

5 in 1881. Peas, above the average, 43 in 1877, and 28 in 1881; below the average, 13 in 1877, and 23 in 1881. Thus we find from the only evidence of an official kind that we can get at, that the crop in 1877 was actually a better and larger crop than that of 1881. But what do we find further? We find that the value of the crop, as entered at the Customs for export in 1877-78, which was the crop of 1877, of wheat, flour, peas, oats and barley altogether amounted to \$15,375,486, against \$15,697,987 in 1880-81, or an increase in the latter over the former year of \$322,501, or only two per cent. Will hon. gentlemen tell me that this difference of about two per cent. accounts for the difference between the depression of 1877 and the prosperity of 1881? But, Sir, we have been told that the National Policy has lessened the price of cereals to the Canadian farmer. One cannot very well understand the position of hon. gentlemen opposite. When we are dealing with manufactures we are told that the imposing of a duty on the foreign article coming into Canada increases the price to the Canadian consumer by the amount of that duty; but when we are dealing with the cereals of the farmer, we are told that it has the very opposite effect and decreases the price of the article coming into the country. What do we find? I know that the hon. member for North Norfolk, the other evening, referred to the prices in Chicago as compared with those in Toronto. If they were disposed to deal with this question in that spirit of fairness which the hon. member for South Brant commended in his closing remarks, they would not make that comparison. They know the reason that at times prices in Chicago were higher than in Toronto. They know that for the same reason wheat in Chicago, during the last year, has been 6 cents. higher than in New York, and therefore they were perfectly well aware that it was not because of any question of fiscal policy either on this side or the other that this particular fact exists. On the contrary, it is due to that miserable gambling spirit which is eating like a canker-worm into the whole commercial transactions of the United States and this country. It is the result of the wheat corners in Chicago, where men seek, not by legitimate trading, but by *finesse*, by holding a hand which they think to be a strong one and going one better if they think it to be necessary; this wretched gambling which, as I have said, is eating as a canker-worm into the commercial honesty and honor of this country and the United States, is the cause of the fact that at times the prices of wheat have been higher in Chicago than in Toronto. But what is the general fact? I take the average value of American wheat exported from Canada as entered at the Customs as the easiest way of arriving at the facts in connection with this matter. In 1877, the average value of American wheat was \$1.50 per bushel, while the average value of Canadian wheat exported was \$1.22 $\frac{1}{2}$, or a difference in price in favor of the American wheat of 27 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents per bushel. In 1881, the average price of American wheat for export as entered at the Customs was \$1.07 $\frac{1}{2}$, while that of Canadian wheat was \$1.03, or a difference in favor of the American of 27 cents in 1878, and of 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents last year. That is the fact as derived from the Customs returns in regard to the export of those cereals in the two years, 1878 and 1881. I do not say, I have too much respect for myself to say, that this is due to the National Policy. During the discussions that took place when those hon. gentlemen were in office, I never charged them with the whole of the depression that existed; what I did charge them with is this; that in the presence of the depression and in spite of suggestions made by wise merchants who understood trade and saw means by which the depression might at least be relieved and mitigated in severity, they failed to do anything. And although now I do not think that the change I have mentioned is due entirely to the National Policy, yet I do think it is an all-sufficient answer to the statement made by hon. gentlemen opposite, that the effect of the National Policy

Mr. WHITE (Cardwell).

has been to reduce the price of wheat to the Canadian farmer. If it has, then I ask upon what ground, hon. gentlemen opposite go down to the Maritime Provinces, as they did last year, and speak to the fishermen about the enormous tax on breadstuffs. How can a tax on breadstuffs be detrimental if the effect of that policy is to reduce instead of increasing the price to the producer? Let them take one course or the other. Let them at least have this amount of candor, that they will have the same story for all parts of the country. If they will only do that I venture to say we can meet them fairly on every platform. But when they go to Ontario and tell the farmers that wheat was higher in Chicago on a particular day than it was in Toronto, and that therefore the National Policy has reduced the price of their wheat, and when they go down to the fishermen of the Maritime Provinces and tell them they are paying 50 cents per barrel more for flour than before the duty was imposed—when they undertake to adopt a policy of that kind, then I say they are not adopting a policy worthy of a great party, as they are, or consistent with that fair, proper and reasonable method of discussion which the hon. member for Brant commended to us at the close of his remarks, although I am afraid he did not act quite up to it during the progress of his speech. What has been the effect on imports of agricultural products into this country for home consumption? I take the Trade Returns for 1878 and for 1881. The hon. member for Centre Wellington (Mr. Orton) last year made a comparison with the Trade Returns one year earlier than I am now able to submit. Taking the years 1878 and 1881, I find there is a decrease in the receipts of barley equal to 285,214 bushels, the aggregate in 1878 being 302,147 bushels, and, in 1881, 16,933 bushels. I find that the importation of Indian corn has decreased 5,344,198 bushels, and I venture to think that the coarser grains of the Canadian farmers supplied that large decrease. Oats declined 2,089,933 bushels between those two periods. Peas, which are not a large importation, decreased 6,306 bushels; wheat decreased 5,558,759 bushels; rye, 145,598 bushels; wheat flour, 126,939 barrels; and I venture to think that the void was filled up by the productions of the mills of this country which had to that extent a greater home market for their output. Then I find this fact, which is of interest to the fishermen of the Lower Provinces and the people of Lower Canada, who do not grow much wheat and have to get their flour from abroad, that, instead of increasing the price by reason of the tax, the average price of flour in 1878, as entered for export at the Customs, which ought certainly to have given us prosperity in that year, if the mere condition of our crops is the one test either of prosperity or the reverse, was \$5.93 per barrel, while in 1881 it was \$4.65. The people of the Maritime Provinces had certainly nothing to complain of in connection with the price of flour under this policy as compared with what it was before. But how far has the improvement that has taken place in the country been the direct result of the National Policy? I quite admit that a change of policy with good times following, and with good times following in other countries at the same time, renders it extremely difficult to apportion precisely where the influence of the policy comes in in those improved conditions; but there are some facts which I think go to show very clearly that the National Policy has done its fair share in improving the condition of the people of this country. It has not been the only factor in bringing about that improved condition, but it is a most important one, and without it that improved condition would not have taken place to the same extent. It is admitted that Canadian manufactures are improving—that they are in a prosperous condition. It is admitted, moreover, that new manufactures have been started. I am not going into details to show whether the gentlemen who made the report to the hon. Minister of Finance made