

in effect what hon. gentlemen opposite have been doing—not certainly in the cases of all Canadian industries, but in the cases of those particular ones which owe their existence to the monstrous scale of duties to which I have alluded. What would the ex-Minister of Finance have said to my friends the Patrons of Industry or other farmers of Canada if a deputation of farmers had waited on him to say that if he and the Government of which he was a member could see their way and were willing to give the farmers a fair interest on the value of their farms and buildings, and were likewise willing to pay fair wages to the farm hands they employed, including themselves when they were doing manual labour, they on their part would be perfectly willing to pay for the seed and to undertake all the labour of supervising the farm, and to be at the expense of marketing, and be content with the proceeds as their reward? And that in effect is an exact parallel to the results in the case of those industries to which I have alluded, and which alone are likely to be injured by the reforms we have introduced. Sir, I should like to ask the ex-Minister of Finance whether, in his judgment, it is more meritorious to produce a pound of iron or a pound of sugar or a yard of cloth or cotton than it is to produce a pound of beef, a pound of cheese or a bushel of wheat; and if he is not prepared to lay down that rule, then I say there was no excuse for the policy he and his friends established and continued with respect to a certain knot of manufacturers. I say a certain knot of manufacturers, because I am perfectly aware there were always a large number of manufacturers who were not existing owing to the protection afforded by the protective tariff, and who were far better off twenty years ago—and they know it now—under the revenue tariff which existed from 1867 to 1878. It might be asked in this connection: When you establish such enormous duties as those, who is it that pays? Money does not drop from the heavens, it has to be extracted from the consuming population of Canada; and, so far as the possible advantage to be derived from increasing the home market is concerned, it is my deliberate conviction that as regards that class of highly protected manufacturers, so far at all events as the matter can be regarded from a purely economical standpoint, it would pay the people of Canada better, if they wanted to increase the home market, to have employed an equal number of men in digging post-holes and filling them up than to have protected industries under a 50 per cent tariff; at all events, in that case we would have had all the benefit of the home market for the simple payment of wages, instead of paying interest on capital and plant sunk as well.

The hon. member for York (Mr. Foster) began his speech by declaring that he did

not understand the tariff, and he was rather ill-tempered with me because I ventured to say that the hon. gentleman's remarks proved the truth of his statement. The hon. gentleman proceeded to allege that we had raised the duties, and he did that with full knowledge of the effect of the reduction under the second schedule of our tariff. When he thought, on the other hand, that he had a point to make at our expense, the hon. gentleman was perfectly capable of referring to the second schedule as showing a reduction. With one breath the hon. gentleman declared that our tariff was highly protective, and scarcely were the words cold on his lips before the hon. gentleman gave a long list of industries which we had destroyed by our tariff. Now, I never did think very much of what I may call National Policy arithmetic; but I thought the ex-Finance Minister was capable of solving this abstruse arithmetical problem: if you add 2½ per cent and you take away 6½ per cent, there is not a material increase in the duty.

Mr. FOSTER. But if you cannot take it away.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. We have taken it away.

Mr. FOSTER. How?

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. It was taken away on the morning of the 23rd of April, if the hon. gentleman wishes to know the date, and will continue to be taken away. Sir, the hon. gentleman on the article of cottons, I think, had entirely overlooked the fact that the great bulk of cottons now imported into Canada come under the operation of schedule No. 2, and in all probability, after the present time they will all come under its operation. When the hon. gentleman talked of the operation of this tariff as regards cottons, I think he forgot this important fact, that we imported four and a half millions dollars of dutiable cottons last year, and of those it may be interesting to know that three and a half million dollars' worth came from England, as against one million dollars' worth imported from the United States. And I altogether mistake the quality and temper of English manufacturers if free trade England, with from six to ten points in her favour, will not be able to drive American cotton manufacturers out of the market.

Turning away from the alleged increase of our duties, the hon. gentleman (Mr. Foster) dilated upon another triumph of the National Policy. It was, he stated, buoyant and expansive; or perhaps he said "expensive," and these were the proofs of it. It had made a most creditable showing—its last dying speech and confession, I suppose, was going to be quoted to its credit.

Mr. FOSTER. If my hon. friend will allow me to correct him. I did not use these