

out of the hands of the farmers last fall at from 38 to 40 cents per bushel of 60 pounds, of the finest grade of hard wheat that is raised anywhere on the face of the earth, and that, so far as the Ontario farmer is concerned, the bulk of his crop was marketed at about 50 cents per bushel. A large proportion of the surplus of our North-west grain found its way down on the American side from Duluth. And why? Simply because American bottoms gave cheaper rates to outside markets than our own lines would give, though they had been bonussed so freely by Canadian money. What was the result? Two large milling companies, the Lake of the Woods Company and the Ogilvie Company proceeded to corral all the surplus wheat in the North-west that they could lay their hands on. Meantime, the farmers in the older provinces, with wheat below a cent a pound, fed it freely to their stock and used it up in various ways, making the most economical use they could make of it. To-day the price of wheat is high because the companies I speak of have cornered the market and the stock is not in the hands of the farmers. Is that a benefit to the farmers? Is that a benefit to the consumers? I venture to say that the only parties benefited by it are these speculators and a few small holders of grain scattered throughout the province of Ontario. With the latter I have sympathy, with the former I have none. These are the facts as to the National Policy as applied to the prices of grain to-day.

Our friends opposite are never tired of telling us about the relative position of the farmer in Canada and the farmer in England. My hon. friend from East Grey (Mr. Sproule) told us to-day that the English farmer was in a difficult position, that he was being taxed right and left, and he and the Controller of Customs and the hon. member for East Hastings quoted to us long paragraphs to show that the British farmer was demanding protection. What is the position as between the Canadian farmer and the English farmer? All that we ask is to be placed on the same level as the English farmer to-day, and we do not ask any better protection than they have at the present moment, nor will we be satisfied with anything less. The English farmer to-day buys everything he consumes at the lowest possible rate. I think hon. gentlemen opposite will admit that. But the Canadian farmer finds that his agricultural implements, such as reapers, mowers and binders are taxed 20 per cent; and the small tools he requires, such as scythes, forks, rakes, and the whole catalogue of smaller implements used on the farm are taxed 35 per cent. And taxes collected from the Canadian farmer are not for the benefit of the treasury. The Controller of Customs admitted the other day that when the question arose as to the value that should be placed upon these implements for duty when they were imported for the use of the Canadian people, he did not refer

the matter to independent officers but to the manager of the combine in Canada that controls the works that manufacture these very implements. If any evidence were wanted to show that this Government is not an independent government of the people, but the servant of the combinations, we have it in that one simple fact. Take, for instance, the sugar that the British farmer consumes to-day, and what do we find? According to the London quotations to-day the sugar that cost 4½ cents a pound here is sold in England at 3 cents, and it is as good to the farmer there who buys it as if he paid 4½ cents per pound for all he consumed. And so with all the articles that he uses, he buys them at the lowest possible rates for he is in the market of the world where everything is sold at its fair value. And the only article he pays an increased price upon is his tea, which is dutiable at fourpence a pound, and his coffee, which pays 14 shillings a hundred, or 1½ pence a pound. The average consumption of tea in England is about 6¼ pounds per head; and, allowing the consumption of coffee to be one-third additional, the English farmer does not pay more than 75 cents per year duty on these articles more than the Canadian farmer pays, who has those articles free. I say that under these circumstances, all we ask is that the burdens shall be taken off the back of the Canadian farmer, and that nothing more shall be placed upon him than his fair and legitimate share of the necessary expenditures in connection with the economical administration of the public affairs of this country; and that the extra taxes that are rolled upon him for the maintenance of these combinations under this tariff, and of these various other protective institutions, shall be removed from his back, and that he shall be given the same kind of fair-play that the British farmer receives.

Let me say one word further as to the plea these gentlemen are making that the British farmers are asking for protection. Sir, it will be a sorry day for the National Policy in Canada if the British farmers succeed in getting protection imposed. I would like to see the faces of hon. gentlemen opposite who are telling us that the British farmer wants protection; I would like to see them go to the people, after their policy had been adopted in England, and tell the people that Canada's cheese was taxed 4 cents per pound to get into the British market; that Canada's beef was taxed 20 or 30 per cent to find its way into the British market; that Canada's wheat was taxed 15 cents per bushel to get there. Where would the shouting be about the protection that the National Policy gave our people? Do they believe that when Great Britain inaugurates the policy of protection, as they would lead us to believe, she is going to protect Canada? Won't she protect Great Britain first? And won't these protective taxes be imposed for the benefit of the