

friends would put that as a serious proposition before the people, and then pose in this House as a man of business who wants to be considered a practical politician. I dismiss a suggestion of that kind without further comment. You cannot gold-brick the farmers of this country with a proposition of that kind.

My hon. friend from St. Antoine (Mr. Ames) further said that the cattle raisers of Alberta were convinced they would lose their market. How did my hon. friend come to know the opinion of the Alberta raisers of cattle? I am in a small way an Alberta raiser of cattle myself, and I do not think the market for that cattle is likely to be lost; but there is no answer to what Mr. Asquith has aptly termed the sloppiness of the protectionist argument. Actually the logical protectionist speaking in the person of the hon. member for St. Antoine (Mr. Ames), says that the multiplication of markets means the loss of markets. Well, with gentlemen who argue in that fashion, it is impossible to continue a serious or relevant discussion.

If the House will extend me its patience a little while, I should like to make a few remarks on the general aspect of this question, and also reply to some of the objections we have heard, and I trust that my remarks will be strictly pertinent to the debate as far as it has gone. Personally I should be quite content to leave the defence of the position of the government as it was left by the speech of the Minister of Customs (Mr. Paterson) the first night of the debate. The hon. minister (Mr. Paterson) in that speech was logical, forcible, cogent and commendably brief. I do not know however, whether I ought not to modify that compliment about brevity, because since then my hon. friend seems disposed with some other members, to eke out his original contribution by supplementary remarks. There is another quality in that speech which we should all endeavour to imitate, and that is that he looked at the thing from the broad national standpoint. My hon. friend reminded me of some one who had been living for some time in a very inhospitable climate and had suddenly found his youth and vigour restored by returning once more to breathe his native air. But the speech of my hon. friend the leader of the opposition reminds me of the man who is still living in an inhospitable climate and likely to remain there much longer.

I find myself, however, in agreement with the hon. leader of the opposition (Mr. Borden, Halifax), and my hon. friend from North Toronto (Mr. Foster) when they said that Canada was big enough to look after her own tariffs, and to make her own tariffs independently of other countries. But if I agree in that, it is as a free trader.

I learned the doctrine in the form of an aphorism from a great Conservative—possibly the greatest Conservative leader—who was at the head of the Conservative party in England in the 19th century, a great financier, the teacher of Mr. Gladstone in matters of finance, and the man to whom Mr. Gladstone, to the very end of his career, referred always in terms of veneration and respect. Sir Robert Peel, after eight years of instruction at the hands of Cobden, came to repeal the corn laws, and laid down what I conceive to be sound philosophy today, as it was then, with regard to tariffs, and that is that the best way to combat hostile tariffs is by a system of free imports. As a free trader, therefore, I am bound to endorse the position that Canada is big and strong enough to attend to her own tariffs. That was the theory laid down by Sir Robert Peel, and which has been put in practice by the greatest commercial nation in the world during 70 years, and how has it worked out? It has worked out, as good theories always do. It has been proved by practice up to the hilt. Take for instance what has happened as regards trade between the United States and Great Britain. Britain takes the imports all right, she gets wire nails from the United States at \$6.50 per ton for which the people of the United States pay \$10 per ton. As a man who uses wire nails, I prefer to buy them at \$6.50 per ton rather than at \$10 per ton. A well educated American told me lately that, to his own knowledge, fencing wire manufactured in Rochester is taken across the Atlantic to Britain and then reshipped to Brazil and sold in Brazil cheaper than in Rochester where it is made. That is dumping, and Britain gets the cheap goods. Sir Robert Peel said that free imports are the best method of overcoming hostile tariffs. How does Britain get on after 70 years experience of hostile tariffs? At this juncture it is sufficient for me to say that British ships plough through the hostile tariff of the United States to such an extent that she exports more manufactured goods to the United States than to any other country in the world. Britain, with her free imports, commands the trade all around. She gets the cheap goods and compels the other countries to take her manufactures in exchange. Sir Robert Peel was a great Conservative statesman and financier, and when he made an aphorism in political economy he made it for all time.

I have ventured to trespass on the patience of the House in order to illustrate why I am an adherent of the position taken by the opposition in this regard. But, how does the position accord with their theory. How does it lie in their mouths to state that they believe Canada is big enough to make her own tariff? Another example of