

position of the farmer especially. I quite admit if it could be shown that this Tariff had no advantages for the farmer, that it was oppressive, that he paid more taxes than formerly and received nothing in return, then he might be induced to accept the invitation of hon. gentlemen opposite to oppose this policy whenever it is put upon its trial. But the leading articles which he is consuming are no higher than before, and in many cases they are less. We will now enquire what other benefit he has in addition to the lower prices. In my judgment the farmer is as greatly interested in this Tariff as any other class of men in the Dominion. In the first place he has the home market. An hon. member opposite referred to the home market last Session, stating that it was of very little importance. Visit any section of the Dominion you please, put yourself in communication with the farmers, especially in the neighborhood of towns where manufacturing industries have been established and are increasing, and ask them if they are deriving no advantage. Why, Sir, under the operations of this Tariff, the vegetables, the fruit, the poultry, the lamb and veal, and other meats, the butter, the cheese, for almost everything they offer for sale, they obtain higher prices on account of the home market than is obtained in localities where they have to sell to the middle man and ship to another market. In conversations with the farmers, I found that, in 1878 they frequently came to market with their fruit and vegetables, and would stand there all day; and, not being able to get a price which would be an object to them, would drive home and wait for another opportunity, frequently being compelled to return and take what was offered. "How is it now?" I said. They replied: "There is no difficulty now. We sell everything we bring in for cash, and at good prices." Why? Because the country is in an active and flourishing state. Manufactories have increased, the number of the employed has increased, and their wages also have increased. They have plenty of money with which to buy country produce—I speak particularly of perishable goods which cannot be sent to a distant market. Some 25,000 more people are employed than in 1878 in these manufactories, and if they represent four for each family, you have 100,000 people to be fed, the heads of whose families were without employment, or were only partially employed, or not in the country in 1878. What the effect of this is to the farmer can be clearly understood. But it is said the duty on oats is no protection to the farmer, the duty on corn is very little benefit to the farmer. What is the fact? Do they not obtain better prices for their corn than they did before with a duty of 7½ cents per bushel? They certainly do. There is no question about that. Do they not obtain better prices for their rye? admit that that is regulated to a very large extent by the price in Germany and elsewhere, the markets to which it is generally shipped from the Dominion; but the distillers of Canada now buy their rye from the farmers of Canada, which they use as a substitute for corn. That gives an increased market, and to a certain extent affects the price. With reference to the price of oats, we have evidence beyond controversy, in my judgment, that it has been increased to the consumer 3 cents per bushel. But it is said the European market regulates the price here. It does not matter an iota what duty you put upon it. Does it not? The leader of the Opposition said in Nova Scotia—and I do him the justice to say he made the same statement in Toronto previous to the West Toronto election—that the duty on coal increased the price of coal to the consumer in Ontario, and that the duty on breadstuffs increased the price of breadstuffs to the consumer in the Maritime Provinces. The operation of this state of things, he said, would create a bad feeling between the people of Ontario and the people of the Maritime Provinces, because the latter had to pay additional for the breadstuffs of Ontario consumed

in the Maritime Provinces, and the former additional on the coal consumed in Ontario. On the subject of coal, I know there has been a great deal said; but my enquiries have led me to the conclusion that, while we receive a very considerable sum from coal imported from the United States and consumed in Ontario, one-half of that sum is paid by the coal producers in the United States. That is my conviction, and we have evidence of it. It is only very recently, in conversation with a gentleman who purchased in the United States 2000 tons of coal for consumption in Canada, that a portion of the coal duty was paid by the coal producers of the Western States. But, as I said on a former occasion, if the people of the United States were to say to us to-day, or any day, that they would go back to the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854, by which the natural products of the two countries would be exchanged free, we would be prepared to agree to that arrangement. But it would be the greatest mistake that any Government could make at this time, while negotiations may be opened at no distant day, while notice may be given by Canada of the abrogation of the Washington Treaty, within twelve months, and when there is a desire in the United States, on the part of a portion of her people, to open negotiations for the free exchange of natural products, it would not only be a mistake—it would be madness, to yield one iota of the vantage ground we now possess. If we were to yield it now we would do that which we would regret for all time to come. Therefore, we are not prepared to offer any proposition for the reduction of the duties now levied on these articles. Sir, the prices have been quoted in Chicago and compared with the prices of wheat in Toronto, and the conclusion has been drawn that the Tariff has no effect on the price of wheat in Toronto. But, Sir, an exceptional state of things has existed in the United States for two years. This year especially the holders of wheat have felt that the short crop in the United States and the short crop in Europe would necessarily bring up the price above what it was when the harvest was completed in America. They have been holding for a time wheat at 6 cents per bushel higher than the price brought for that description of article in the Liverpool market, adding the ordinary freight and ordinary expenses in taking it to the market. What have they been able to do from the fact of holding the grain? They have driven the railroad companies and the shipowners to the point that, in order to enable them to get the price they were asking for it in Chicago, they have reduced the freight by railways, and the charges of transportation and the freights on shipping by which it has been sent forward, and thus made just a fair return considering the price which was paid for it in Chicago. And what was the difference a week ago. I will give an illustration, simply to show that this Tariff, while it does not, of course, increase the price of grain 15 cents a bushel, it does, as I estimated last Session, increase the price on an average of 10 cents a barrel on flour consumed in the Dominion of Canada; and, if the leader of the Opposition was present, I would thank him for the compliment which he paid me at one of his meetings when he undertook to show to the people of the Maritime Provinces that they paid more for their flour, and, in order to clinch the matter, he quoted my statement in Parliament to prove that the price was increased to the consumer 10 cents a barrel. Ten days ago wheat was sold in the Toronto market 3 cents higher per bushel than it was sold for in the Chicago market, and it could not have brought these 3 cents per bushel in excess had it not been for the Tariff; and I will tell you why. The cost of transmission of that particular class of wheat from Chicago to Liverpool, *via* New York, was precisely to a cent what it cost to convey the same description of wheat from Toronto *via* the Grand Trunk Railway and the Allan steamers to Liverpool;