

to the expectation of some people, he may not have opportunity to do that for a long while. But that is something that is in the lap of the gods and in the womb of the future. I hope he will study the question, anyhow, and that, if he does not, some successor of his will do so the next time a Budget is produced in this House.

I daresay that some of my hon. friends opposite would like to turn to me and say: Well you are a great bore; after all, your speech is just another exposition of free trade. Well it is, and what can one do but keep expounding what one believes to be true until it reaches the unenlightened, or those who do not want to be enlightened. I was told the same thing about free wheat. I got an immense encouragement from the recent history of the hon. gentlemen opposite, and every little encouragement, to a man who loves freedom as much as I do, will keep him going on preaching it as long as he is above the sod. It is an exposition of free trade, but I am afraid I have to give the House more than an exposition of free trade in these war times. I think that the war has afforded the greatest vindication of free trade that ever principle received in the history of mankind. I think so. I pointed out this afternoon that I was glad of the opportunity of putting on Hansard what had actually happened in other countries of the world in regard to fiscal policy since the war began. It is a very interesting study, this fiscal question, more interesting than any fiction if a man will only give his mind to it. The tariff conditions in the world at the time the war broke out were very interesting. It would have appeared at the time the war broke out that while Britain was wedded more strongly than before to her free trade policy, the Central Empires—Germany the leader of them—were more firmly wedded than ever to the system of protection. They had built up the system in Germany in a period of forty years. They had buttressed it in every conceivable way, and appeared to be wedded to it. But the moment the war struck them what happened? Well, this is what happened: that Great Britain stayed with her fiscal policy of freedom, fighting for freedom because she knew better what it was than any other country in the world. She appreciated it more—I mean in fiscal matters—and she knew that fiscal freedom and all-round freedom was worth fighting for. Little Denmark and Holland, each rather largely free trade countries and wonderfully prosperous as a result, did not need to alter their fiscal

policy. They did not put any imposts on. Whereas Germany and Austria-Hungary and the neutral protectionist countries ran away from their fiscal policies the moment the storm of war struck them.

Mr. Speaker, when I go to sea I should like to go always in a ship that could stand rough weather—and protection is evidently no ship for sailing when the waves roll high. She is all right, perhaps, for foolish economic escapades on the part of young and inexperienced peoples when conditions are reasonably favourable, the breezes are favourable and things are good; but when a storm strikes her every principle she carries is jettisoned. Protection is deserted, their tariff walls are thrown down as I put on record from Board of Trade figures this afternoon. We are at the parting of the ways in Canada. We have these problems to tackle. Our people, I believe, will look more anxiously to us for the tackling of them than they have ever done before, and we shall have to choose whether Canada is going on along the line of freedom fiscally to get nearer to the Mother Country's example, or whether she is going to keep wallowing in the beggarly elements of the Hun's policies or former United States policies; whether she is going to keep decking herself in the worn out and cast aside garments of nations which have become more advanced and more enlightened. I put that to the House seriously, not in a contentious spirit, but with the love of Canada and hope for its future as strong in my heart as it can be in the case of any man not born in Canada. We shall have to choose.

Have we any other guidance as to the worthiness of the free trade ship? I venture to think that the greatest financial miracle of the war has been the financing of Great Britain. It has been a war of miracles; we live in marvellous times. We have lived to see the people of Russia apparently cast off in a moment, before anybody was looking for such a thing, the swaddling clothes and bands of autocracy and become one of the free democracies of the world. We have seen her reach her hands over the heads of the Allies and grasp the great democracy of the West to the south of us at a time when that great democracy, speaking the English tongue, is throwing in her lot with the British Empire and giving her guarantee not only of the winning of the war but of the results of the war being such as will be thoroughly satisfactory to every free man everywhere. But financially there has been no miracle in the history of the world like