

to the farmer, so far as I, as a farmer, can at all judge and am capable of forming an opinion, it has been of enormous benefit to the farmer. We have been told to-night, in the course of this debate, that there was no protection to the farmer. There is a protection to the farmer on his wheat, as the hon. member for West York has just proved; there is a protection to the farmer on his oats, as I have just shown, and there is a protection on his peas also; because I know myself that I have got a much higher price for peas ever since the introduction of the National Policy. There is a protection to the farmer for his pork, and incidentally for his eggs, his butter and his cheese—I say incidentally, because there has been a much greater demand for these commodities in our own markets, and the consequence is that we have higher prices.

Mr. IRVINE. Do we not export more cheese than we did?

Mr. McNEILL. I dare say we do, but that is no reason why we do not get a higher price for cheese at our own doors. The hon. gentlemen go upon theory. They say we export so and so, and therefore it must be so and so. But we refer them to the facts. The whole of their contention proceeds upon theory, from beginning to end, and they refuse to look facts in the face. They assume a certain theory, and, like the school men of old, they twist the facts into conformity with this theory. If they would look abroad, and see what the facts were, they would know that this free trade, as they call it, is a dead issue almost everywhere. They would know that there is no great country in the world which follows that policy, with the exception of England, and in England there is an enormous reaction against it. They would know that there is no country in the world, as I have stated before, which has ever succeeded in building up its industries without having recourse to protection. Notwithstanding that hon. gentlemen know, or ought to know, that to be a fact, they ask us to turn round and introduce into this country a policy directly the reverse of that which has proved to be successful all over the world. Not only so, but they ask us to adopt a policy which is now pursued by England as the only great country that adopts it. England is the one country which to-day pursues that policy at all. Formerly she was a protective country, just as much as Canada; and, therefore, it is impossible to deny that every great country, England being no exception, has succeeded in building up its industries under a policy of protection. It is also a fact that the greatest thinker on their own side of the question that has been produced during this generation, John Stuart Mill, admits, though he was a great free trader, that in such circumstances as ours we would probably be justified in adopting a policy of protection. Yet in spite of all these facts, hon. gentlemen would do just the opposite for Canada to that which has been successful everywhere else, they say; pursue the very opposite of the successful policy and then you will be all right.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT. The policy is remarkably successful this year, is it not?

Mr. McNEILL. I think it is; I think that so far as Canada is concerned, this year we have every reason to believe that the policy has been successful. If we compare Canada this year, with other countries, we have every reason to be proud of the National Policy. And if the hon. gentleman will tell me any country which has adopted the policy he advocates, which is more prosperous than Canada, I will be much obliged.

Mr. MILLS. New South Wales.

Mr. McNEILL. Where are the great manufacturing industries that have been built up in New South Wales. Does the hon. gentleman not know that there is a tariff imposed

in New South Wales in the form of great freight rates, that we have not got here at all, and if that country is an exception, it is an exception which proves the rule. I would like the hon. gentleman who first interrupted me, to mention a country that has adopted the policy of free trade that is in a more prosperous condition than Canada. Not only is there no such country, but the one country which has pursued a policy of free trade—of course it is not free trade. But they call it so; it is a policy of free imports, because free trade means free selling as well as free buying—but the country that has pursued the policy of free imports is the one great country which did not benefit to any considerable extent by the great wave of prosperity of hon. gentlemen were so fond of talking about a short time ago. Not only do they ask us to adopt a policy the reverse of that which has been successful in France, in Austria, in Germany, in Italy, in Russia and in the United States, but they ask us to pursue a policy which has resulted, in the case of England, in placing her at a disadvantage during the last few years, as compared with every other country in the world. I make that statement upon the authority of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Childers, the Chancellors of the Exchequer of England. At the time when the Finance Minister of Canada was able to declare enormous surpluses, these gentlemen who had charge of the finances in England were obliged to admit that the finances of that country were in a very unfortunate condition, and that its trade and industries were depressed. Now, with regard to this matter of wool, I have understood, from the observations of the Minister of Customs, that he intended to protect the Canadian farmer on his wool. I have understood that it was the belief of the Finance Minister himself that the tariff had been so framed. There is some ambiguity with regard to the wording of that clause in the tariff, and I am sure the hon. gentleman will take care that that ambiguity is removed in future and that the farmers shall have the protection they require. I may remark also that I do not think any Government can be supposed to be omniscient, and if these matters are not pointed out to them by the farmers in the House, like myself, for example, and others, why I think that upon us should be the blame. I confess that if there has been a mistake of that kind in this tariff for some time past, and if we, the farmers in this House, had not called the attention of the hon. gentleman to it, I think upon us should be the blame. I am glad attention has been called to the matter, and that this discussion has arisen, because, although at the time this tariff was first framed it would have been absurd to place a protective duty upon fine wools, when they were not being produced in the country, now that we have had time to make a start in raising fine wools, I think there ought certainly to be some protection upon them. As regards the question of shoddy, I must say that it seems to me a very difficult question; but, on the whole, I should much prefer to see the tariff altered in that respect, and the farmers protected. I think the question just resolves itself into this: Whether it is better that we should supply a cheap blanket with the shoddy, or make the consumer pay for a dearer blanket without the shoddy. I think there are certain classes of consumers who should be regarded in this matter, and if it were possible to supply them with very cheap blankets, without doing the others injury, it would be very desirable that it should be done. But the difficulty with respect to that is, that if you allow shoddy to be used in one class of goods and to be imported into the country, it will be very likely to be used for other classes, and it will be very difficult to prevent fraud to consumers. So that, so far as shoddy is concerned, I should like, speaking as a farmer, if the Finance Minister could see his way to make an alteration in the tariff in regard to it. So far as the question of benefit of the National Policy is concerned, I am satisfied, from all I have seen and know, that