

so unfortunate in the expression of their policy, to say the least, that they led the British people to believe they gave one thing when in fact they were giving another and a very different thing.

But what has been the effect of this course? Hon. gentlemen opposite have been shown to be all wrong in their action; duties collected have had to be repaid, with the attendant costs; the scope of the clause was larger than they had intended, and if one says in excuse: Well, when notice was given by Great Britain that the treaties would be denounced, it was found by the decision of the Law Officers of the Crown that until the denunciation became effective the most-favoured nations' goods had to be admitted under that clause, if any one as an apologist of the Ministry makes that argument now, I cite him the other fact, and that is, that under that clause the Ministers themselves have opened up the benefits of it to nations and countries which have no most-favoured-nation treaties with us at all, and are entirely outside the pale. Hon. gentlemen opposite first denied that the effect of the clause would go further than England. They were wrong. They then denied that it would go further than Belgium and Holland at all events. They were wrong. They next denied that it would go further than the most-favoured treaty nations. They were wrong. Japan and the Netherlands came and demanded entry for their goods under this clause, and they were accorded entrance. To-day, as Mr. Kendrick Murray states, there is not a great country in the world whose commerce is worth much, outside the United States, which is not having the advantage of the same clause; and yet hon. gentlemen were Jubilee heroes and took Jubilee honours which largely came to them on the faith they inculcated that Canada had in the Jubilee year made a magnificent and exclusive gift to Great Britain out of good heart and good will alone.

What have been the results of this action? It was stated that it would make a great change in the commercial trend, and that Great Britain's trade with this country would increase under this preferential advantage of one-eighth first, and later of two-eighths or one-fourth. Has it? The facts have a right to speak, the facts must be heard; and as the facts were against hon. gentlemen in those other particulars I have mentioned, the facts are equally against them in this respect. The truth is that the imports from Great Britain to this country have suddenly fallen under the one-eighth advantage which those hon. gentlemen claimed they had given to Great Britain. We have, unfortunately not received the last quarterly report of the Minister of Trade and Commerce, which should have been due on 1st January, I think, and so there is nothing to go on in the way of public record but the first quarterly report and the English re-

turns. Let me take the English returns first. I find by the English returns that the exports of Great Britain to British North America for the nine months ending 30th September, 1896, were of the value of \$12,800,000. For the same period of 1897 it was \$11,765,543, or a decrease of 8½ per cent in English trade so far as England's exports to this country are concerned, assuming that the imports to Newfoundland were equal in both periods.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE (Sir Richard Cartwright. I did not catch what my hon. friend (Mr. Foster) is quoting.

Mr. FOSTER. The nine months ending 30th September.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. How are you making your comparison, for 1895 or 1896?

Mr. FOSTER. 1896 and 1897 are the two years.

The MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE. I thought you said 1895?

Mr. FOSTER. There was a decrease of 8½ per cent in English trade with us. In cotton goods there was a decrease from \$1,729,353 to \$1,450,241; in linens from \$573,347 to \$446,579; in laces, silks and that like, the reduction was from \$33,823 in one case to \$20,911, and in the other from \$114,936 to \$77,739. Iron and steel goods decreased from \$2,309,000 to \$1,669,900, and apparel decreased from \$1,395,642 to \$1,152,314, and so on through the list that is given. Now, I am free to admit that this takes in but five months of the actual working of the preferential tariff, but at all events that is the state of things as developed by the Trade Returns from Great Britain.

How is it then with reference to the imports from the United States; because one great glory of this new legislation was, that it was to increase British trade with us and to decrease United States trade with us; at least to change the relative proportions of the two. From the United States, during the eight months up to the 31st of August of these two periods, the import of corn in the last period increased to \$2,267,901 as against \$1,761,230 in the preceding period. The imports from the United States of manufactures of iron and builders' hardware, increased from \$379,546 worth to \$389,015 worth, and so on through a considerable list. I cannot avoid upon this point, calling the attention of my hon. friend the Minister of Trade and Commerce to an argument that he once made; seriously made I have no doubt. I want to present it to him and to ask, if he will seriously make it again. I know his stubborn adhesion to a thing he has once said, even though it be wrongly said, but I have yet hope that in this case, the thing is so patent and so clear, that my hon. friend