

money. In this whole transaction, the evidence of which is upon record in our public documents, the country lost a hundred thousand dollars. It was open and bare-faced piece of corruption. Now, Sir, let me refer to another case. My hon. friend from East Huron—and I deal with this now partly in answer to my hon. friend from South Oxford—said: We only increased the debt by reason of the fact that we were compelled to carry out the obligations left by the Tory party when they went out of office. He then referred to the Welland canal contracts. I tell the hon. gentleman, they were not obliged to carry out the obligations of the Tory party unless it was a good work and in the public interests, and I tell him further that if they had carried out the obligations and practices of the Conservative party, they would have saved hundreds of thousands of dollars to the country. What did they do with regard to the Welland Canal contracts? My hon. friend says that no contracts were cancelled. He was technically right, but morally he was very wrong. The Conservative Government called for tenders for work on the Welland Canal in 1873. These tenders came in in October, 1873, but before they were acted upon, hon. gentlemen opposite came into power. And what did they do? They wrote a letter to the engineer asking whether there was not some informality with regard to these tenders. And there was some informality of course! I have the letter here, Sir, if hon. gentlemen dispute what I say. And the consequence was that these tenders were laid aside, and other tenders were called for. And I am here with the evidence afforded by the public records to give my hon. friend the result of that second call for tenders. On section 2 of the Welland Canal the lowest of the first tenders which were called for and received by the Conservative Government, was \$321,000. In the second calling for tenders the lowest was \$396,000. And the contract was let to the lowest tenderer. In section 3 there was only a difference of \$30,000 between the lowest of the first tenders, and the amount at which the contract was let. On section 5 the lowest tender on the first call was \$266,000, and on the second call, \$312,000; and the contract was let to the fifth lowest tenderer at \$352,000. On section 14, the lowest tender on the first call was \$292,000, and the work was let for \$321,000, notwithstanding that upon the second calling for tenders there was a tender put in for \$292,000. On section 12, the lowest tender on the first call was \$302,000, and on the second call, \$327,000, and the work was let for \$551,000. On section 7, first call, lowest tender, \$251,000; second call, lowest tender, \$283,000; and the work was let by these purity and economy-loving gentlemen at \$327,000. On section 13, the lowest of the first tenders was \$270,000; the lowest of the second tenders,

\$313,000; and the work was let for \$325,000. It will be seen, Sir, first, that the prices at which the Conservative Government would have got the work done was much the lowest, and second, that the lowest tenders were passed over by these gentlemen. Now, just a word as to the method of argument pursued by my hon. friend from East Huron. Taking a certain number of years, he said that the average of contracts to the lowest tenderer in the time of Sir John Macdonald, was 35 per cent, while in the time of Mr. Mackenzie it was 84 per cent. For his comparison he took the years 1874, 1875, and 1876, of Mr. Mackenzie's time. But he forgot this—that the system had changed, that a deposit was required in Mr. Mackenzie's time, while no deposit was required in Sir John Macdonald's time, the consequence being that all the men who tendered under Mr. Mackenzie had to put up evidence and did put up evidence of their ability to do the work, and there was no excuse for neglecting them. Still further, the hon. gentleman omitted to take the year 1877 into his calculation. Had he done so, he would have found this percentage suffer material damage, because, in 1877, this economy and purity-loving party gave forty-two contracts, all told, of which seventeen were let to the second, third, fourth, or fifth lowest tenderers. I want now to discuss another point that came up in the speech of my hon. friend from East Huron, and afterwards to discuss the general trade policy of the country. In the first place, it seems to me that the effort of hon. gentlemen opposite has been mainly to prove that they have not changed their views upon the trade question. I am not going to discuss the question whether they have changed their policy or not. Surely it is patent enough to the people of this country; surely it has become notorious that they have been skipping about from pillar to post, and have discredited themselves before the people of Canada. The only reason they can possibly have for hoping to convince the people that they have not changed their trade policy is that they share the belief of my hon. friend from North Norfolk (Mr. Charlton) "that the masses of this country are not remarkable for their intelligence," anyway, which opinion the hon. gentleman expressed in a famous letter to the people of the United States some few years ago. As regards the question of protection or free trade, I want to begin my argument by showing that the hon. member for South Oxford has always been the controlling spirit of hon. gentlemen opposite. The light and airy, beautiful nothings of my hon. friend the leader of the Opposition do not count against the vigorous demands of the hon. gentleman from South Oxford; and while the hon. member for Quebec East (Mr. Laurier) may talk gracefully and beautifully, the man who says