

to have grown more than our trade with any other country. In the last year our trade with the United States appears to have increased from \$91,000,000 to \$94,000,000, while our trade with Great Britain barely increased from \$79,000,000 to \$80,000,000, which is proof enough, if proof were needed, of the enormous importance to the people of this country of cultivating close and friendly relations with a nation which in the face of the disadvantage of two hostile tariffs takes from us very nearly one-half of our total exports and imports. The hon. gentleman estimated his surplus at \$1,867,000. That is a substantial surplus, but I observe that in obtaining it he charged to capital account \$163,000 for expenses of North-West lands, while he appropriated the entire receipts from North-West lands to income, and also that he charged to capital account about \$370,000 for rolling stock on the Intercolonial Railway; so that in my judgment at least \$530,000 ought to be deducted from the hon. gentleman's surplus, leaving a substantial surplus it is true, but one very considerably less than that which he claims. And, Sir, while I am on this subject I may call the attention of the hon. First Minister, who is the party most chiefly responsible in the first instance, to the fact that although we have now come within five or six months of the time when we were to receive \$68,000,000 profit from the sale of the North-West lands, our expenses for North-West lands, up to the 30th of June last, amounted to \$5,909,462, and the total receipts credited to us to that date amounted to \$4,205,526; so that to-day we have five or six months left to us to overcome a deficit of \$1,633,936 and to realise the much desired profit promised by the hon. First Minister of \$68,000,000 odd, payable on the 1st of January, 1891, both days inclusive. Well, Sir, all I will say is this, that looking at the promises held out to us when this same National Policy was introduced, and looking also at the performances, the results with respect to the National Policy correspond very accurately, so far as the majority of the people of Canada are concerned, to the results of the hon. gentleman's North-West land policy. But, Mr. Speaker, there a question of still greater magnitude which I desire to discuss to-night. We have now had something like eleven years of the operation of this same protective nostrum, and the time has come for us to see to what position it has brought us; and more particularly has the time come for us to see to what position it has brought the greatest class in this community. I need not say, for I have the authority of hon. gentlemen opposite, and particularly the hon. First Minister, for declaring that the prosperity of Canada mainly depends on the prosperity of the agricultural class—that our wealth comes chiefly from that class, and next to them from our miners, our fishermen, our sailors and our lumbermen; the rest are practically to a very great extent dependents or waiters or servants on those classes. Of these productive classes, as every one knows, our agriculturists are by far the chief. If they prosper, the rest will prosper, and prosper permanently; if they do not prosper, I need not tell the House that the prosperity of all the rest will depend on a very unstable equilibrium. Now, it may interest the House to know what, in the opinion of the hon. First Minister, was the condition of the farmers of Canada a few years ago.

I find that in 1876, when the subject of the National Policy was first introduced to the notice of the people, that hon. gentleman, speaking of the condition of the agricultural class, made use of the following rather remarkable words:

"It is not every man who can be or likes to be a farmer, and the man who is unwillingly made one will be a failure. There is no life in the world, in my estimation, more happy and enviable than the farmer's under the circumstances in which he is placed in Canada. It is a pleasant, independent life, bringing domestic happiness and all that the expression implies, but still all men are not to be farmers."

A little later on he went on to say:

"I shall not assert on their part that they come here *in forma pauperis*, or that they are suffering from distress or pecuniary difficulty. I am not going to say anything of the kind; no man could truthfully say that the farmers cannot live in comfort or happiness under the present tariff."

That is the tariff to which my name is attached. Well, if the hon. gentleman had never stated an exact fact in his life before, he stated it then. Sir, it was all true. The condition of the farmers of Canada was fairly good in 1876, and more than fairly good, take the whole country throughout. The land values of the farms was certainly rising. On the whole, barring accident from unprosperous seasons, their indebtedness was diminishing; the taxation of the country was stationary, the farming population—and to this I call the attention of the House—was increasing with reasonable rapidity, and, as the statistics of the United States clearly show, emigration from this country, and emigration on the part of the farmers was lessening. Moreover, there was reasonable probability then of retaining our surplus population in our own country. It is true at that time there was a serious commercial difficulty, not merely in Canada but in the United States, in England and in almost the entire civilised world. And it was equally true, and the right hon. gentleman knew it well, that so far as Canada was concerned our commercial difficulties arose, to a very considerable extent, if not altogether, from the state of things in the United States, which were then going through a period of unexampled depression, and that our commercial difficulties were far less than those existing in the United States, and that they were certain to disappear the first moment that a revival of prosperity took place there. Waiving this, however, we have had, on the authority of the First Minister, his own admission of the condition of the farmers of Canada, and notably of the farmers of Ontario, at the time when the late Government was in power. It becomes our duty to examine the condition of the farmers of Canada to-day. Anywhere and everywhere that is a most important task; here it is supremely so. At all events so far as our inland Provinces go agriculture is, agriculture must be for many a day our great staple. Sir, I do not at all mean to say that we may not have a reasonable number of manufacturing industries in this country, but I do say that, taking Canada as a whole, circumstances do not seem to fit us to become a great manufacturing country, and most assuredly, if I am to judge of the progress which the exports of manufactures have made in the last eleven years, the policy of hon. gentlemen has been singularly unfortunate in promoting the exports of manufactures at all events from this country. It becomes our duty to ascertain what are the best tests of the