

know perfectly well that we cannot legislate in their behalf, and therefore they have not applied to us for relief. The manufacturers claim that the want of protection is the cause of the depression. When the Committee to report upon the state of manufactures sat in 1874, Mr. W. E. Sanford, member of a large wholesale clothing firm in Hamilton, stated that our prices were fully $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. lower than those of the United States, which has a protection of 100 per cent. I think that is an admission which shows clearly that the more protection manufacturers have the higher goods are. It has been stated that protection will not increase the price of manufactured articles. I can hardly conceive that such would be found to be the fact in practice, and it will be difficult to convince any person that such will be the case.

I find here another man who was very honest in his expression. He was asked how many of them would undersell each other. He said about one-half dozen. Then there would be a union amongst them to keep up the prices of their goods. "We are obliged," he said, "to unite to keep up the prices of goods." If you give an advantage to anybody, no matter whether he be a farmer, manufacturer or lumberman, you must expect him to make the most of his position. The farmers of Canada were not included in this resolution, and therefore the hon. member for Centre Wellington cannot support it. I think if the farmers of Canada were left alone they would be better pleased. They do not want anything of the kind, and I think if the mercantile community and the lumbering classes gained anything by it, and if the tariff was raised to a protective tariff then the business of the country would be placed in the hands of a few wealthy manufacturers and importers about our sea-coast. If you raised it to 25, the percentage asked for, you will find that the wholesale business will be in the hands of one or two people. In Great Britain, where free-trade is the order of the day, you find goods at low prices through competition; but the manufacturers are combining by every possible means to keep down the wages of their employés. This was a very serious

question with British statesmen—to settle labour and capital—and it is only of late years that they have been able to accomplish anything in that direction which is at all satisfactory. At present, Great Britain with free-trade is in the most prosperous condition, and manufacturers at last have been compelled to pay proper wages. They took the advantage whenever they could, and we ought to consider that it will be a difficult matter for farmers to get the trade of the country out of the hands of manufacturers and importers when once the latter have it. In the States, not many years ago, the railway contractors had got control of the railways, and the farmers had great difficulty and would not but for legislative pressure have secured their rights. If we raise the tariff to a protective point—and I am glad the question has come squarely before the House—I think it will be the hardest day for Canada she has ever seen. I hope the tariff will be kept at a revenue rate, even if it might be necessary to make a revision of the duties. If we have a protective tariff we will drive away foreign competition, and will at once give the monopoly to manufacturers and wealthy importers to make immense sums of money. I hope there is intelligence enough in the House to see that the country would prefer that the tariff was lowered instead of increased. It is rather high already for revenue purposes. Some hon. member stated not long ago, that the Government ought to make a change on account of the depression. I beg to differ. The more the tariff is kept to one standard the better for business men, as they would have a sure basis upon which to make their engagements. I fully agree with the Government in not meddling with the tariff at present, because I do not believe it had anything to do with the depression. Legislation did not bring it and legislation cannot cure it. Countries with free-trade are suffering, and the United States with a heavy protective tariff of 100 per cent. upon some articles felt the depression sooner and to a greater extent than Canada. It is impossible to believe that a protective tariff would remedy the depression. I am