

if they had gone to the United States factories which are suffering from the depression which exists there, and the starvation which exists there—away from their Canadian homes, without any money to bring them back—in that case there would have been real suffering amongst them. But instead of that we have kept them in our own country. They are here; on the whole, well-doing fellow subjects of ours and furnishing a home market for the great industry of all, our agricultural industry. The hon. gentleman contemplates a return of that happy state of affairs when our factories shall be closed, when all the vigor and energy and constructive skill and enterprise of those who are not fitted or inclined to follow agricultural pursuits must go to the United States. The hon. gentleman would be glad to return to that state of things, but he does not express the opinion of the country; he does not express the opinion of the representatives of the people in this House. And I tell the hon. gentleman if he goes to the country as the leader of his party, as the exponent of free trade, and I go to the country as the exponent and supporter of the National Policy, we will beat him at almost every poll.

Mr. COCKBURN. Try it to-morrow.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. We have been trying it, and of the nine members who were introduced to you, Mr. Speaker, seven went to the polls as advocates and supporters of the National Policy—as advocates and supporters of the Government which introduced and maintained the National Policy, and two, I believe, occupy seats on the opposite benches. We are quite satisfied with the opinion of the country. We have the declaration of the majority of the country, and I believe that as seven is to two, so is the majority in the whole country in favor of the National Policy. My hon. friend was merry over all this kind of thing. He is not usually playful, but to-day he was excessively merry, and, like Mark Tapley, he wished to show that he was jolly under adverse circumstances, and certainly the portentous sight of seven gentlemen walking in one after the other, declaring continued confidence in the Government and their policy, was enough to arouse all his energies and make him as happy and as smiling as Mark Tapley himself, even at the Garden of Eden. The hon. gentleman says he knows that he and his party have been charged with belittling the country and undervaluing its position, but, he says, I must tell the truth and shame the—Tories. Well, I do not know that the Tories will accept the comparison drawn by the hon. gentleman, but certainly it will occur to him in that case that the Tories have played the very devil with him and his party. The hon. gentleman alluded to my speeches in England. Well, Mr. Speaker, I was in England, and I made some speeches. I am not ashamed of those speeches, and I adhere to what I said. I believe what I said was true, in substance and in spirit; I intended to speak the truth, and I am not ashamed of what I said. The hon. gentleman spoke of my speech as to a Bankruptcy Act, and he said I sneered at the prejudices of the rural population. I simply told the truth. I stated that the boards of trade in Canada, representing the commercial interest, were, as a whole, in favor of the introduction of a bankruptcy or insolvent law; I said that the rural population were opposed to a bankruptcy or insolvent law—that they had strong prejudices against it. Is that not so? Is it not so, in this House and out of this House, that while the commercial men desire an insolvent system with protection against undue preferences, the representatives of the rural constituencies as a whole are opposed to a bankruptcy law? That is what I stated, and I stated the truth. The hon. gentleman said that I stated that I was going to do the best I could for them. The hon. gentleman has not read my speech carefully, or he has forgotten it. I carefully guarded myself from expressing any opinion upon the question. When the represen-

tatives of the chambers of commerce, some of the most important chambers in England, asked what course they should take to express their views, I said I really did not know that they could do anything better than to pursue the course which they had already commenced—to keep up their communications with the various boards in Canada, and through them to use the powers and arguments they wished to use for the purpose of showing that a bankruptcy law was a necessity. Now, Mr. Speaker, it was my duty and my pleasure to receive with all courtesy these important bodies. The trade of England with Canada is of great importance, and I believe is going to be of still more importance; and it was of the utmost moment that I should receive such great representative bodies as the chambers of commerce when they wished to state that they believed sincerely that the commercial intercourse between England and Canada, and the development of that intercourse, were greatly prejudiced in consequence of the absence of a bankruptcy or insolvent law. I believe they have taken my advice. They are communicating now, or have communicated, with the various boards of trade in Canada; and, Mr. Speaker, the Speech did not say that there was not going to be any measure introduced. I may give the hon. gentleman this information in advance, that it is the intention of the Government to ask this House to strike a special committee, carefully formed, for the purpose of examining into the whole subject. They will have before them the petitions, the memorials and the remonstrances of these various commercial bodies, and we shall get a report upon the whole subject, and especially upon one point of the greatest importance, which dwells most particularly in the minds of the members of the English chambers of commerce, that is to say, the possibility of there being undue or fraudulent preferences. Those who have read my remarks may, perhaps, remember that I explained to those bodies, that unless the measure amounted, in the fullest sense, to a bankruptcy or insolvent law, the jurisdiction did not rest with us, but with the Provincial Legislatures. In order, therefore, that this whole subject may be reviewed in its commercial and constitutional aspects, it is the intention of the Government to ask this House to strike a committee of competent men to deal with this subject. The hon. gentleman has spoken about a reciprocity treaty, and treaties in general, and if I understood his remarks, he desired that we should go again to the United States and renew our efforts to secure a reciprocity treaty. Mr. Speaker, the public men of the United States, from the President down, know that Canada has always been ready to enter into negotiations for a reciprocity treaty. They know that upon our Statute Book there is a provision that in case the Americans at any time choose to enter into negotiations with us, the Government are empowered by the Parliament of Canada, without a new Act, without any legislation whatever, to reduce the tariff, or wipe away the duties altogether, on condition that the Americans reciprocate. And, Sir, what more do they want? It is not by going down on our knees that we shall get reciprocity, or by doing what those people at St. John did the other day. Because there has been a treaty entered into between the United States and Spain, giving the United States exclusively the trade with the Spanish Antilles, they said. We must have annexation with the United States—anything in order to get this trade as well.

Sir LEONARD TILLEY. Not many said that.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I am very glad to hear from the Minister of Finance that very few said that. Yet they were men who held out to the United States the supposition that we must have annexation if we do not trade with the Spanish Antilles. Why, Mr. Speaker, the consequence was, as happened before, and as has happened again and