

specific duty, and a duty which was reasonable in 1874 had become an unreasonable duty in 1893. But at all events, if the protection of the Canadian oil maker was a good thing, why should you cut down his protection while you kept it up for other people?

Hon. Mr. BOULTON—The duty was not lowered.

Hon. Mr. POWER—There were changes made which were equivalent to a reduction. Then the duty on binder twine was reduced one-half. The duty on cordage was supposed to be a capital thing, yet we are called upon to thank the Government for reducing the duty. To be consistent we should have been indignant with the Government for reducing that duty. If it was a good thing to put on the duty, we must have been worse off for the reduction. The truth does, in spite of the shrewdness of our friends opposite, come to the surface occasionally. They do feel, and have acknowledged in various instances that a duty is a tax, and that it makes things dearer; and I only hope that in the proposed changes in the tariff they are going to recognize that principle to a very considerable extent. While my hon. friend across the floor was talking about how much had been done for the farmers, I could not help thinking that, possibly the fact that the Patrons of Husbandry in the west had been making a good deal of noise over the tariff lately had much to do with the character of the hon. gentleman's speech. Those farmers in Ontario and Manitoba have been enjoying all the blessings of the duties on pork and flour for some years, but they do not seem to be satisfied; and they ought to know their own business. Probably the farmer of Ontario thinks he was just as well off when he was doing his business in another way when he was selling his grains close at hand, and that he could find a better use for his coarse grains than feeding them to hogs.

Hon. Mr. SMITH—I do not know of any better at present.

Hon. Mr. POWER—No better at present; he is driven to that. There is a paragraph which speaks of a measure on bankruptcy and insolvency which it is hoped will make more adequate provision than now exists on that subject for the increasing trade and commerce of the country. I am

quite aware that the law with respect to insolvency is not in a satisfactory condition, but I trust that the measure which is foreshadowed in that paragraph of the speech will be altogether different in principle from the Insolvent Act which we had before. Under the Act of 1875, insolvency was encouraged, and the creditors, as a rule, got practically nothing. The assignees and the lawyers concerned in the settlement of insolvent estates generally came off very well, but as a rule—I speak, of course, only of my own province, I cannot speak of other provinces—as a rule the creditors got next to nothing. The present system is unsatisfactory, but there is one thing about it, insolvency is discouraged. As it is now, a creditor can get a judgment against a man and hold it over him, and, if a debtor makes an assignment and acts dishonestly, and afterwards attempts to go into business, that judgment is there *in terrorem* and can be enforced. Insolvency is discouraged. There is, undoubtedly, in some of the provinces room now for unfair preferences; but I think that on the whole the present system is better than the one we had in 1879. They have in England an Act which works well, and if the measure which the Government propose to introduce follows generally the lines of the English Act it may improve the condition of things; but I for one should not care to commit myself to an unqualified approval of this measure until I see what it is.

The next paragraph is important but does not need much comment now, because the measure to which it refers will be before us. It is with respect to what is known as the fast Atlantic service. The leader of the House became very emphatic in dealing with that service, and condemned in advance any one who ventured to express a doubt as to the entire wisdom of the course indicated by the government. I do not propose for one to be scared by any declaration of that sort. We are here to use our best judgment with respect to the measures which come before us, and if a member of this House honestly thinks that any measure that is proposed is going to cost more than it is worth, it is his duty to say so and oppose the measure; and I have no hesitation in saying with respect to this Atlantic fast line that it is going to cost a great deal more than it will ever be worth. I do not hesitate at all to say that. I have said it in Halifax and I say it here, and I