

The right hon. gentleman had been amongst the farmers at Peterborough, and knew it would not be safe to announce a National Policy to them, because that would involve a course of proceeding which, though it might be of problematical benefit on the one hand, would certainly be injurious on the other. At Hamilton he had, for the first time, to compete with gentlemen, as opponents, who were prepared to take their stand upon Protectionist principles. There he was reported to have said :

“One of the most important questions of the day was the commercial policy of the country. He had no hesitation in saying he was in favour of incidental protection to home industry. It was absolutely necessary, in consequence of the great works now in progress, of the railways and local improvements that were contemplated, that the revenue of the country should be increased, and that would best be done by Customs duties on articles imported into the country. The policy of the Dominion Government was to give incidental protection to home industry, although he knew they would be bitterly opposed by members of the Opposition, who were heart and soul in favour of Free-trade. He appealed to the meeting not to elect one, who, while pretending to favour Protection, would vote for the installation of a Free-trade Government.”

Well, the right hon. gentleman was sustained in Hamilton. What he somewhat unjustly called a Free-trade Government was not at that time called into power, and he had the opportunity afforded him, in the Session of 1873, of making good what he had promised in his speeches, and showing by practical legislation how far he desired to carry out what he called a Protectionist policy. Nay, more, when Mr. Tilley delivered his Budget speech in 1873, that hon. gentleman did not deny that he might have to give effect to such a policy. Mr. Tilley said :

“I know it may be asked are the Government not prepared to make some readjustment of the tariff, and my answer is that the Government will not during the present Session propose to touch the tariff in any particular. There are, I admit, some few interests in the country in relation to which, if the tariff were opened at all, the Government would feel justified in asking, and would feel it their duty to ask, for some readjustment. But, under the peculiar circumstances in which we are placed, looking at the increased expenditure of the next year, and the fact

that some readjustment must take place next Session, the Government have concluded to make no present change.”

There was a postponement of the evil day. The speeches delivered on the hustings in 1872 were disregarded, and Mr. Tilley, while admitting that there might be some cause for a readjustment, put it off to a more convenient season. He left it over for a day which, for him, never came. But it was important to apply one test after another to the sincerity of hon. gentlemen opposite to see what was taking place, not simply in Parliament, but in other places. That there was no serious intention at that period on the part of the Conservative leaders to introduce a protective tariff might be gathered from the action of their friends on the Dominion Board of Trade. In 1873, a member moved a resolution in favour of admitting free all articles of prime necessity and raw materials for manufactures, and increasing the duties on articles of luxury and those which entered into competition with our own manufactures, but that the imposts should not be larger than might be required for the public service. This was ruled out on a point of order. Another resolution, in a more decided Free-trade sense, was moved by Mr. Wilkes, and an amendment was proposed by Mr. Thomas White. In mentioning that gentleman's name he (Mr. Dymond) took the opportunity of saying that he referred to him solely as a representative man. He took that liberty with his name simply because the record of the proceedings of the Board of Trade were presented to hon. gentlemen officially when they came to Ottawa every year ; and he did not do it either for the purpose of impugning the opinions that gentleman might hold at the present time, with which he (Mr. Dymond) had nothing to do whatever, or suggesting any personal inconsistency on his part, for that was of little importance, so far as this House was concerned. He mentioned his name because he was an able man, and knew a great deal more than many persons of his political complexion who presumed to speak on the subject ; and because he (Mr. Dymond) had not the slightest doubt that Mr.