

National Policy, its population only increased by thirty souls! Of what crime were Nova Scotia and New Brunswick guilty that Providence, often severe but always wise in its decrees, should punish them to such an extent? I know not; but if I am to judge of their population by the deputation they send here, deputation composed of very nice fellows, no doubt, I think I am not mistaken when I say that these provinces only have what they desire, since the great majority of their representatives here boast of being good supporters and apostles of the National Policy just advocated by the hon. member for Victoria. For the whole Dominion, during the decade from 1881 to 1891, the total increase in the population was 508,429. During this period, however, we expended millions of dollars to bring here from the old countries of Europe, over eight hundred thousand immigrants. What was the result of this policy? We not only were unable to keep this immigration here, but we could not even keep here the natural increase in our population. If protection had been such a benefit to the country, it seems to me our people would not have left us. And if the population had increased under the protective system to the same extent as it had under a tariff for revenue, it ought to have increased by about two millions, instead of 508,429. As Sir John A. Macdonald used to say, moreover, a country that cannot keep its own people must necessarily be ruled by a wrong fiscal system. The National Policy was again, and they insisted on this, to give our farmers a local market. And in addition to that, it was to keep them in our country. The various censuses taken in 1871, 1881 and 1891 superabundantly show that instead of keeping our farmers in this country, this policy has unfortunately driven them out of it. Here is the number of farmers, as given in the various censuses. In 1881, we had 656,712 farmers in this country. In 1891, according to the last census, we had only 649,506 left. It is not necessary to comment at any great length the meaning of the figures I have here before me. Let me, however, give some particulars by the way. The farming population of New Brunswick, in 1871, numbered 40,306; in 1881, 54,485, and in 1891, it had fallen to 45,880. The farming population of the four original provinces of the Dominion, from 1871 to 1881, increased in number from 476,922 to 619,231 during the period of the tariff for revenue, thus showing during this decade an increase of 142,409. From 1881 to 1891, during which time we had protection to the utmost given to us by the hon. gentlemen opposite, we find that our rural population, instead of increasing, decreased by 7,206. If we now take the figures relating to the four oldest provinces of the Dominion, we find that the decrease in numbers was 36,277 souls. If the National Policy had given a profitable market to the farmers,

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it seems to me the farmer could better sell, and at higher prices, his products than in 1878. But, Mr. Speaker, quite the contrary is the case now. Here are the quotations taken from the Quebec "Chronicle," under date 17th February, 1877—and we all know that this is a Conservative paper, that it always had at least strong Conservative leanings, and that even now it supports the Government—and here are quotations taken from the "Moniteur du Commerce," under date 22nd February, 1895. The "Moniteur du Commerce" is known to be a purely commercial paper, but with Conservative leanings. The following table shows the prices realized by the farmers for their products in the month of February for each of the years 1877 and 1895:—

QUOTATIONS OF FARM PRODUCE.

|  | Feb. 17, 1877.  | Feb. 22, 1895.                        |
|--|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Butter .....                           | \$0.18 @ \$0.25 | \$0.14 @ \$0.21                       |
| Cheese .....                           | 0.15 @ 0.15½    | 0.08¾ @ 0.09¾                         |
| Eggs .....                             | 0.30 @ 0.35     | 0.11 @ 0.26                           |
| Maple sugar ....                       | 0.10 @ 0.11     | 0.06½ @ 0.07                          |
| Apples .....                           | 3.00 @ 4.00     | 1.50 @ 3.00                           |
| Onions .....                           | 2.00 @ 2.50     | 1.75 @ 2.00                           |
| Hay, 100 bundles.                      | 7.00 @ 8.00     | 5.00 @ 6.50                           |
| Straw .....                            | 4.00 @ 5.00     | 4.00 @ 4.50                           |
| Wood, 2½ ft....                        | 3.50 @ 4.00     | 3.70 @ 5.50                           |
| Beef, 100 lbs., first<br>quality ..... | 8.50 @ 9.00     | 9.00 @ 9.50<br>(per 200 lbs. salted.) |
| Fresh pork .....                       | 7.00 @ 7.50     | 5.25 @ 5.25                           |
| do .....                               | 0.10 @ 0.12     |                                       |
| Salt pork .....                        | 0.11 @ 0.12     |                                       |
| Hams .....                             | 0.09 @ 0.15     |                                       |
| Oats, 34 lbs.....                      | 0.47 @ 0.49     | 0.38½                                 |

Mr. Speaker, when farming is prosperous in a country, everything is going well. Farming is the source, the basis of the public welfare and national wealth, that is acknowledged by all the economists. This not being true of our country, our farmers desert the Dominion and their produce do not sell. But, Mr. Speaker, not only has the position of the farmer changed with respect to the sale of his produce, not only has our farming population decreased in number owing to the protective tariff, not only has the value of farm lands decreased to the extent of at least 20 per cent, not only do farm produce sell cheaper as a result of the fiscal policy we now have, not only are the farmers powerless to realize for their products the proper and fair prices they ought to receive, but, owing to the protective tariff, they have to pay higher prices for industrial products. Owing again to such a tariff, our export of farm produce has decreased to the following extent: in 1874, 1875 and 1876, we exported for \$59,897,000 worth of farm produce, or an average of \$19,300,000 a year. Let us now see what the position is under the National Policy system. For the three years 1889, 1890 and 1891, our total exports of farm produce amounted to \$38,988,000, or an average of \$13,000,000 a year. Now let me give