

imported by the last trip of the steamer amounted to some \$19,000. That would go a long way to balance the subsidy which the country gives it, and in my judgment it very seriously obstructs trade between the two countries.

Another subject adverted to is that of factory labor. It is no doubt a very important one, and it is proper that at this early period we should consider whether the children, those whose growth has not matured, are confined in factories unduly to seriously affect their health. A very large proportion of the inmates of those factories are women and children. If I am wrong hon. gentlemen will correct me, but I believe that in some of them half the employes are women and children. If that is a fact, it is very important that they be not subject to extreme hours, and that the surroundings are such as do not affect their health as has been the case in some other countries. But I notice here with what tenderness His Excellency's advisers have thought proper to advert to this subject. We are told that measures will be considered "for the best means of promoting the comfort and well being of the workman and his family, without undue interference with the development of our manufacturing industries." One would infer from this that there was a little timidity in the expressions of sympathy with the women and children therein implied, if it was to unduly interfere with the profits of the manufacturer.

The next paragraph adverts to the surplus of \$4,000,000. Well, I suppose if the tariff had been a little higher we might have made it \$5,000,000. It was simply a question of taxing the imports of the country. My hon. friends who speak so enthusiastically of that surplus, more especially the hon. senator from Montreal (Mr. Ogilvie), seem to think it was in some way due to the fiscal policy of the country. Now, in my judgment, it was due to the increased purchasing power of the people of Canada. It was due, no doubt, to the large importations with a high tariff, and to no other cause. The products of this country, the grain, the flour, beef and other farm produce, had been selling at good prices to the United States and to Europe; our lumber had gone up enormously in the last two years, probably fifty per cent.; the demand was greater

than the supply. That has brought back immense wealth to this country. Hon. gentlemen cannot say that that branch of industry has been in any way helped or fostered by the National Policy; on the contrary it has been injured, because people have had to pay more for their supplies. The condition of affairs which I have described has been one of the causes of the great prosperity of this country. The ability of the United States to take our lumber at higher figures than they were able to pay in former years, and the prices which prevailed for agricultural products enabled our people to buy abroad, and the imports being heavily taxed, the consequence is: we have \$4,000,000 of a surplus. The mere fact of putting up a tariff could not have the effect of stimulating trade. We know that in the United States the high tariff did not prevent terrible depression, that although it was the same as it is to-day it did not stimulate importation. The imports of the United States during the last four years have more than doubled. Any one who will consult the returns will see that the imports of 1881 were double those of 1876, and the effect is to give that country a surplus of \$126,000,000. In some months the surplus amounted to between \$13,000,000 and \$14,000,000. Taking the population and the other circumstances into consideration, that is a very much larger proportion than the tariff of Canada has yielded. The United States has had a wonderful era of prosperity in the last three years, and the consequence is they have bought largely and exported largely, and they are rapidly paying off their national debt. If the Government, while adverting to this subject, had coupled with it the statement that they proposed to remove those duties which press unduly on the people of this country, there would have been some cause for rejoicing. If the people of the Maritime Provinces were told that they were to get their flour and grain and other food supplies without having to pay a heavy duty I think it would be a cause for congratulation. If the people of Ontario were told that they were to have the coal tax removed there would be some reason for rejoicing. Whether the members of the Government propose to remove those obnoxious taxes, we cannot at the present moment foretell.

I have no other observations to make at