

The Chief Secretary, after describing the gathering as one of the most notable deputations which had ever come to lay its case before the Irish Government, and knowing the remarkable growth of public opinion in favour of the policy embodied in its Bill of last session, expressed his heartfelt sympathy with the case which was presented, and his earnest desire, which is well known, to proceed with a policy of agricultural and industrial development at the earliest possible moment.

There is an Irish Secretary of an English free trade Government admitting that the agricultural depression in Ireland and England was due to the competition of those countries, and stating his intention to set up in free-trade England a department for the encouragement of the agricultural interests of the country. If many English industries are being ruined by the competition of countries which have adopted the bonus system, we may have to adopt it here in order to keep our markets. We may have to go the pace which other countries are taking for the purpose of depriving us of the cheese market in England. We do not hold that market by any inherent quality of our cheese, but only because up to the present time we have been able to get there ahead of the others; but when they adopt our method, and follow our plan, they will be our equals, and they may dispossess us of the market. A thing has happened very recently with regard to agriculture to which I wish to direct the attention of the Minister of Agriculture. That is with regard to the shipment of live stock from Canada to Great Britain. It is a fact that to-day the South American countries promise to beat us out of the live stock market which we now have in England. They can raise and finish their bullocks for less than we can, they can ship them to England at almost the same rates that we can, and I am told by large stock-dealers of Toronto that a large amount of capital is being transferred to South America to develop the export trade of cattle from Argentina. So that it becomes the duty of this Government, especially the duty of the Minister of Agriculture, if he finds that other countries are beating our country in the markets of Europe, to adopt some means for retaining those markets—to adopt, if necessary, a national policy. The National Policy has been denounced time after time as something not to be adopted by this country. But the mother country has adopted a national policy in some respects. What are the British quarantine regulations but a system of protection adopted to keep out our cattle and meats? The same thing has happened in Germany. Germany is one of the most progressive countries to-day, but it has a strong agrarian party, as it is called there, whose fundamental principle is the protection of native products against the food products of other countries. Now, if we find all other countries adopting such

Mr. MACLEAN.

a policy, we must adopt it in this country. Some hon. gentlemen who have spoken say that they do not believe in bonuses. I say that all these measures are bonuses, either directly or indirectly; and once you adopt the principle, you need have no hesitation in carrying it out in every direction. I am glad to see that hon. gentlemen opposite are coming more and more to this idea of protection. My hon. friend from Huron, when the other day made his new confession of faith, gave us a statement of the creed of protection which I must say I have never heard better stated; and the speech of the hon. gentleman who preceded me, if it means anything, means that in his opinion it is now time for the Liberal party of this country to adopt protection, if not by a bonus system, then by the adoption of cold storage, the appointment of agents in the old country, the inspection of our dairy herds, and I do not know what. But, Mr. Speaker, that is protection, and nothing but protection. That is a departure by these hon. gentlemen from their former creed, and the adoption of what has always been the policy of the Conservative party; and it would be far better for the Government candidly to admit this policy. They have adopted a great many planks of the policy of the Conservative party, and they should now adopt this one of agricultural protection. I am convinced that the Minister of Agriculture will be forced to adopt this very measure in regard to butter before long. I believe he is in a quandary to-night; I believe he does not like the division that is about to take place on this question; and I believe that our hon. friends opposite who represent agricultural constituencies do not like to have to vote against this resolution in favour of agricultural protection. I have no hesitation, Mr. Speaker, in voting for this measure of agricultural protection. I give the Minister of Agriculture credit for the steps he has taken already to encourage agriculture in this country; but I hope, now that he has made the break, that he will come out boldly and squarely in favour of what will keep the Government in the estimation of the people of Canada, that is, the writing on their party standard of every encouragement to the agricultural interests of this country.

Mr. OLIVER. Mr. Speaker, as I represent an agricultural constituency, and as the question before the House is one relating particularly to agriculture, I wish to say a word or two in regard to the resolution, which upon its face is strongly in favour of an important branch of agricultural industry. I am, Mr. Speaker, a national policy man; I am in favour of a national policy. But it does not necessarily follow that a national policy always means a policy of high tariff or a bonus. I am in favour of whatever will be found