

country, I may say that they have not been acquired yesterday or the day before, but far anterior to the year 1878, 1876, or even 1875, at a time when the matter was taken up so ably, and when the celebrated resolution upon which the National Policy was founded was brought down to this House by the right hon. Premier, then sitting at your left, apparently in a hopeless position of Opposition, having merely the corporal's guard at his back, and taking a step that, so far as I have been able to read or understand the history of constitutional government, has not had a parallel—when the head of a great political party, though, at the moment, in opposition and in small numbers, propounded on the opposition benches a policy which, though strongly opposed by the Ministry of the day, was subsequently heartily endorsed, and later on reendorsed, by the great majority of the people of this Dominion. My own conclusions on such subjects are not arrived at by the perusal of theories. It has been my lot to be compelled, as it were, to study far more the pages of my own personal experience, in reference to the effect of our present fiscal policy on this country; and in arriving at conclusions, when I found the generally accepted trade theories, however scientifically laid out, either in books or in speeches of public men, were contradicted by the facts, I decided that it was so much the worse for the theories. The leader of the Opposition, however, and those who support him, appear to act on entirely the opposite principle, that where facts contradict theories, they concluded apparently so the worse for the facts. I shall not, at this late stage of the debate, trespass upon the time of the House any longer than will be absolutely necessary to elucidate some of the points in reference to the working of our fiscal policy, and to refute, as I think I will be able to do, some of the futile attempts of hon. gentlemen opposite to establish that our policy is not in the best interests of the country. I think it is not difficult for any unprejudiced, impartial mind, to establish that the policy of the present Government is eminently in the best interests of our country. With the permission of the House, I will take the liberty of making some quotations from the Finance Minister's Budget Speech, to show why I consider and why I believe the people consider, the country is to be congratulated on the results of his policy. The first point in which the general ratepayers of our country are particularly interested is, that the taxation under the Administration from 1874 to 1879, under the *regime* of hon. gentlemen opposite, was \$4.88 per head, while from 1879 to 1884, under the present Government, it was 10 cents less per head, notwithstanding an increased expenditure in the active development of the country, of \$750,000 per year. For 1883-84 our tax per head of the population was actually \$1.35 less than that of the United States, although the ex-Finance Minister (Sir Richard Cartwright) has asserted that ours is nearly double that of the United States. This is the gist of the result of the Administration of last year, and in which the people are especially interested. I shall next take the liberty of referring to the statement made by the member for South Huron (Sir Richard Cartwright) who, I regret, is not in his place at the moment, for in it is explained the extraordinary fallacious position which that hon gentleman has attempted to maintain before this House and the country for years past. The statement to which I refer is this:

"We find that our debt in six years apparently has increased about 60 per cent.; we find that our taxes are increased at the rate of 150 per cent., the average amount to-day of taxes being 150 per cent. greater than they were six years ago.

"He then goes on to explain why he comes to that conclusion; from about 17½ per cent. the hon. gentleman has made them very considerably over 35 per cent., taking them all round."

Now, according to his own position, according to the basis he lays down himself, upon which he makes his calculation and estimate the actual taxation paid by the people, he

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exaggerates only 50 per cent., but this may be considered very moderate for that hon. gentleman. By this exaggeration he exposes the falsity of the basis upon which he founds his estimate of the taxation per head paid by the people of this country. Now, the practical fact is that all rates named under the tariff are not necessarily taxation, except on such articles as are necessities and cannot be produced in the country, or unless such as are produced under the paternal influence of the National Policy are thereby rendered more expensive to general consumers than formerly, whereas the contrary are the facts, as has been most conclusively shown during this debate by several hon. gentlemen on this side of the House. If the contention of the hon. member for South Huron in this connection be correct, an article stated in the tariff at 100 per cent. would cost the consumer of the country where that tariff is imposed double what it would otherwise, a contention so ridiculous and absurd that it is hardly worth referring to further. Now I take the liberty of asserting that a basis such as the hon. gentleman has laid down for statements of any kind being false, insecure and a fallacy, the structure of argument which he raises on such a basis must be equally fallacious. Again, that hon. gentleman says:

"For the last six years this unhappy country has had a protective tariff, administered by a Government of practical politicians, presided over by a philanthropic Minister of Finance, who desires to increase the greatest happiness of the greatest number."

I am able to congratulate the hon. gentleman for having expressed the precise words that would be used by the great majority in this country in reference to the present Government, although ironical on his part. He goes on further to say:

"By giving to a few hundred persons, influential political partisans, who had access to him, unlimited right to tax the millions of consumers who were not equally fortunate."

The hon. gentleman has for once, as I said, expressed the facts of the case, but he states in one breath that the manufacturers, from the effects of the tariff, had been highly benefitted at the expense of the consumer, while, in the next breath, he attributes what he terms their present ruinous condition to the effects of the National Policy, overlooking the fact that, if that is true, and it is not true, the great mass of our community must be getting the benefit from lowness of prices arising from over-production. The hon. member for South Huron says further:

"A very sharp check will be needed. In these six years our position has altered very materially for the worse, and not only materially but morally."

Because, forsooth, the great majority of the people of this country have emphatically affirmed and re-affirmed that the hon. gentleman is not the heaven-born financier that he imagines himself, and will have none of him. He has been tried and found wanting, as also have the political party with which he is allied. Hence that hon. gentleman hesitates not from his place in this House to cast this insult in the face of one and all who differ from him, and to charge the great majority of the people of this country with having deteriorated, not only materially but morally. Again we have his gratuitously implied insult to the great body of the agriculturists of our country, who are a mainstay of this Dominion more important than any other interest—that exists in this Dominion. I refer to his recent statements made in his efforts to attack the correctness of the census or to attack the hon. the Minister of Agriculture. On that occasion he did not hesitate to make a variety of statements, of which, with the permission of the House, I will give a few specimen bricks. He said:

"Now, Sir, in order that the House may know that I am warranted in saying that the census, as at present taken, abounds with a great many details which can by no possibility be accurate, I will just call the attention to certain items in the census of 1881. I find there that nearly twenty pages, and something like fifteen distinct entries required to be made up all over the Dominion, are devoted to items like these: Total