

and who benefitted by it? There was hardly a session of Parliament in which a squire or nobleman did not move for a commission to inquire into the distressed state of agriculture, which was the result of protection. Agricultural laborers were in a state of degradation and misery, and in the towns the weavers, spinners, and manufacturers were in a state of pauperism and wretchedness horrible to look back to. (Cheers.) All this was under the system of protection which these wise men wished to return to. The danger of such a state of things was that it would produce discontent with the institutions under which we live. The country had only been saved from revolution by sweeping away the system of protection, monopoly, and cruelty. (Cheers.) The result had been an enormous increase of trade, a prodigious increase of shipping, and an amazing increase of national wealth. (Cheers.) In support of this view he quoted Sir Stafford Northcote's book, "Our Financial Policy," published in 1862, to the effect that although there had been seasons of temporary local and partial suffering, and the changes had sometimes pressed hard upon particular districts, yet, on the whole, the condition of every portion of the community had been greatly improved by the new policy. (Cheers.) It was a pity the principle which had proved so beneficial should be swept away because it had begun to rain."

HON. MR. KAULBACH—It shows that there is an agitation for fair trade in England.

HON. MR. McCLELAN—Yes, and he is speaking against it. His whole speech is interesting, but I do not care to take up the time of the House reading it, because I have other speeches to which I wish to refer.

HON. MR. KAULBACH—My hon. friend might see that we are in a new country and that we ought to adopt the policy which England followed when her industries were in their infancy, too.

HON. MR. McCLELAN—My hon. friend referred four times, in the course of his speech, to the enormous crowding of families in London, but I think it will be a long time before the chief city of his province, Halifax, is so over-crowded under the National Policy. I had occasion to refer, the other day, to the fact that in 1870 some opinions were expressed in this House on the subject of protection. At that time there was a measure brought forward to impose a tariff called the

National Policy. The junior member from Belleville is not very happy in his memory of the history of this National Policy, because he did not refer to what was called the National Policy which was introduced and carried in 1870. There was a very close vote upon it in the Senate. That National Policy did not go so far in the way of protection as this one does. It provided for the imposition of a duty on coal, flour, salt, rice and a number of minor articles.

HON. MR. PLUMB—And Sir Charles Tupper said it was "the thin edge of the wedge," did he not?

HON. MR. McCLELAN—He may have said so. In the discussion which took place in the Senate on that question, the hon. Senator from Saugeen, who is now the Minister of the Interior, moved the resolution in amendment, which was, practically, a three months' hoist, and, in the discussion on that, he took very strong grounds against the thin end of the wedge of protection, and that seemed to be the danger which pervaded his mind—that it would lead to higher protection, and that the whole principle of protection was wrong.

HON. MR. KAULBACH—A wise man may change his mind.

HON. MR. McCLELAN—Certainly, and I trust that my hon. friend from Lunenburg may change his; it is perfectly legitimate; I am not imputing any improper motives to anybody. I am merely quoting the opinion of public men—distinguished men—upon this question. In this connection I will refer to expressions from a speech delivered by the hon. Senator to whom I have just made reference, *inter alia* :—

"He believed it to be exceedingly unsound to impose a duty on coal and bread stuffs, or any natural products that were now free."

That is exactly in accordance with the views some of us entertain to-day. Then he continues—

"Then the duty would be a great obstruction to trade all through the country, which should, in accordance with the true principle of commerce, be left as unrestricted as possible.

"Not only would the tariff be worthless to