

which certainly does not exist; and when the statement goes forth that the hon. gentleman has presented this as the condition of affairs, it will go very far among intelligent men to weaken his high authority among them. Speaking of the Province of Ontario, I do not know of any better test of the condition of farmers than the test of farm values, and I will quote from Mr. Blue, the statistician, the high authority in that Province. I differ entirely from what the hon. gentleman said just now with respect to the returns of farm values. The hon. gentleman stated that farmers are apt to return their farms and crops as being more valuable than was actually the fact. That has not been my experience, and I do not think it has been the experience of the census takers. If enquiries are made with respect to the values of the farms and crops, it always occurs to the mind of the farmer that this means taxation, and that it will not do for him to overstate the value. However that may be, Mr. Blue's figures are based on a series of years, and of tests taken in precisely the same way; consequently, if they are exaggerated in one case they are exaggerated in another. I challenge the hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright), I challenge any hon. member in this House, and I challenge the hon. member for North Norfolk (Mr. Charlton), who is not in his seat just now, but who professes to have more familiarity, and probably has more familiarity, with the condition of affairs of certain States in the United States than any other hon. member, to bring me a parallel in any State in the United States, the most favorable of all the States, where farm values have retained their steadiness as they have in Ontario. Mr. Blue takes a period of seven years, from 1882 to 1888, inclusive, and he shows that while the average value for those years was \$637,732,000, the value for the last year, 1888, was \$640,000,000, proving that there has been, from year to year during those seven years, a steady increase in farm values, and that the last year of which he gives evidence it gives a higher value than the previous years, or than the average of the seven years. And the same thing is true with regard to farm buildings. The average of the seven years is \$172,000,000, and the estimate for last year, 1888, is \$188,000,000. The same is true of farm implements, the average of the seven years being \$46,000,000, whereas the value last year was \$49,000,000. The same is true of live stock, the average value of the seven years being \$99,000,000, and the estimated value of last year being \$102,000,000. The same statement holds good with regard to the total value of farm property, the average for the seven years being \$956,882,048, and last year's value being \$981,368,094. Now, I throw down this gauntlet decidedly and clearly. Let any gentleman in this House or country—for I provoke a challenge, not only on the floor of this House to be taken up by members of this House, but by any body who may hear or read my remarks—point to me a single State of the Union which can show such a uniform, steady and gradual increase of farm values during the last seven or eight years as is shown by this much maligned Province of Ontario. I have in my hand a comparative statement of the values of certain farm products in Ontario and the United States which I made myself, and for the correctness of which

Mr. COLBY.

I can vouch. It is taken from Mr. Blue's figures on the one side and from the official statistics of the United States on the other side, showing the average values of cereals per acre in the respective countries during the past seven years. I find that in the United States the average value per acre of wheat was \$9.44, while in the Province of Ontario, this poor, distressed Province—what were his words? "murmurs of distress;" "extreme distress in Ontario;" "a great amount of distress"—in this exceedingly distressed Province—I am quoting the hon. gentleman's words—the value per acre was \$15.78 as against \$9.44 in the United States. I find that in the article of corn, in the United States, the value per acre was \$9.32, while in Ontario, according to Mr. Blue—I do not know what private sources of information my hon. friend may have—but according to the provincial statistician the value was \$18.90 per acre as against \$9.32 in the United States. In the article of barley, the value in the United States was \$12.67 per acre as against \$14.98 per acre in Ontario. In oats, the value in the United States is \$8.08 as compared with \$12.88 in Ontario. In rye the value is \$7.15 in the United States, as against \$9.97 in Ontario. In buckwheat the value is \$7.95 in the United States, as against \$8.77 in poor distressed Ontario. These figures are taken from the "Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1888," and from the "Annual Report of the Bureau of Industries for the Province of Ontario, 1888." I find in a recent article in the *Canadian Journal of Commerce* a similar comparison with some of the very best agricultural States. I came upon this article after I had made my own calculations. It is as follows:—

"The average value of farm products in Ontario has been compared with those of the chief agricultural States of the Union by an Ottawa official statistician, greatly to the advantage of Ontario. The returns for the six years, 1882-87, published by the Department of Agriculture at Washington, are compared with those issued by the Bureau of Industries at Toronto, and the question to be solved was, what have ten acres in each of the eight chief crops of wheat, barley, oats, corn, rye, buckwheat, potatoes and hay, yielded in money value? The answer is, in Ontario, \$3,640; in New York, \$7,474; in Ohio, \$6,457; and so on till we get to Iowa, with a return of \$4,958. The average production of wheat in Ontario was two bushels an acre more than in Michigan, three bushels more than in New York and Kansas, five bushels more than in Illinois and Wisconsin, and six bushels more than in Missouri. The Ontario farmer with eighty acres in the above crops, would, at the end of the six years, have received more than the farmer in New York by \$1,166; in Ohio by \$2,183; in Michigan by \$2,200; in Illinois by \$2,798; in Indiana by \$2,861; in Kansas by \$3,215; in Missouri by \$3,341, and in Iowa by \$3,682. These figures do not include 1888-89, when Ontario did not make such a good showing, owing to drought and other causes. The returns we have given, however, are most gratifying and should tend to inspire confidence in the farming community."

Now, I refer the hon. member for South Oxford to that comparison, drawn between this poor, wretched, distressed, murmuring Province of Ontario, and the cream, the pick of the States of the Union, according to the evidence given to us—not by politicians, not by men speaking on the stump, not by men talking in Congress, not by men writing in free trade or protectionist newspapers—but by the officers of the respective Governments, under the responsibility of their officers, and, unless we know differently we must accept them, and that is the condition of poor, distressed, murmuring, wretched Ontario.