

to whether my hon. friend looks like a medical man or not I would only say this: that I do sincerely hope, for the benefit of his patients, that he knows a little more about medicine than he knows about farming.

Steel, imported in the use of the manufacture of skates.

Mr. BLAKE. Perhaps the hon. gentleman will state if he knows how many houses import steel for the manufacture of skates.

Mr. BOWELL. I do not think there are a great many. The article was placed on the free list, because it was not manufactured in this country, in order that the skate manufacturers might not only continue their work, but be able to export, as they were and are still doing, to other parts of the world.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. Have you any idea of the quantity?

Mr. BOWELL. No; I frankly confess that these articles, being on the free list so long, and being now placed here at my own suggestion, I did not look into the question, supposing that any one who had paid any attention to the politics of the country was aware that these things had been on the free list.

Mr. BLAKE. I happened to be aware that by Order in Council these had been put on the free list, but this is the first opportunity we have had in Parliament of ascertaining the reasons. Does the hon. gentleman know if there is more than one manufactory of skates?

Mr. BOWELL. There is one in St. John and one at Dartmouth.

Mr. BLAKE. Was it necessary, for the purpose of the export trade that this steel should come in free? I thought the drawback system answers our export trade.

Mr. BOWELL. It is in order to promote the industry and enable it to be continued. It has been the policy of the Government, in articles of the kind, that do not come into competition with anything manufactured here, to place them, as far as possible, when the revenue allows it, on the free list. As this article had been on the free list for many years, and the trade had grown up with it on the free list, the manufacturers represented the injury it would do them if we collected the high rate of duty, unless we increased the duty on skates very largely; and we thought it advisable to place this article on the free list. It has been on the free list since 1880.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. The Customs returns do not enable us to ascertain how much is imported for this particular purpose, and it is necessary we should have some idea of the quantity. Very considerable advantage is taken of provisions like this, and cases have occurred in which, under such a provision, a very large quantity of an article has been imported, far more than the wants of the particular manufacture, for which it was ostensibly imported, required. You do not allow this steel to be imported for any other purpose?

Mr. BOWELL. No; not now.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. I suppose the hon. gentleman can easily find out, when this comes up in the usual course, how much was imported last year for the purpose. I take it that the principle the hon. gentleman adopts is this, that it is all entered through the Customs, and he requires proof of some sort from the manufacturer that this goes actually into the manufacture of skates.

Mr. BOWELL. It would be impossible to obtain the information the hon. gentleman asked for unless I wrote to the different ports at which it is imported, that is, Halifax and St. John, for the reason that the returns kept in the Department here are, as he knows, aggregated at

the different outports, except in special line articles. I will endeavor to ascertain the information he has asked for, and if possible I will give it to him. The manner in which we enforce the law is, by compelling importers to take an affidavit that it is imported for a particular purpose and will not be used for any other; but, notwithstanding that fact, he knew during his time in office, even that was evaded, and is still, as the hon. gentleman no doubt has seen from the public press, and as the leader of the Opposition knows, for I am informed that cases have been laid before him where we have seized the articles and punished the parties who have entered them under special provisions and have used them for other purposes than those for which they were imported. I may be in error as to the hon. gentleman's having the facts, but it was stated to me that they were sent to him, and that is why I said, on a former occasion, that no doubt he had many complaints, which would turn out on investigation to be without foundation.

Mr. BLAKE. I do not remember whether any such papers have been laid before me, but from some source I have been aware, and former discussions in the committee made it plain, that there is great difficulty and inconvenience in charging a tariff on an article for certain purposes, and admitting it free for others. There is a temptation, and it is human nature, if an article is required, to say it is wanted for that purpose and then to use it for another. Of course, proper precautions should be taken in all such cases, and that is why I have been of the opinion that there should be as few of these deviations as possible, consistently with the policy of the Government. The hon. gentleman stated as the reason why this was placed and proposed to be continued on the free list, that there were many manufacturers of skates who manufactured not only for home consumption but also for the export trade, and I said I had understood him to say, on former occasions, to the House, that the drawback system answered admirably for that, so far as the export was concerned, so that I did not see that that portion of his remark held water. But, of course, we know that the general policy of the Government is, when it is compatible with certain other portions of their policy with which it sometimes conflicts, to admit the raw material free; and there is a sense in which I entirely agree with that policy. With reference to the application of it to the article of steel, we know that there is one steel manufacturing company in the country already. I do not know whether they have ever proposed to manufacture steel of the particular quality required for skates; probably not, as there is no duty upon it. I refer to the Londonderry steel works. More than that; steel works were one of the very things which it was told to us, in May and June, 1882, would be developed in this country if only the electors would signify their confidence in the National Policy by their verdict at the polls. At a meeting held in the city of Toronto, in order that the First Minister might address the electors, the chairman stated in his presence that the Steel Association of Ontario were willing to expend three million dollars, and asked the people:

"Was it not of importance to the people that such an industry should be started, and he might say that he was only one out of two hundred companies ready to be floated by American capitalists if the Government was returned and the National Policy upheld."

And the First Minister ratified that by his statement, a few days afterwards, speaking at Yorkville, when he said:

"The Government had appealed to the country before their time had expired, in order that all uncertainty about the continuance of the National Policy might be removed. The industries that policy had inaugurated, though important, were small to what would be established if capitalists were certain that the tariff would not be repealed or brought by slow degrees to a free trade standard by Mr. Blake and his party. As an instance of this, he mentioned that a company was prepared to invest two millions in starting steel mills at Niagara as soon as the people declared in favor of protection. The Government had good