

pockets of the people before but did not go into the treasury, it is in the power of the sugar refiners to take for themselves at a greater rate *ad valorem* than they had before. But he is giving the right to the people of this country to use on their breakfast-table sugars under No. 14 when imported from the country of production, while if they import it from any other country they have to pay 5 per cent. upon it, and on refined sugars the people still have to pay $\frac{8}{10}$ of a cent per pound. The hon. gentleman alluded to the argument of the hon. member for South Oxford with reference to the balance of trade, and attempted to account for the balance against Canada. I do not wish to go into a discussion of the subject of the balance of trade. The hon. member for South Oxford mentioned that only to show how utterly unable hon. gentlemen opposite were to grasp the condition of the country. He was showing that for years it was claimed by the predecessor of the hon. Finance Minister, a gentleman from his own province—and his claim was cheered to the echo by all his supporters—that if there was a balance of trade against us, we were on the highway to ruin. His policy was to reverse that condition of affairs; and when, owing to their policy, hon. gentlemen opposite actually did succeed for one year in changing the balance and making our exports greater than our imports, these hon. gentlemen threw up their hats in acclaim, and shouted: "We have managed it; we have made our exports greater than our imports, and we are now on the highway to prosperity." The hon. member for South Oxford referred to that to show hon. gentlemen opposite that since that time there has year after year been an enormous balance of trade against us. The hon. member for Albert argued that these balances were fictitious and could not be relied upon to show the real condition of the country at all; but the hon. member for South Oxford only referred to the matter to show that these hon. gentlemen do not comprehend some of the subjects they undertake to discuss. Now, the hon. gentleman said that we claimed that the National Policy was a failure. Well, we have said that it has not accomplished all that hon. gentlemen opposite claimed for it. Let me ask the hon. gentleman himself a question. I think he himself was reported as saying, in reply to a question of a newspaper man, that the National Policy was a failure and would have to be discontinued. I think that was the view he himself expressed, if he was correctly reported.

Mr. WELDON. That was not my view.

Mr. PATERSON (Brant). I only know what the hon. gentleman is reported as having said, and if he took that position he would not surely find fault with us when we, who do not admire the National Policy, declare it to be a failure. The hon. gentleman claimed that there were good features in this National Policy. He pointed out that before it was introduced, there had been small industries scattered through all the towns and villages, but that in place of them we had now large factories. He said that in those days in every village you would find a tannery tanning the hides of the whole village. When I went to school I used to be told that the schoolmaster attended to that business in part. But no doubt the National Policy has partly had the effect of wiping out these smaller industries. But if the aggregate number

Mr. PATERSON (Brant).

of people that are receiving employment in this country now, under the system of large factories, has increased, the aggregate number of people scattered through all the villages and towns and helps to carry on the different institutions of the country, has decreased. I rejoice in the evidence of prosperity as well as hon. gentlemen opposite, and in any progress made in our manufactures, provided it is made legitimately; but I hold that if you have to bonus a manufacturer to an extent greater than all the wages he pays to the men employed by him, it is a direct loss to the country instead of a gain, and that is a proposition no hon. gentleman opposite can successfully controvert. Hon. gentlemen opposite are hardly fair when alluding to the arguments of my hon. friend from South Oxford with reference to the depreciation of farm lands in Ontario. The hon. gentleman denounced that statement in very strong language. I think he was pleased to say it was untrue, and that he would prove it to be untrue. Now, in questions of this kind it is better not to impute an untruth to an hon. member; it is better, if we can, to admit that he has given an opinion in which he honestly believes, though he may be very much mistaken, and give him the benefit of the doubt. I think an hon. gentleman is all the more bound to do that if he is not in a position to substantiate the assertion he makes by some reliable data. But what is the proof the hon. gentleman gave to show the hon. member for South Oxford was wrong in saying that farm lands had depreciated. He took the report of Mr. Blue and read the total value of improved lands in Ontario compared to what they were seven or eight years ago. Does the hon. gentleman suppose that Ontario is standing still? Does he suppose that no land is being brought, year by year, under cultivation which was not cultivated before? Does he suppose there is no increase in the total acreage of improved land? How does the hon. gentleman's reference disprove the statement made by my hon. friend from South Oxford, which was that individual farm lands have depreciated in value 25 per cent.? The figures given by Mr. Blue do not disprove that statement in the slightest degree. I can assure hon. gentlemen opposite that this is a point on which I do not care to touch, as I find no pleasure in talking about the depreciation of land in Canada, and would much rather be able to rejoice that our lands were appreciating instead of depreciating. But I am forced to say, and I say it with regret, that—let the hon. gentleman attribute it to one cause or another—if I am to believe the statements of loan companies and the farmers themselves, farm lands in many parts of Ontario have depreciated below what they were worth some years ago. I would be only too glad if the hon. gentleman could bring any proof to the contrary, but that he has failed to do. I, however, will not discuss this question at further length, but will leave it to be discussed by hon. gentlemen who will follow me in the debate, and who are more conversant with the matter. No true Canadian can rejoice in the fact that our lands are depreciated, but no true statesman, no true legislator, is justified in living in a fool's paradise and shutting his eyes to the facts. If the contrary be the case, he ought to know it, and face it, and introduce legislation to remedy it instead of imposing burdens upon the people greater than they are able to bear. The hon. gentleman,