

I find that we imported into Canada last year \$449,446 worth of coal oil, on which \$351,886 of duty was collected, being a rate of 80 per cent. on the necessary article of light most largely used by the poor of this country. We imported \$5,154,000 worth of sugar, on which a duty was paid of \$3,433,324, being at the rate of 67 per cent. on an article which goes very largely into the consumption of the poorer classes; and that is very far indeed from representing the real tax, because probably an equal sum or nearly an equal sum, under our present scheme of taxation, finds its way into the pockets of the rich refiners. On the articles of coarse woollens and the like, while most of us in this House can obtain the goods we wear at an average rate of 20 per cent. our poorer brethren are obliged to pay 40, 50, 60 and 70 per cent. on the materials they think it convenient to use as clothing. Now this tariff, amongst its other injustices, continues to perpetrate one very gross injustice, to which I believe the attention of the Government was called lately, in the case of the millers of Canada. Where else would there be found a system, called a protective system, in which the Canadian miller is absolutely discriminated against in favor of the American miller. That is protection reversed. You injure your own manufacturer for the benefit of the foreign manufacturer, and when the former points out that such is the case, on the clearest evidence, you cannot venture to redress the wrong you have done. I observe that the hon. gentleman, particularly in the closing part of his speech, indulged in a very great deal of assumption which I cannot characterise as at all well founded. He and his friends behind him would, forsooth, cram down the minds of the people of this country and the throats of gentlemen of this House that all the progress that has been made in Canada for the last twenty-one years is due, forsooth, to those hon. gentlemen on the Treasury benches. I have not time, it would probably require several hours, to review in minute detail all the statements the hon. gentleman submitted. They will be reviewed, Sir, before the vote is taken on the question submitted to you. Do not be afraid; there are plenty of able, zealous, intelligent gentlemen beside and around me who will not leave one sophistry, one false statement unanswered, but human strength has its limits and I cannot undertake to go over the whole work to-night. I will, in my reply, confine myself simply to chalking out the outlines, and no doubt the picture will be amply filled in by my hon. friends. What do the statements of the hon. gentleman prove? They prove, it is true, that in spite of bad policy, in spite of misgovernment, an advance, aye, and a considerable advance, has been made in some directions. That nobody here has ever denied. I have never denied it, and I have never heard one of my hon. friends deny it. But what we do say is this, that in many other directions we have not advanced. We say that a good deal of what is claimed as advancement is not, in the proper sense of the term, really an advancement, but that it is rather a case in which what one man gains another man is pretty sure to lose. When hon. gentlemen talk of the leaps and bounds and the progress which Canada has recently made, they appear to forget one important consideration. Within the last seven or eight years what between the sums borrowed and spent by the Government, what between the sums borrowed and spent by great corporations like the Canadian Pacific Railway and others, probably not far short of \$200,000,000 of borrowed capital has been spent in Canada. That is coming to an end. The hon. gentleman has told us so, and we all know it is so, and in making his calculations for the future, I recommend the hon. Minister of Finance to bear in mind that this huge capital expenditure is now coming to an end to all intents and purposes, at any rate the greater part of it, but that both in our case and the case of the corporations to which I

allude, one thing remains,—the interest remains a charge on the earnings of the people of Canada to be paid for all time to come. Now, it appears to me the hon. the Minister of Finance has omitted in his *résumé* certain vital points. I think that if he will take the trouble to examine the works of those writers who most deserve respect, and to confer with those men whose opinions on this subject best deserve respect, he will find that they will be disposed to agree with me, at any rate thus far, in saying that in a country like Canada, that in a country of the age of Canada, that in a country in the state of settlement of Canada, the real, true indices of prosperity are these: First of all, and to this I specially call the attention of the House, the rapidity of the increase of population in Canada; next, and we will have more to say on this presently, the rapidity of the increase of the total volume of trade; and next, and here I fear I take issue with the hon. gentleman, the importance of the debt decreasing, both absolutely and relatively, and the importance of our taxation decreasing, both absolutely and relatively; again, the rapid progress of settlement in such new countries as we may be fortunate enough to acquire; the growth of new cities and towns, the capacity to attract and to retain such emigrants as come to this country; and, last but not least, the wise, just and equitable distribution of property among the masses of the people. Those I say are the true signs of prosperity in a country like Canada. On the other hand, I say that the true signs of an arrested development in a country like Canada are these: When you find population, particularly in the rural districts, either stationary or retrograde; when you find the volume of trade either stationary or retrograde; when you fail and fail egregiously in settling and filling up new territory; when you are not able to point to new towns or villages springing up in any number; when you find a decrease in the selling value of agricultural lands in the country; when you find a rapid increase of the debt and of the taxes and a rapid efflux of people from the country, whether they be emigrants coming to this country or whether they be your own people who seek to improve their position by removing to another land. Now, I ask this House which sets of conditions on the whole exists in Canada to-day? Let us review these in detail. Hon. gentlemen will remember that a very few days ago I put the question to the Minister of Agriculture as to the population which he estimated to exist in this country, and I asked him on what his estimate was founded, and to divide it among the several Provinces. The hon. gentleman was kind enough to send over to me his memo., and I found, as indeed I had expected, that this elaborate statement of 4,946,497 souls was simply the purest guesswork, that there was not one particle of foundation for the statement so formally submitted, other than this, that if—if, Mr. Speaker—the population during these seven or eight years had increased in the same ratio as it did in Canada between 1871 and 1881, then these results would follow. I have also the hon. gentleman's own statement, as recorded in the books of his department, of the immigrants who settled in Canada during 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886 and 1887; and I call the attention of the House to certain remarkable results which flow from these two separate statements of the Government beyond possible contradiction. I find that in the years I have named we received in Canada 630,744 immigrants, who, according to the statement of the Department of Agriculture, are expressly declared to have settled in Canada, besides the large number who passed through and went away. I find that our population in 1881 was 4,432,481. Adding to these the 630,744 above-named, it is clear that we would have, without any natural increase at all, 4,955,554, and therefore that, on the showing of the Minister of Agriculture himself, on the evidence formally laid on the Table of this House in the books of his depart-