

Mr. PRITCHARD. Does not the hon. gentleman know that the prices of food products are regulated by the markets of the world?

Mr. LADNER: That is not the point. The farmers of the United States are substantially supplying the home market. My hon. friend will find there is not a great volume of agricultural products going into that country from the outside.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: This is a dialogue.

Mr. LADNER: I would not mind if the Minister of Agriculture participated in it too. He did not say very much in his recent speech and he has the opportunity to make up for it now.

Mr. MACLEAN (York): Come on in, the water is fine.

Mr. LADNER: I do not think anything is lost by a little exchange of ideas. We get up here with prepared speeches and sometimes advocate theories that are not very wise. So it does not do a bit of harm, even in the case of members of the cabinet, for hon. gentlemen opposite to exchange views with hon. gentlemen on this side.

I have departed somewhat from my notes. However, I have covered my subject in its entirety with the exception of one question and that has to do with the boot and shoe industry in British Columbia. I have a communication from the manager of a leading concern which has been in business there for a number of years. It deals with the effect of the British preference and this is what the writer says:

Shoe workers in Great Britain only receive about half the wages that the same operators get in this country and in addition they are manufacturing their shoes from German leather and using other materials which are obtained from Germany. It is impossible for us to compete with this. We have not made any money in our manufacturing department for several years and unless things take a change for the better soon we will have to give up the manufacturing business. We are operating with about thirty-five to forty less hands than formerly and to these we can only give work four or five days a week. If the government think they are going to build up a country by cutting off the protection they are greatly mistaken. Our employees and their families and others like them will continue to drift to the States where they can get work.

There you have a business man, connected with a large manufacturing industry, writing to a member of parliament and urging him to bring before the country the conditions of that industry. A large sum of money has been invested in that industry, several scores of people are employed by it, and these men have their homes, and form a large body of consumers. The question is simply this: Is it in the interest of Canada that ten, twenty-

five, forty or fifty cents be saved on a pair of shoes and an industry of this character destroyed? Is it to the interest of this country—as it has been held to be for many years past—to protect our industries or is it better instead of allowing for a period of temporary depression, to eliminate these industries and force the people employed in them to move to other countries? Should we not protect our industries so that we may have them here when times are bad as well as when times are good?

Mr. MacLEAN (Prince): Is the hon. member in favour of the British preference or would he prefer to see it abolished?

Mr. LADNER: I am in favour of protecting our industries, and if the British preference works against that principle then I say it should be modified accordingly, to keep it as it is would not be in the interests of this country. I do not think it is in the interests of this country. When we placed the proposal before the British people of a preference we were told it was not sound economically and they did not want it. I do not see why on a business principle we cannot regard this matter in the same light, and I believe we should. I stand for a reasonable protection and not for an arbitrary protection. I believe, Mr. Speaker, we should protect those industries which exist here; give them protection in order to retain them in this country and to encourage others to come here. We should protect the industries which are indigenous to the country, those which manufacture products from the natural resources of Canada; and, contrary to the views of the Secretary of State (Mr. Copp) if we follow a policy similar to that pursued in the United States since 1828 we will find that Canada will become a prosperous and happier nation; and our children will be able to live under the British flag.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

After Recess

The House resumed at eight o'clock.

Mr. R. E. FINN (Halifax): In rising to offer some remarks on the budget that was presented to parliament on April 10, I desire first of all to tender my sincere felicitations to the Acting Minister of Finance (Mr. Robb) on the able presentation he made to the House of the conditions of the country and the fiscal changes that are to be made to bring about, as I hope and believe, beneficial results to agriculture and the other