

tion of the resolutions, now before the House. I need hardly say that probably no question likely to arise during this Parliament, at all events during the present session, will be of more importance than this question, nothing has been looked for with greater interest, or with greater uncertainty, and no question has been more unsettled, perhaps, than the question of the tariff. Before the elections we said justly that our friends on the opposite side had no policy; and I think we are justified in saying that up to this moment, with all that has been done, they have not given the House or the country any striking evidence of having a policy, beyond one of such elasticity and of such a shifting character, that neither the House nor the country have any conception where these hon. gentlemen are going to lead us to in the end. Hon. gentlemen claim that they have redeemed their pledges. In fact, the hon. Finance Minister said that the resolutions before the House afford complete evidence that the Government have redeemed their pledges to the people, in essence and in fact. Now, I wish to call the attention of the House for a few moments to the position that was occupied by hon. gentlemen opposite before the election. They had no policy; they had only a set of small cries with which they went to the country. They claimed, in general terms only, that the policy of the Conservative party was bad; but they did not propose to remedy it in broad sense. Before I sit down I hope I shall be able to make it clear that they have not redeemed one solitary broad pledge, but have simply redeemed what they went to the country with—a few small cries. Now, what were those small cries? One was the question of binder twine; another was the question of coal oil; another was the question of rice, and another the question of barbed wire. Now, I would like to ask, Mr. Speaker, whether, when we consider the tariff of hon. gentlemen opposite in its details, it can be looked upon as redeeming the pledges of hon. gentlemen opposite? Let me take first the question of coal oil. In that article these hon. gentlemen made a reduction somewhat disappointing to their own friends, but which cannot fail, on the other hand, to be far-reaching in its effects upon the country. They have made a reduction of 1 cent a gallon. Now, I would like to ask any hon. gentleman in this House—I care not how ardent a free trader he may be or how economical he may be in his own habits—if in this reduction there are any compensating advantages to the country which correspond at all to the blow that has been struck at that industry. Let us take the average consumption at the maximum estimated by hon. gentlemen opposite, namely 20 gallons to each family per year, and the reduction in the tax will simply amount to 20 cents on the consumption of one family. I should like to know whether

Mr. CLANCY.

it is worthy a great party to have struck so severe a blow at an important industry in order to give the small benefit to each family of 20 cents per year. Some hon. gentlemen may say that that is a very important thing in itself. I would admit that it would be if it were only one item out of hundreds of others in which reductions were made, but when you can only point to such a small measure of relief, I say that it is unworthy of the dignity of a great party to plume themselves on such a slight reduction, which strikes a blow on an important industry without giving the people any substantial relief.

Let me take the question of iron. I am pretty sure that public opinion would be very slow in coming to the conclusion that hon. gentlemen opposite have given any substantial relief to the people by way of a reduction in the specific duties on iron. I have it upon the authority of several gentlemen, in whom I have the most implicit reliance, that a ton of iron upon which a duty of from \$4 to \$10 was paid, when manufactured and when it goes to consumer, is, in fact, worth about \$400. Now, just let me see if there is any relief given to the people by the reduction on the specific duties. If that statement be correct, and I have no doubt it is, it would seem that the duty imposed, putting it at the maximum of \$10, would not amount to more than 2½ per cent. Is that giving the people any substantial relief?

It is impossible for any hon. gentleman who thinks out clearly this question to say that the lowering of the specific duties upon iron is anything but a sham. But that is not the worst of it. Those gentlemen have thought it wise to grant a bounty upon the iron manufactured in this country, which, to my mind, is a very proper thing; but when the Minister of Finance states that he is unwilling to grant a bounty upon the iron manufactured in Canada, except in so far as it is consumed in Canada itself, that seems to me the most extraordinary doctrine ever enunciated. The enlightened policy would be to give a bounty to encourage exports. What would cheapen iron in this country would be to manufacture for export twice as much as we can consume. We live in an age when men must trade on small margins, and if anything would have a tendency, as a stumbling-block, to render the encouragement utterly worthless, it would be to provide that the encouragement to be given to the iron industry in this country can only apply to the products which are consumed in this country. I am pretty sure the people will vigorously object to this policy, because after all it is only shifting the burden of taxation. If we lower the specific duties for the purpose of letting in on the one hand, and then give a bounty on the other hand, on the iron consumed in the country, we are taxing the people unnecessarily. We are taxing them in such a way that they are