

should also be proscribed; the very name of liberty, under whatever form it might appear, was a permanent threat for the rulers of that country. His hon. friend from Maskinongé (Mr. Houde) attempted the other day to throw ridicule upon the assertion of the hon. member for Lambton (Mr. Mackenzie) who had said that Protection had a tendency to develop socialistic ideas. He (Mr. Béchard) thought the hon. member for Lambton was not wrong, for Protection was the first step towards acknowledging the doctrine of the right of work—a fundamental principle of socialism. One of the main reasons advanced in favour of Protection was that this system gave work to a certain number of people; consequently, that everyone in the community must be taxed, and, therefore, bound to sacrifice an indefinite portion of his labour, his income, his property, under whatever form it might be, for the benefit of others. He (Mr. Béchard) held that this was preaching, although unintentionally, the doctrine of the right to work, which was in direct antagonism with the right to property. Hon. members would remember that celebrated answer of M. Proudhon, an apostle of socialism, to M. Thiers: "Grant me the right to work," said he, "and I'll grant you the right to property." M. Proudhon understood very well that these two rights were incompatible. But he (Mr. Béchard) hastened to add that he had no fear of socialism being developed in this country, at least for a number of years, by the introduction of a Protective policy, because this country was abundantly provided with bread, space and liberty, three of the principal elements of satisfaction and happiness in the life of nations. Now, after having dwelt, perhaps at too great a length, on those generalities, he would approach, before concluding his remarks, a more practical branch of the subject. On the 17th of September last, the people of Canada rendered a verdict in favour of Protection, and they had sent to Parliament a large majority of members who were disposed to vote for it. Nothing could prevent, he presumed, the introduction of that system; and, since the people had pronounced for it, he felt pretty much inclined to say: let them have it and bear the consequences. But,

since they were bound to have Protection, he wanted it to be just and equitable to all classes, and not favouring one class at the expense of another. He would undertake to say a few words in the interest of one class with which he was more particularly connected, as he had the honor to belong to it: he referred to the farming class of the country. He could easily see that, under this tariff, the farmer would have to pay higher prices for his cotton goods, his woollen goods, his shoes, for his sugar, all his agricultural implements, and many other articles which he was obliged to purchase, but he failed to see how he would receive compensation for the new sacrifices which were imposed upon him. There was no kind of produce from which the farmer would receive any benefit under the tariff by way of an increase of price. The duties levied by this tariff upon wheat and flour were, doubtless, intended to raise the price of that commodity; and, if such an increase would occur, it would be detrimental to the Province of Quebec, where wheat was not grown in sufficient quantity for the consumption of its people. But there was, in the Dominion, taken as a whole, a considerable surplus of wheat, for which we were bound to seek a foreign market, and according to the rule, which was perfectly rational, that whenever a country possessed a surplus of any kind of produce, the price of it at home was fixed by the price it was worth abroad, it followed that the price of wheat and flour could not be increased, at least in Ontario and Quebec, by the importation of any duty.

Some HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. BÉCHARD said he heard the cheers of some hon. members from the Province of Quebec, sitting on the Ministerial benches, on hearing his statement that the imposition of duties on imported wheat and flour would not increase the price of that product in their Province. But he supposed those hon. members would continue to cheer him when he told them that the price of wheat and flour being not increased by those duties, it necessarily followed that the wheat producers of Ontario or Quebec, would not be benefitted by them; and that, those duties being of no avail to anyone, they became absolutely use-