

tries of England, rooted in experience and skill, upheld by vast wealth, and assisted by all the prestige of a well-earned reputation, are unable to endure the strain of this policy of so-called Free Trade without danger, surely it were little short of midsummer madness to expect the comparatively insignificant manufacturing industries of Canada to survive so fierce an ordeal. The example of England ought to be a warning to Canada, and we ought steadily to keep in view the fact that during that period in which so-called Free Trade worked well for English manufacturers, the conditions were exactly the reverse of those which confront Canada to-day. Then, England's manufacturing industries were overwhelmingly strong, and she had no competitors in her own markets. To-day, Canada has for competitors the mightiest industries in the world, and her own industries are in comparison utterly insignificant.

The fast-failing exports to foreign countries, together with the steadily increasing inflow of foreign manufactured goods, is producing a deep impression upon many minds in the United Kingdom; and a movement of immense power is unquestionably making against the existing fiscal policy. It is felt that trade both at home and abroad is going from bad to worse, and that something must be done, and soon done, if dire calamity is to be averted. This opinion is so prevalent that last year the then prime minister gave voice to it at Hastings, on the eve of a general election. The words following are certainly the most remarkable, in reference to the fiscal policy of the country, that have fallen from the lips of any leading English statesman since the days of the Corn Laws:

"There is a matter which occupies our minds, and in which, I think, the prosperity of this country is greatly involved. I allude to the question of our external trade. After all, this little island lives as a trading island. We could not produce in food stuffs enough to sustain the population that lives in this island, and it is

only by the great industries which exist here, and which find markets in foreign countries, that we are able to maintain the vast population by which this island is inhabited. But a danger is growing up. Forty or fifty years ago everybody believed that free trade had conquered the world, and they prophesied that every nation would follow the example of England and give it-elf up to absolute free trade. The results are not exactly what they prophesied, but, the more adverse the results were, the more the devoted prophets of free trade declared that all would come right at last; the worse the tariffs of foreign countries became, the more confident were the prophecies of an early victory. But we see now, after many years' experience, that, explain it how we may, foreign nations are raising, one after another, a wall, a brazen wall, of protection around their shores which excludes us from their markets, and, so far as they are concerned, do their best to kill our trade. And this state of things does not get better. On the contrary, it constantly seems to get worse. Now, of course, if I utter a word with reference to free trade I shall be accused of being a protectionist, of a desire to overthrow free trade, and of all the other crimes which an ingenious imagination can attach to a commercial heterodoxy. But, nevertheless, I ask you to set yourselves free from all that merely vituperative doctrine, and to consider whether the true doctrine of free trade carries you as far as some of these gentlemen would wish you to go. Every true religion has its counterpart in inventions and legends and traditions which grow upon that religion. One of the difficulties we have to contend with is the strange and unreasonable doctrine which these Rabbis have imposed upon us. If we look abroad into the world we see it. In the office which I have the honor to hold I am obliged to see a great deal of it. We live in an age of a war of tariffs. Every nation is trying how it can, by agreement with its neighbor, get the greatest possible protection for its own industries, and, at the same time, the greatest possible access to the markets of its neighbors. This kind of negotiation is continually going on. It has been going on for the last year and a half with great activity. I want to point out to you that what I observe is that while A is very anxious to get a favor of B, and B is anxious to get a favor of C, nobody cares two straws about getting the commercial favor of Great Britain. (Cheers.) What is the reason of that? It is that in this great battle Great Britain has deliberately stripped herself of the armor and the weapons by which the battle has to be fought. You cannot do business in this world of evil and suffering on those terms. If you go to market you must bring money with you; if you fight, you must fight with the weapons with which those you have to contend against are fighting. It is not easy for you to say, 'I am a Quaker; I do not fight at all; I have no weapon,' and to expect that people will pay the same regard to you, and be as anxious to obtain your goodwill and to consult your interests, as they will be of the people who have retained their armor and still hold their weapons. (Hear, hear.) The weapon with which they all fight is admission