

Customs Tariff

on anthracite coal? I do not choose to answer the question without consideration. Though my hon. friend may be willing to give any idea that comes into his head without any thought, I prefer to think over a question before answering it. I do not apply this to my hon. friend to my left or my hon. friend across the floor at all, but any man with no brains whatever can ask questions that the wisest man in the world cannot answer. I do not like to answer questions without giving any thought or consideration to the subject. I should like to know if my hon. friend (Mr. Logan) is in favour of it.

Mr. LOGAN: I have wearied this House advocating a duty on anthracite coal. There is no reason why the rich man's coal should come into this country free while the poor man's coal is taxed, and there is no reason why American anthracite coal should be brought into Canada to the extent of about \$50,000,000 worth annually to compete with coal produced in Canada.

Mr. MANION: My hon. friend has good sense. He has given the question some thought, and I am glad to hear him express his opinion. He is not entirely correct in saying that soft coal is the poor man's coal. As a matter of fact, soft coal is not so much the poor man's coal as the coal of the manufacturer, the large producer and the railways. Nearly all the soft coal used in this country is used by large manufacturing plants and so forth. Since using coal last year of a softer variety, I have come to the conclusion that it is time we should use more of the soft coal and not import anthracite at all from American mines.

I have just one more observation to make and then I shall conclude. My hon. friend from East Lambton (Mr. Fansher) this afternoon stated that only a certain percentage of the bounties paid to oil operators went to the farmer; I think he said that one-eighth went to the farmer and seven-eighths to the producer. There are arguments in defence of that situation. Naturally the farmer when he gets his royalty or rent—whatever one cares to call it—runs no risk at all, whereas the producers who are spending their money on equipment, machinery, and so forth, have always to face the possibility of a loss. So that it is only natural that they should get a little more than those who take no chances. But while it may be true that seven-eighths of the bounties do not go directly to the farmer, nevertheless indirectly all this money goes not only to the farmer but to the rest of the country as well; for everything that is paid out in bounties in

[Mr. Manion.]

the production of the oil must find its way eventually into the pockets of the people. If these bounties were discontinued, the one-eighth which my hon. friend speaks of would no longer go to the farmer, and the farmer would certainly be worse off in so far as this particular matter is concerned. I am inclined to think that there will be many a farmer who will not vote for my hon. friend after the stand he took this afternoon in regard to the bounties; it seems to me that they will be voting for themselves in voting against him. In conclusion I just want to emphasize this fact, that any money spent in this way in the development of iron, oil or coal in this country goes into the pockets of the people, and that fact is well worth the careful consideration of parliament at the present time.

Mr. R. V. LeSUEUR (West Lambton): This question of oil bounties has been discussed at considerable length already, but before the vote is taken or the subject concluded I think it my duty to make a few remarks on the situation with regard to the oil production industry in Canada. Coming from the western part of the county of Lambton, where a large proportion of the oil production of Canada takes place, I am naturally more or less familiar with conditions in the industry. Canada's oil production is not large to-day; the year 1923, I believe, saw a production throughout the country of some 158,000 barrels, or approximately 160,000. Of that production, I should say that between 65 and 70 per cent was in the county of Lambton. Obviously therefore the oil industry has been and is to-day a very important factor in that county, particularly in the central portion of it. There are I understand 3,570 wells being operated in Lambton county at the present time, and there are about 216 power plants in operation, the investment being upwards of \$2,000,000. The industry employs directly several hundreds of men, and indirectly many others besides. The wells in Lambton county produce a very small quantity of oil individually; they are all pumped, all the oil having to be raised up to the surface. These wells therefore are in a very different position from what one might call flowing wells. They are nearly all old wells, and there is of course the cost of maintenance to be considered, in the form of new casing and sand pumping and cleaning; so that the upkeep is fairly high. It can be understood, I think, that a well which produces only between four and five barrels a day of oil that must be pumped to the surface is utterly unable to compete with a well which