

ity in the country, and I have adduced the best possible proof of the position I have taken, and I think the hon. gentleman from Niagara will find it very difficult to controvert my statements, or the statements of that Detroit manufacturer. To show that there is not very much in the arguments of my hon. friends, who give as a reason why English statesmen were induced to adopt a free-trade policy, that the country had grown rich under a protective policy, I refer to Molesworth's history of England, vol. 1, page 51.

HON. MR. KAULBACH—We do not want any book theories.

HON. MR. McCLELAN—Am I not permitted to refer to history, to the standard authors? This historian remarks:

“Nor were these discontents without reason. The people of this country had for some time past been suffering cruelly, and had been forcing themselves on the attention of their law-givers in an altogether unpleasant and unsatisfactory manner. Statements of agricultural distress, mining distress, and manufacturing distress, were made, echoed and re-echoed. Sometimes they were met by unqualified assent; sometimes by vehement contradiction; but still they continued to be made. But let Governments and members of Parliament say what they would, there was distress, and very serious and terrible distress, too. Agricultural laborers were found starved to death, having tried in vain to support nature with sorrel and other such like food. In vain did landlords abate their rents, and clergymen their tithes; wages continued to fall, and had at length reached such a point of depression that they did not suffice to support existence.”

“The simple fact was, that wars, national debt, increase of population, corn-laws, mal-administration of the poor-laws and other legislation or hindrance of legislation, had reduced the great mass of the people, and especially the agricultural laborers, to the verge of starvation and despair. They were going mad with misery; and in their madness they did mischief by which they themselves were sure to be the first and greatest sufferers.”

That shows—

HON. MR. PLUMB—What does it show? That the condition of the agricultural classes of England was exceedingly distressing.

HON. MR. McCLELAN—I can show by history that the statements that hon.

gentlemen have made, as to the cause of England adopting free-trade, are not correct.

HON. MR. MACDONALD (B. C.)—That is fifty-five years ago.

HON. SIR ALEX. CAMPBELL—My hon. friend seems to take a melancholy pleasure in reading of this distress.

HON. MR. POWER—I rise to a question of order. There are not more than a dozen members on this side of the House, and there are some sixty on the other side, and although hon. gentlemen on the other side are allowed, as a rule, to go on without interruption, when three or four members speak on this side they are interrupted continuously, and in a most discourteous way.

THE SPEAKER—With regard to the point of order raised by the hon. gentleman from Halifax, the hon. member who has the floor has taken it so good-naturedly that I did not care to interfere; had he complained of it, I certainly should have called hon. members to order.

HON. MR. KAULBACH—I do not think my hon. friend from Halifax has any right to say that those interruptions are discourteous, so long as my hon. friend from Hopewell has not complained.

HON. MR. PLUMB—When we ask questions we do so to get information. If my young friend, the senior member for Halifax, had been in some other body, he would have been taught something on rules of order.

THE SPEAKER—These remarks are certainly out of order.

HON. MR. McCLELAN—It must be remembered that there are very few in this Chamber who advocate the views which I hold, and of course it can scarcely be considered that all public men must think alike on this subject. This question was not imported into this House by the Opposition, but by a supporter of the Government, and in the discussion hon. gentlemen have gone too freely into the subject.