

crease the value of 1,000 feet of lumber by any duty imposed upon imported goods. Thus, so much as they increased the burdens on the producers of lumber and fish, they took from the hard earnings of those people and put into the pockets of others. Placed now in a position of greater responsibility than before, he (Mr. Jones) felt bound to exercise the greatest judgment and discretion in a matter of so much importance to the people of Nova Scotia; and looking at all the interests involved, looking at the different classes this would affect, he considered that it would not be for the interest of the people of Nova Scotia, as a whole, to impose this duty on coal, if it were accompanied as it must be accompanied, as hon. gentlemen opposite admitted it must be accompanied, by increased duties on other articles which these people were obliged to consume. The hon. gentlemen opposite had shifted their ground within the last few years. A short time ago there was a discussion in this House, and throughout the country, with regard to the question of Protection and Free-trade. The right hon. gentleman laid down a broad proposition in favour of Protection, and was ably sustained by many hon. gentlemen opposite. There had never been such an utter breakdown as had been exhibited by those hon. gentlemen last year in the discussion of that measure. They commenced with a policy of Protection, thinking they could persuade the people of this country that it would be in their interest to go for a protective policy; they believed there was something captivating in the idea of Protection, and, to a certain extent, that idea did obtain a lodging in the minds of the people. But they had commenced their game too soon. As soon as the people had time to reflect, after they had been instructed by members of Parliament and the Press, and had studied the speeches delivered throughout the country during these last two years, they realized the position in which hon. gentlemen opposite would have placed them. When these hon. gentlemen came back to Parliament they abandoned their policy, and asked only for a re-adjustment of the tariff. They abandoned the ground

they had taken when they first brought forward this measure, and merely asked now for a re distribution of the tariff. They knew very well they could not touch the question of Protection unless they advanced the cost to the consumer. If it did not, the man who had goods to sell would not get more value for them, and would be just as well off without legislation at all. When their policy had been subject to the criticism of the country, they found they had to change their ground, and they now proposed merely a readjustment of the tariff, and were not going to raise the price at all. The right hon. gentleman knew that a tariff was a system of compromise between different interests, that when he came to discuss the fiscal policy of the country, when he summoned all the gentlemen around him who had the responsibilities of recommending that policy to Parliament, they could not legislate with regard to small or sectional interests, but with regard to the general interests. The hon. gentleman had said we must adopt a retaliatory policy, that we could not get reciprocity with the United States unless we had something to offer. It was rather late in the day to lay down that policy. When this country had something to offer in return for free admission of coal into the United States, the right hon. gentleman neglected that interest, and he and his policy were responsible to-day to the people of Nova Scotia for the unfortunate position in which that interest was placed at present. When the right hon. gentleman was at Washington and that treaty was under consideration, it was on record that he was offered the free admission of coal, lumber and salt into the United States. And it was on record also that when the right hon. gentleman refused that arrangement, he had not the courage to hold out, when the Americans ultimately withdrew it, but was yielding enough, to use a mild expression, to give up the only inducements we had in our possession, namely our fisheries. The right hon. gentleman knew that when he parted with our fisheries, he parted at once and for ever, as long as the treaty remained in force, with the only hope this country had of securing reciprocal relations with the United