

had been a failure in England. It was not true that England had found the end of her prosperity. It was not true, as political charlatans might say, that England had no market except Central Africa for her products. On a return of prosperity, not to herself alone, but to the other nations by the trade of which England had grown rich and powerful, England would still sweep the seas with her ships, and still command the commerce of the world. Let him call the attention of hon. gentlemen opposite to a few facts with respect to England's fiscal policy. He did not, however, do it with the hope that it would have any great influence on that debate, because they were not discussing Free-trade, although they might be discussing Protection; but, as an Englishman, he could not allow his own land to be impugned by the citizens of his adopted country. The right hon. member for Kingston had told the House that, in consequence of England having commanded the trade of the world during the progress of the continental wars, her people had obtained an enormous degree of prosperity, and that, from that fact, they were able, comparatively, to do without Protection. As a matter of history, that statement would be found to be scarcely accurate. The only great result Great Britain derived from those wars, so far as his knowledge extended, was the addition of £800,000,000 sterling to the national debt, mainly taken out of the industries of her people, and spent, to a large extent, in subsidizing foreign armies. But, as a matter of fact, it was not the consequences of the war that gave Great Britain her commercial supremacy. In 1822, the whole amount of the exports of Great Britain was only £36,968 964 sterling. In 1842, under a Protectionist régime, her exports had increased only £11,000,000 sterling, or thereabouts. In 1853, when the country had enjoyed for ten years a system of partial Free-trade, such had been the effect of Free-trade during her first and partial experiment, her exports had doubled, and amounted in that year to what was thought at that time the large sum of £93,351,306 sterling. She had then entered on her career of Free-trade. It

thus appeared that, under Protection, there was an increase of £11,000,000 in ten years, that under partial Free-trade, the exports had doubled in the next ten or eleven years; but that, after twenty years of Free-trade, in 1876, although that was a year of depression,—the exports of Great Britain amounted, not to £93,000,000, but to the enormous and almost incredible sum of £256,000,000 sterling. As to the world's markets being closed against her, and Great Britain being driven to Central Africa for a market, no doubt the time would come when Central Africa would yield a return for the enterprise and expenditure that had been incurred in years of exploration. We could no more judge of what that country would be in the future by what it was to-day, than of America by its condition 100 or 200 years ago; and, with Free-trade to sustain England in her venture, she would be able to point to a rich harvest and her merchants returning laden with the wealth of the products of that country. But England did not depend on Central Africa yet. In 1876, that terrible year of depression, England exported to British possessions £65,000,000 sterling worth of products, to Germany more than £20,000,000, to the United States close upon £17,000,000, to France £16,000,000 and to the Netherlands nearly £12,000,000. So, after all, the expression used by the right hon. member for Kingston was nothing more than a figure of speech, which he had not even in that sense any justification for using, when he spoke of Great Britain being forced to resort for her customers, not to the nations of the world around her, but to Central Africa. Here was another little indication of what Free-trade had done for England during the last few years. No man was more competent to speak on financial and commercial questions than Mr. Shaw Lefevre, formerly secretary of the Board of Trade, which, as hon. members were aware, was a Department of the Government in Great Britain. Mr. Lefevre spoke as follows in a lecture which he gave recently in England:—

“It appeared that the growth of those accumulations had been very rapid. The income tax returns showed that the gross