

and agitated for the imposition of protective duties on imported manufactured goods, a few because in their special trades they have met with some effective competition in the home market from foreign manufacturers of similar goods, and many more because they have found their export trades checked and hampered by the imposition or raising of the duties on their goods in foreign countries, and they perhaps naturally desired to find some means of striking back, and giving a blow for a blow, without realising the broad economic consequences of such a policy on our international trade as a whole.

But throughout the whole of this period the great mass of our labouring populations have been steady supporters of a Free Trade policy, and not least so the agricultural labourers and workers in rural industries, whose condition has been so greatly ameliorated by the low prices of foods and the general advance in the wages of labour. The degree of the general acceptance and support of our Free Trade policy in Great Britain has been shown by the fact that, in spite of all the changes of governments due to our party