

vating the home market, and the uncertainty of foreign markets is clearly demonstrated in our trade with the United States. We must, however, accord the government credit for endeavouring to give the United States a reasonable chance in their trade with this Dominion. Since taking over the reins of power the government have made every effort to build up trade with the country to the south of us, but what have they given us in return for the home market which we have lost? We find that in 1921, when the present administration took office, we sold to the United States two and a half times the amount of agricultural products which we sold them in the year just past. This is an evidence of the uncertainty that exists in attempting to establish markets far from our own shores. Many members on all sides of the house have in the past emphasized the view that agriculture was the basic industry of the country, but experience has taught us that no basic industry can make any progress without reference to others; it is bound to be more or less dependent upon the secondary industries if the industrial development of the country is to be maintained.

We awaited with interest the budget that has been brought down by the Minister of Finance, and now that it has been submitted we find certain tariff changes proposed. The budget may be pleasing to those who are interested in a low tariff: the Minister of Finance calls it a re-classification, but whether you describe it thus, or whether you call it a ratification or a modification or a lowering of the tariff or tariff tinkering, the effect will be the same; it will be felt just as injuriously by industry throughout the Dominion. The present budget is only another evidence of the instability of this administration's fiscal policy, and it will react unfavourably not only on the textile industry but on many others besides. Certainly, at any rate, it will affect the textile industry, one of the earliest established enterprises in this Dominion. I need not go into details in regard to this industry inasmuch as the effect of the proposed tariff reduction as related to textiles has been emphatically stated in Hansard. But while the budget will entail considerable hardship, while it will throw many of the labouring class out of employment, while it will shut down many factories and worry many capitalists who have put their money into similar industries, it will prove the statement I have made that agriculture and all these other enterprises are interdependent: one cannot suffer without injury to the other.

We on this side regret that the government has dealt the textile industry another blow of uncertainty. The effect upon the industry, the labouring man, and our domestic markets can readily be anticipated. This subject has been dealt with in detail by several hon. members on this side and is therefore already on Hansard. But may I say that we find industry and agriculture showing a common concern in view of the unhappy situation in which they find themselves. I know there are many older members in this house who will recall the tariff cuts on textile goods in 1898, when hundreds of woollen mills and scores of textile plants were forced out of business. The sheep industry immediately felt the effects and began to decrease from 2,500,000 head until the number reached 2,000,000 head only in 1911. After the smoke of the reciprocity battle had blown away, and a stable fiscal policy had been inaugurated, we find that both industries improved and the increase in the number of sheep by 1921 amounted to 60 per cent. Then followed the negotiation of the French and Australian treaties, and we regret to note that during the succeeding five years the number of sheep decreased from 3,700,000 head to 2,877,000 or approximately 30 per cent. It is interesting also to find that during that time Australia increased its number of sheep by 13,000,000, and France by 1,000,000.

In the early days of Canada the sheep was christened the golden hoof of agriculture. The value of sheep as weed exterminators has always been appreciated by expert agriculturists, and when we hear of the admitted problem of weeds where grain cropping becomes the chief enterprise, as our western friends well understand, I would ask the right hon. the Prime Minister, who has recently joined the industry, and the hon. Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Motherwell), another sheep breeder, if they would not consider the possibility of gaining 100,000,000 sheep for Canada, similar to the number in Australia and other countries, instead of the two or three million that we now have as likely to prove a benefit to agriculture.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I note a report has been laid on the table of this house by a research commission regarding the condition of our woollen industry, and while I have not read it I might say that if the government is desirous of improving conditions they have only to follow a very simple process. First, let them encourage the breeding of better sheep, and the careful grading of the wool. Second, let the duty be raised on raw wool, as well as woollen products instead of being lowered. Let them also encourage other industries, thereby enlarging the home market for mutton.