a good deal of prosperity in the land. If that be so I should like to ask this question, and that is all I am going to say on the prosperity: If this is a prosperous country and the people are conscious of it, if the people in the old country are conscious of it, and we have a Minister of Immigration trying to bring im-

migrants to this prosperous country and they do not come, what is the conclusion? It must be one of two things: Either the country is not as prosperous as the government claim or the minister has fallen down on the job.

An hon. MEMBER: Both.

Mr. ROSS (Kingston): An hon. member says "both". Well, the government can settle for themselves which it is.

The government claim that they have reduced the debt of Canada. That subject has been well threshed out, but I have failed to hear any member of the government explain why there is an increase in the railway debt greater than the supposed reduction of the national debt. I am not going to discuss the matter any more than to cite figures which have been repeatedly given. According to their own figures there has been a reduction of \$105,000,000, and then turning to the official report of the national railways you find an increase of indebtedness amounting in round numbers to \$158,000,000, showing that not only has there been no reduction in the debt but there has actually been an increase of approximately \$53,000,000 during the time this government have been in power.

I wish to turn now to a matter which has been already fully discussed but upon which I wish to say a few words. The treatment which this government have given the woollen industry is very marked and is characteristic of their attitude toward this branch of commerce. If we study the history of the woollen industry we will find that for some unknown reason the Liberal party have been always antagonistic to it. The following figures will amply demonstrate that: In 1885 there were 241 mills, 460 cards, 2,062 looms in this country. In 1897 there were 236 mills, 477 cards, and 2,120 looms. Then came the Liberal policy, and the next figures we have are for 1907 when, owing to the tariff of the Liberal government, the mills had been reduced from 236 to 148. In 1912 they had dropped to 78. During the few years that a government favourable to the industry was in power the number of mills increased, but owing to the policy of the Liberal government for the last few years the number has been reduced until it stands at, I think, about 59. I should like to draw this supposition to the attention of the government in connection with the admission of free yarn. If one manufacturer sends for yarn to a country outside of Canada he says practically to his employees: I have no further interest in you. I will close that branch of my industry dealing with yarns and I will make more progress. My industry will go on, but I will discontinue employing the

[Mr. A. E. Ross.]