

entirely for myself—that I do not attach, and never did attach, as much importance to the question of the imports from Great Britain and the United States respectively, that some hon. gentlemen have attached to it. True, I recognize the fact that in England we borrow our money, that her flag floats over us, that her Army and Navy are pledged to defend us, and therefore it was not exactly a thing that might be called very loyal to Great Britain to put on a Tariff that would legislate specially against her. I have gone that far in sentiment, but we all know that in matters of trade there is very little sentiment; and while we are willing to give what advantages we might fairly accord to Great Britain, we also recognize that while she is one of our great customers, while we like to interchange our commodities with her, we should never lose sight of the fact that the great Republic to the south of us is a nation against which we should not stir up feelings of strife. I am one of those who believe that it is not in the interests of Canada that harsh words should be uttered against that nation. When I find them taking \$40,000,000 worth of our products, and giving us gold, or what is equivalent to gold in return, I value their trade as I value the trade of any other country, and, therefore, I say that I have not attached the importance to this question that some hon. gentlemen seem to have attached to it. I merely allude to this fact because the hon. Finance Minister thought it necessary to establish every position he had ever taken in the past with reference to Tariff changes, and sought to prove himself in the right in regard to them, and in consequence that those who differed from him were in the wrong. The next point touched upon by the hon. Finance Minister was one with regard to which I confess I felt a little sympathy for him; for even party warfare in the House of Commons, and the desire to get the better of an opponent, cannot prevent a little feeling of sympathy sometimes arising in one's breast when we find that opponent in too tight a place for his comfort. In such a tight place, I may venture to say, without offending the feelings of the hon. gentlemen, was the hon. Finance Minister when he touched upon that subject which is known by the name of the Balance of Trade. That was a subject upon which we have had very strong arguments from the hon. Finance Minister. That was a subject of which hon. gentlemen opposite were fully cognizant, a subject which they had grasped in its details, a subject as to which they had laid down a cast-iron rule, a subject which they had mastered thoroughly and entirely. The position which they took upon that question they held to be unassailable in its nature, and the arguments adduced from this side were arguments which they considered could not bear investigation. The hon. Minister of Customs in the year 1880, when the hon. gentleman succeeded for one year in reducing the imports below the exports, placed, or caused to be placed, in the Report of the Commissioner of Customs to the Minister of Customs, in the preface to the Trade and Navigation Returns, in a very conspicuous position the statement that at last they had accomplished what they had claimed they would accomplish; that they had equalized the imports with the exports, and, therefore, that prosperity had dawned upon the country, and that they had then achieved that which it was the duty of statesmen to achieve. When I made a motion in the House with reference to another subject, the Minister of Customs, in replying, said, that all it was necessary to do in answer to my argument was simply to point me to the fact that the Commissioner had stated, in the preface to the Trade and Navigation Returns, that we had equalized the imports and the exports. Next year the balance of trade was \$7,000,000 against us. The Commissioner of Customs alludes to that fact in a very gingerly manner in the preface to the Returns. Next year the balance of trade against us had swollen to \$17,000,000, but the Commissioner of Customs forgot to report that fact altogether. Now, let us

Mr. PATERSON (Brant).

look at what the hon. Finance Minister himself said with reference to this matter. That hon. gentleman, in speaking at the Grand Conservative Convention, in Toronto, on 24th November, 1881, is reported to have used language which I shall quote from the *Mail* newspaper; a newspaper that gives a very correct report of the hon. gentlemen opposite—reports quite as correct as it sometimes gives to hon. gentlemen on this side, without my attributing to them any design to misrepresent. What I mean to state is, that the reports given by that paper of speeches made by a distinguished gentleman like the hon. Finance Minister, are verbatim, and, therefore, the *Mail's* report may be accepted as the language used by him. The hon. gentleman said:

“During the last two years we have nearly equalized the exports with our imports. Whatever Free Traders may say our people cannot understand the theory that the larger the excess of our imports over our exports the more prosperous is the country. We say that as with the individual so with the nation, and that if he expends more than he receives, poverty stares him in the face. If, on the other hand, his receipts exceed his expenditure his condition is hopeful. The latter is the position of the Dominion if we take into account our receipts for freights.”

That statement was received, as every utterance of the hon. gentleman would be received in a gathering of such intelligent men as would constitute a Conservative Convention, with enthusiastic cheers. Now, let us look into this question of the balance of trade. The hon. gentleman recognizes that to day that balance is against us, but he seeks to minimize the fact by taking the last four years, and he says it is only \$8,000,000 a year against us. That does not show our position, for this year the balance is against us to the extent of more than double \$8,000,000, and it is to that fact that we must address ourselves, for if the hon. gentleman succeeded in gaining an equilibrium three years ago and has lost it now, according to his own language, poverty stares us in the face. How an hon. gentleman who took the position which he took, can, in the face of an adverse balance of trade, last year amounting to \$17,000,000, rise in his place and say this year, as he did last, that never in the history of the country were we so prosperous as we are to-day, is something which the hon. gentleman has not explained. With reference to the annual balance of trade, in the fifteen years since Confederation there has been an annual balance of \$18,858,526 against us; in the seven years they were in power before, the annual balance of trade against us was \$22,123,745. In the five years of the Mackenzie Administration it was \$21,022,215; while, in 1881-82, the adverse balance is \$17,282,297; and in the six months which have elapsed, between July last and the 1st of January, 1883, the balance of trade was \$10,799,358 against us. It is going on increasing at an enormous rate. If poverty stared us in the face before, poverty is now knocking at our very doors, and yet the hon. Finance Minister tells us that we stand to-day in a happier and more prosperous position than before. How to reconcile these things is not for me to say; that is a task which devolves upon the hon. gentleman, and it is one to which I wish to direct his attention. What has been the course of our trade during the six months that have elapsed since the Trade and Navigation Returns were completed in June last. I have the figures here, and they show very badly from the stand-point of the hon. Finance Minister. In the six months ending December 31st, 1882, as compared with the six months ending December 31st, 1881, our imports increased by \$9,546,436. That, according to the hon. Finance Minister, indicates the ruin of the country; because when he introduced his Tariff, and time and again afterwards, he stated that it was absolutely necessary for the welfare of the country, that we should decrease our imports. Had we covered them with corresponding exports the case would not be a matter for regret; but what are the facts? During the same six months our exports, instead of increas-