

Mr. DAVIN. The hon. member who has just taken his seat has not gone over a great deal of ground, although he has spoken at considerable length. He started out—because I will come right to business with him—by a statement that not only did the National Policy take out of the pockets of the people the amount of the duty, but it also took out of the pockets of the people fully as much again. Now, Sir, that statement was made by the hon. member for South Oxford; it was also made from the back benches: and with the permission of the House, I will reply to what the hon. member for South Oxford said:

We have the most awful tariff exactions. We have had a taxation of sixty millions a year since 1879, and a billion of dollars have been taken out of the pockets of the people.

He is fond of that billion, because you remember that in summing up what our indebtedness is, he declares on his own ipse dixit that it is also a billion, without giving rhyme or reason for that statement. Said he: We tax ourselves to the extent of \$60,000,000 a year; in 16 years, \$450,000,000; the cost of collection equals half of the revenue; although we have statistics to prove that it does not equal the half of half. Yet the hon. member for South Oxford, in the most reckless manner, declares that it equals half. Then he goes on to add to that an amount that brings it up to a billion dollars:

So far as our tariff is a protective measure, the taxation is the total consumption of imported goods, plus the goods manufactured under that tariff in the country.

Precisely the same statement, though not made so formally nor so definitely, has been made by the hon. member who has just taken his seat. Again, I will quote the hon. member for South Oxford:

The more manufactured, the more taken out of the pockets of the people. Where the goods manufactured are four times the amount of the goods imported, then you may fairly conclude that it will take four times, or five times more out of the pockets of the people than it puts into the treasury.

So the argument is irrefutable, the richer you make a country in manufactures, the more certainly do you rob the people generally, and the sure course to wealth would be to blight every manufacturing industry that could arise! That is the logic of these gentlemen, that is to say, if they ever give a thought to logic. But I think after the speech to which we have just listened and the previous speeches from the Reform side of the House, I do not think we shall come to the conclusion that there is much logic at all events in one part of the debate. Take cotton. We have had the version of the hon. member for Queen's (Mr. Davies), and I will give the House the versions of

the hon. member for North Norfolk and of the hon. member for South Oxford. The latter hon. gentleman gave the total import as the value of \$4,000,000; total value of manufactured articles, \$10,000,000; tax, \$5,600,000; amount paid into the treasury, \$1,140,000, while the manufacturers receive \$4,460,000. The hon. member for Norfolk said the manufacturers receive \$2,250,000, and the hon. member for Queen's placed the amount at \$3,000,000. Which of those hon. gentlemen is right? Because surely when we are here in the great council of the nation discussing so important a question as the tariff of the country we are not to be told that a million dollars one way or another on a single item of the fiscal policy is of no account whatever. Why, Sir, it is trifling with the question. Here is an hon. gentleman sitting on the front Opposition benches, who if the Reform party came into power, as he anticipates—hope tells a flattering tale just now, and the hon. member for South Oxford anticipates the same outcome, and on the back benches one hears a curious squeak like an echo, that the party is coming into power, but we have heard that cry before, and it has died away and nothing came of it—the hon. member for Oxford would be Finance Minister and the fiscal policy of this country would be entrusted to his tender mercies and the member for Queen's would be in the ministry, as also would be the hon. member for North Norfolk. If those three hon. gentlemen on one item of the fiscal policy differ so much that one says \$2,500,000 is taken by manufacturers, another \$3,000,000, and another \$4,000,000, I think the public are in a position to demand from them what they mean; under which king they serve; to which estimate they will adhere; and that when hon. gentlemen opposite call upon a Tory Government to explain a difference of \$50,000 or even \$10,000, the Reform party should not be permitted to say that one million or two millions of dollars amounts to nothing. And it matters nothing, because the speech of the hon. member for Oxford, like the speech to which we have just listened, and like the speeches of a member of the Reform party with whom I would not compare them for a minute, whom I would put above and apart from them, show the utmost recklessness, not merely in regard to one detail of that policy, but the utmost recklessness of statement as to what their general policy is. What have we heard in regard to the policy they have placed before the House during the present debate? We need not go over the debates from year to year. We need not take up what they said in 1879, and then go to 1888, when they began to set forth their commercial union policy, and to 1889 when they proposed unrestricted reciprocity, and to 1890 when they wobbled again. Then we had the leader of the Reform party down at Boston de-