

majority of my constituents was the best possible market in the civilized world.

Mr. EDWARDS: Would the defeat of reciprocity account also for the depression in the United States at the present time?

Mr. NEELY: My hon. friend will have to demonstrate first of all that the premises on which his question is based are sound, and that there is a condition of financial depression in the United States similar or equal to that in Canada.

The defeat of the trade agreement of 1911 was also a severe blow to production in this country, in that it meant the stemming of the tide of that class of immigration which is largely responsible for much of the development and prosperity of Canada in recent years. Take the best class of immigration that we have in Canada to-day, in western Canada particularly—I say the best class, because the immigrants come to us not only with money but with equipment and with experience that is worth more than money—the class of American farmers who for years past have been flocking into Canada from the farming states to the south. The defeat of the trade agreement of 1911 did more to stem that tide of immigration than anything else that has ever occurred in Canada's history. Since 1911, there has been a great falling off in this class of immigration, to the great loss not only of the people of western Canada, but of the people of every part of the Dominion.

What does this Government stand for in the matter of its trade policy? My hon. friend the Minister of Finance is exceedingly sensitive about criticism or question of motive as to why the present tariff legislation has been brought before the House and the country. I say in all sincerity that no matter that could be brought forward by the Government having for its object the

paying of our proper Bills—the

5 p.m. paying of Canada's share in the successful prosecution of the

great struggle in which the Empire is engaged—would meet with one word of criticism from any hon. member on this side of the House; but I strenuously object to the people of Canada and hon. members of this House being asked to vote for proposals labelled as war-tax proposals, when the Minister of Finance himself admits that the objects of this legislation are not to pay the expenses of the war. That statement, made in the first Budget deliver-

[Mr. Neely.]

ance of this session by the Minister of Finance, cannot be mistaken. He says in the clearest language that every dollar of Canada's share of the expense of this war is to be obtained from the Government of Great Britain, and that this extra tax is to meet that great gap, which he sees before him, between the current revenue and the current expenditure, outside of the expenses of the war.

My hon. friend the Minister of Finance takes criticism of his proposals almost as personal criticism of himself. It is a well-known fact that all egotists are thin-skinned; and when I point to the fact, which was abundantly demonstrated in the three-hour speech of the Minister of Finance the other night, namely, that he appears to assume the whole responsibility of the financial situation of Canada at the present time, one can quite understand how criticism would be exceedingly unwelcome to one who has such a high valuation of his own abilities.

It took only a matter of a few minutes to run over the speech of the Minister of Finance the other night, and count the number of times the Finance Minister had actually used the first personal pronoun. I could hardly believe the result myself when I was told that he used it no less than 435 times, and that exclusive of references made by the hon. gentleman to himself as "me" or "my." That would be an average of about 145 times an hour, or about two and a half times a minute. Sir, we have been accustomed to regard the Emperor of Germany as the greatest egotist in the world, but even he is more moderate than my hon. friend. The Emperor of Germany takes a partner with him, for his expression as reported to us is "Me und Gott." But my hon. friend the Minister of Finance does not share responsibility or honour with anybody; he takes it all himself. He assumes the most injured air towards members of the Opposition because they dare to question the express object for which these tariff proposals are brought down. Although the Minister of Finance holds a much more important place in this House and in this country than I do as a private member of this House, I would counsel him to cultivate a spirit of stolid indifference to criticism, for I believe it would make him a more useful member of this House and a better minister and member of the Government. If he is thin-skinned about criticism, I am not, and I propose therefore to inquire, as best I can, into the underlying motive or principle