

importation of blankets amounts to 364,000 lbs. I presume that it would do to introduce one-half shoddy into the blanket; hence it reduces the quantity of wool used to a very small amount indeed, and if we entirely excluded blankets now imported we should add to the consumption of our wool but a few thousand pounds.

Mr. ALLEN. I am interested in this wool question, for I have been engaged in the wool trade for the past twenty years; and, Sir, prior to the introduction of the National Policy, the price of wool was from 30 to 40 cents, and sometimes as high as 50 or 60. Since its introduction the price has fallen until the present season. I have sold several thousand pounds of wool at very low prices. The highest price I got for the finest clean wool, free of burrs, was 18 cents per pound. The second grade, good wool, suitable for blankets or carpets, brought from 15 to 16 cents; and the unwashed wool of all kinds sold for 10 cents per pound. Now, Sir, I believe while the farmers are paying duties of from 25 to 50 per cent. on the goods required by them, wool ought not to be allowed to come in free from foreign countries. We have the very same class of wool here in Canada that they have in England. Wool that we sell at 18 cents per pound is quite equal to the wool imported from England; and it is not fair treatment that the farmers should be obliged to submit to the competition of this free wool. I know for a fact that during the past season large quantities of Canadian wool have been stored, and still remain in store, while wools imported from foreign countries are sold to the manufacturers. I believe that this is not carrying out the principle of the National Policy. The farmers have a right to expect and to receive a share of the protection which is being accorded to others. I hope, Mr. Chairman, that rags and shoddy will be excluded. We have too much of that commodity already; we do not require any more of them while we have wool at from 10 to 15 cents per pound, that can be manufactured in Canada so cheaply into blankets, tweeds and other products. We have no need of shoddy, and I hope the Government will exclude it from this list of imports.

Mr. FERGUSON (Welland). I would not like the impression to go to the country that we import either English or American wools into this country to manufacture. The wools that are imported from England are brought from South Africa, Australia and other places. The large importers bring them to England, and they are purchased in England by our importers, but there are no English wools brought to this country for the purpose of manufacture, and none from the United States. The wools that are brought from the United States are purchased from large importers, who bring them from the southern latitudes. They are bought sometimes on commission, and sometimes imported and sold to manufacturers in this country. Now, none of this wool comes into competition with Canadian grown wool. Canadian grown wool and imported wool are used for two distinct purposes. If you were to put 10 cents a pound upon wool imported into this country you could not increase the price of Canadian wool at all by it, for the reason that no tweed goods, which is the largest product of the woollen manufacture in this country, could be produced out of Canadian grown wool, except, perhaps, from a very small quantity of wool from the Down sheep; and the South Down wool is too coarse for the use of our manufacturers of tweed goods, except in small quantities. We must have Merino wools and the finer wools that are brought from these southern countries. Another reason why these foreign wools do not come into competition with Canadian wools is this: These wools are purchased at 18 or 20 cents per pound, and are bought in a filthy, dirty condition, full of sand, grease, and every other kind of filth, which when these are cleansed out give us about 40 lbs. of clean wool out of 100 lbs. as purchased, and sometimes

Mr. FAIRBANK.

no more than 36 pounds of clean wool; so that when we purchase it at 20 cents we only get 40 per cent. of wool out of the original quantity that we can use in manufacture, or 45 to 55 cents per pound for clean wool. Manufacturers pay sometimes 20 or 22 cents for these imported wools, so that they do not come into competition at all with our Canadian wools. Now, there is one point I wish to be understood, and it is this, that, so far as I know, and I think I am well informed on this subject, we do not import English grown wools into this country for the purpose of manufacture, nor do we import American grown wools for this purpose, they all come from Australia, Africa, South America and New Zealand.

Mr. O'BRIEN. I wish to correct an impression which hon. gentlemen opposite are taking much pains to send abroad, and that is that the price of wool has gone down very materially during the last few years. Now, it is preposterous for them to talk of the low price of wool for this season as the ordinary price of wool, because everyone knows that it is only within the last year that the price has fallen. I can tell hon. gentlemen that I have sold South Down wool within the last two years for over 30 cents per pound, and it is only within the last two years that the price of wool has fallen.

Mr. MILLS. The hon. gentleman said the duties had benefited the industry. If so, they would prevent the prices falling.

Mr. O'BRIEN. I do not think either the Minister of Finance or the Minister of Customs will allow hon. gentlemen opposite to put statements in their mouths which no man of common sense ever would make. Hon. gentlemen opposite have been continually putting into our mouths the statement that we said the tariff would regulate the price of wheat. No man in his senses would state that the tariff would affect the ordinary prices of wheat. But what we do say and what we have always said is, that under certain conditions, such conditions as prevailed during last year, and prevail now, the tariff does cause higher prices for our wheat. I am certain that neither the Finance Minister nor any hon. member on this side of the House stated that the tariff was going to regulate the price of wheat. But hon. gentlemen know well that when it was proposed last year to take the duty off wheat in order to equalise the duty on flour, there was a great outcry, because the duty had been found to be a great benefit to our wheat growers. The same thing occurs with respect to the prices of wool. Speaking from my own knowledge, I find that the National Policy has had a very beneficial influence on the price of wool, as it has created a demand for certain classes, for which previously there was no demand. A few years ago there was no demand for South Down wool, or at least very little. The National Policy has promoted the woollen manufacture which has used that particular class, and during the last few years the prices of South Down wool, as compared with the coarse wools, has advanced, and it is relatively higher than in 1878. That is due to the National Policy, because it has led to the manufacture of cloths in which this class of wool is used. What I particularly want to say is this: That the Finance Minister and the Minister of Customs would do well to look into the regulations of the tariff on wool. I think the classification, as it now stands, is altogether an erroneous one. Wool should be divided into three qualities—fine, medium and coarse. We only produce the two latter, medium and coarse; and as we are never likely to grow the higher class, it might be admitted free of duty, as a raw material, because it would not come into competition with our wool. On the other hand, as regards coarse wool, as the hon. member for Welland (Mr. Ferguson) said, it would not matter if we put 10 or 20 per cent. duty on it, because we export it and do not import it, and so it would