

people of Canada, even supposing that the hon. gentlemen opposite do speak, which I doubt, for the other half; we know, and we have proof, that in advocating the course we have advocated, we reflect correctly the views of the Local Legislatures of the people who are in many important respects, closer to them, or at least quite as well acquainted with their real wants and wishes, as we can be. I have no doubt that if the hon. gentlemen were to submit to-morrow a plebiscitum to the people of this Dominion, demanding of them plainly whether they did or did not desire to cultivate close trade relations with the United States, by every honorable means and methods—I have no doubt whatever that such plebiscitum would obtain a perfectly overwhelming vote throughout this Dominion. I have no doubt either for my part, that if it were possible for us to obtain a fair and honest expression of the people at the polls, free from those debasing and perverting influences to which I have alluded; free from the effects of Gerrymander Acts, and Franchise Bills, and a subsidised press, and all the side issues which disturb a political election—I have no doubt, whatever, that the result would be precisely the same. I say, it is an ostrich-like policy on the part of these hon. gentlemen to affect—as the Minister of Finance appears to affect in his speech this afternoon—indifference to the policy which may be pursued by the country to the south of us. The United States are our closest neighbors, bordering on us for more than three thousand miles, they are our chiefest and most profitable customers, they are the home of a very large number of our people, and more than that, their prosperity, as hon. gentlemen well know, most largely affects our prosperity. A great crisis and a great depression in the United States would mean great injury and great loss to an enormous number of our people. Now, Sir, that being so, and there being no possibility of disputing these facts, why cannot the hon. gentlemen recognise that? Why must they neglect the ordinary precautions, which would recommend themselves to men of common sense? Why, must they deliberately invite and challenge grave injury to this country, as has been done to-night, by the proposition submitted by the hon. gentleman? I tell the hon. the Minister of Finance and I tell his colleagues, that if the Bill now known as the McKinley Bill passes through the United States Congress in its present shape, these portions of the Bill, which are likely to affect our people injuriously, will have been passed, humanly speaking, more in consequence of the ill-advised acts of the hon. gentleman and his colleagues, than from any other cause whatever. I say that the hon. gentleman has acted most imprudently and that he has done all that he can possibly do to inflict a grave injury on the people whom it is his bounden duty to protect and to provide for. Now, Sir, in listening to the remarks of the hon. Minister of Finance, I missed two or three things which we were in the habit of hearing commented on in former occasions. I can well remember when hon. gentlemen, occupying the position of Finance Minister, were wont to tell us that nothing did so much injury to this country as the great preponderance of imports over exports. The hon. gentleman is well aware that we imported some \$20,000,000 worth more than we exported during the last year, but on the present occasion he does not consider that fact as even

worthy of notice. The hon. gentleman likewise, and the hon. gentleman's colleagues, a little while ago, lost no opportunity of explaining to the House, and explaining to the people of Canada, that it was an unanswerable proof of the general prosperity of the people of the country that our savings banks deposits kept increasing by millions and millions every year. It was no doubt quite an accidental oversight on the part of the hon. gentleman that he did not mention to-day, that whereas the savings banks' deposits amounted to \$42,999,692 on the 1st of October last, on the 1st March last they had been reduced to \$41,305,493, being a loss of \$1,700,000 of savings banks' deposits in the course of five months. That is a fact which has no doubt entirely escaped the hon. gentleman's memory. Perhaps the hon. gentleman, or some of his friends, will tell us that was because of the reduced rate of interest from 4 to 3½ per cent. Now, Sir, I call the attention of the House, as I have done on two or three occasions before, to the fact that the hon. gentleman's proof of "marked prosperity," simply indicated that they were paying some 30 or 40 per cent. more than the money was actually worth, and, therefore, they got the additional deposits of which they boasted. But when they come down to the fair market rate, not to 3 per cent. but 3½ per cent., in five months their deposits were reduced by nearly \$2,000,000. The hon. gentleman cannot see, I suppose, that is any evidence either of the falsity of the system on which he worked, or—if his previous statements were correct—any evidence of the pressure which, according to him and his friends, is now inflicted on the country. When the hon. gentleman and his friends were calling the attention of the people of Canada to the increase of the savings banks' deposits as a proof of our great prosperity, I took the opportunity on many occasions of pointing out to them that that was an entire delusion. I pointed out that Canada was a borrowing country and not a lending country, and that it was perfectly absurd for them to suppose that if they borrowed from the people of Canada, they could produce any other result than to oblige the people of Canada to borrow from somebody else. I have in my hand a very curious proof of the exact accuracy of my prediction. I have here the returns of the moneys borrowed by loan companies abroad in the last few years, and I find that whereas on the 1st of July, 1879, we borrowed through our savings banks \$9,207,000, and on the 1st of January, 1890, \$41,800,000, being an increase of about \$32,000,000, at the same time the Canadian public were borrowing, in England chiefly, in precisely the same ratio. In 1879 they had borrowed \$6,602,000, and on the 1st of January, 1888, within a period two years shorter than the term for the savings banks' deposits, they had borrowed \$36,502,000. So that the whole result of the policy of these hon. gentlemen was that they borrowed from the people of Canada, and compelled the people of Canada to borrow abroad at higher rates; and that statement does not take into account the numerous other loans, municipal and private, which have constantly been made. Sir, the hon. gentleman had not one word to say at the same time of the growth of our trade with the United States. According to our Trade and Navigation Returns, our trade with the United States appears

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT.