

I hope that the Government will pay some attention to this part of the question, and that we may reap some practical results from it later on. I certainly must say that, to me, the action of the Government in allowing the training of men on the Rainbow and Niobe to slacken off, in the way they have, is a very serious, and I think a very reprehensible way of doing things.

The training of men for naval service is a matter that has to be carried on a great many years. You cannot make a man into a good sailor in a short time. It takes a long time, and the Government most certainly should have gone on, and done their very best to get men to train in these ships. At the present time out on the Pacific coast, where we have a slackening in business of every kind, there is no doubt, to my mind, that men could have been much more readily recruited for training on the Rainbow now, than they could have been in the last two or three years. The Government is losing a great opportunity in this way in having allowed that training to get behind, and not paying the attention to it that should have been paid.

The hon. leader of the Government in speaking the other day on the Address referred to a matter that was, to myself, rather a surprise, because of the way in which he handled it. He was talking about the question of the cost of living, and he referred to the cost of living in England, and quoted from a well known book, 'England and the English.' The figures that he gave on that occasion were, to my mind, decidedly misleading. I happened to have read the book at one time, and I think those figures ought not to be quoted to show what the British Government does, in regard to the taxation of food stuffs. The list of things given in that particular table as quoted by the hon. leader of the Government, referred to two items which, alone of all the items he mentioned, could properly be called food stuffs—grain and sugar. Now if the hon. gentleman had taken the time and trouble to refer to past history and see what was the condition of things in England at the time those duties were applied, he would have found that the duty on sugar, for instance, was first imposed in the year 1902 by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and had to provide for the expenses of a war in China as well as the war in South Africa. At that time a large amount of money had to be provided, and he was faced with a deficit, and the fact that he would have

to obtain a considerable loan in order to make the revenue and expenditure of Great Britain coincide at the end of the year. That was the first time that the duty on sugar was adopted by the British Government for a great many years—in fact, since the country started on a policy of free trade. The duty was placed at four and two-pence per cwt. on refined sugar, and was gradually reduced down to two shillings per cwt. on raw sugar, polarizing at not more than seventy-six degrees. That duty on sugar has been kept up to the present time, but the rate of duty has been very considerably reduced, so that, at the present time, the sugar that was paying four and two pence per cwt. in 1902 was paying only one and five pence half-penny per cwt. in 1913. That duty on sugar, of course, produced a considerable revenue. The estimate that was made on the duty at the time the Chancellor of the Exchequer was making his Budget Speech, was that he would get a return of £5,100,000 from this duty on sugar. But the next year he was able to announce to the country that instead of £5,100,000 he had got £6,390,000. Then the amount obtained from the duty on corn was not satisfactory. The necessity for the duty on corn was due to the same causes as the duty on sugar, it was adopted a year later. The same Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, having to provide for a considerable portion of the cost of the South African war in 1902-03, placed a duty of three pence per cwt. on imported corn, and five pence per cwt. on imported flour, which he estimated would produce £2,650,000. That duty was placed on corn and flour for the one year, but Mr. Ritchie, who succeeded him as Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the following year when he came to his Budget Speech in 1904, gave as his reason for abolishing the duty on corn, that corn is a necessary of life in a greater degree than any other article of food. It is a raw material. It is the food of our people, it is the food of our horses and cattle. The tax has a certain disadvantage, namely that it is inelastic, and what is much worse, it lends itself very readily to misrepresentation. Therefore he abolished the duty on corn in that year, and it has not been adopted again. I mention this because the hon. gentleman in his speech left the impression that the duty on corn was in the nature of a protective duty, and that England was taxing food products, for the purpose possibly of affording some kind of