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1901-10-16

House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker took the chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION

MOTION OF CENSURE

<page>6067</page>

Debate resumed (from 15th October) on. motion by Mr. Reid -

That this House cannot accept the Financial and Tariff proposals submitted by the Government -

Because they would place the finances of the Commonwealth and the States upon an unsound and extravagant basis.

Because they fail to adjust the burdens of taxation and the advantages of the free list in an equitable manner, revealing a marked tendency, which this House regrets to observe, to press upon necessities of life and appliances used in our farming, mining, and pastoral industries more heavily than they do upon many articles of luxury.

And because they would, in their operation, destroy the stability of the revenue by making imposts for national purposes a source of undue profit to a few individuals, and a few favoured industries, at the expense of the whole community.

That the foregoing resolutions be conveyed, by address, to His Excellency the Governor-General.

Mr. SYDNEY SMITH (Macquarie). I thank honorable members for the courtesy extended to me last evening, when, by consenting to the adjournment of the debate, they permitted me to avail myself of this occasion to address to the House a few remarks upon what I think is the most important question that is likely to claim the attention of the Federal Parliament for some time to come. I was very much struck by the remarks of the Prime Minister in reference to the attitude of the leader of the Opposition upon the question of free trade and protection when appealing to his constituents in New South Wales and in the interests of the people of the Commonwealth, and so that honorable members may be aware of the exact position of affairs, and may know to what extent they can place any trust, in a political sense, in the expressions or the policy of the Prime Minister, I shall go back to the time when the right honorable gentleman represented one of the strongest free-trade constituencies in New South Wales - I refer to East Sydney. I remember a very strong speech which he made then in favour of free-trade - and which we all applauded because we believed he was sincere in his advocacy of that policy - on the 10th October, 1885. He then stated -

As regarded the great question of free-trade and protection, he could conceive of nothing more calculated to bring about the ruin of the colony than a Chinese system of protection. Our trade should be as free as air..... No rigid, wretched Chinese system of ad valorem duties should be imposed here.

I like a consistent man - not one who, for political purposes, takes one view one day and another view the next day.

Mr Kingston

- Then the honorable member does not like his own leader?

Mr Chapman

- The honorable member's remarks are a strong accusation against the leader of the Opposition.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- The leader of the Opposition has always advocated free trade. In 1891, the Prime Minister was again returned by a strong free-trade constituency, upon the understanding that he would do nothing to interfere with the fiscal policy of the country. He then made a strong speech to the electors of East Sydney, in which he told them that they could trust him, and that, although perhaps he had gone wrong once before, he was going in then pledged to support federation above all things, and to sink the fiscal issue.

Afterwards, when a dispute arose in the Assembly over the eight hours provision which I had introduced in the Cool Mines Regulation Bill, the right honorable member, who was in the counsels of and a friend and strong supporter of the Government, moved the adjournment of the debate in order to give me an opportunity to reply to the criticism which had been launched against what was termed my strong democratic action. The motion for the adjournment was, however, negatived, and the Ministry, in which I had the honorable and learned member for Parkes as a colleague, and the late Sir Henry Parkes as

leader, resigned office. Well do I remember the remarks of the right honorable member when he referred to Sir George Dibbs, who was at the time leader of the Opposition, and said that he could be no party to the formation of a Government constituted and headed by an enemy of federation. He did not believe in raising the fiscal barriers ; he believed in doing everything he could to bring about federation without raising the fiscal barriers. But what occurred within ten days of the defeat of the Parkes Administration ? The right honorable gentleman went over and joined Sir George Dibbs as his AttorneyGeneral, and within a few weeks that Government came down with a policy of protection, imposing duties of from 10 to 15 per cent. This occurred notwithstanding the fact that the right honorable gentleman was pledged to the electors of East Sydney not to raise the fiscal issue, because it' was alleged that such action would interfere with the consummation of federation. In view of the opinions expressed by certain gentlemen in Sydney during the last few days upon the proposed Tariff, which includes duties ranging up to 1 50 per cent., it is amusing to read what was said at the time the Dibbs-Barton Government brought forward their proposals -

The honorable and learned member for East Sydney, Mr. Barton, has had two opportunities of making his choice, and on each occasion he has deceived those who trusted him. I tell him now that upon the great question of the union of the colonies his chance of leadership has gone by for ever..... The man who will not be a leader on that question or upon any other great question requiring the confidence of the people is the man who has betrayed that confidence twice. The man who has changed his convictions without having the courage to explain the reason for it in the House, but who has still the courage to inform the Assembly that, in spite of his change, in spite of the contradiction which his conduct now gives to his former opinion, he still aspires to be the leader in this great cause.

That was a speech delivered by Mr. B. R. Wise, the present Attorney-General of New South Wales, on the right honorable gentleman's attitude in favouring 10 or 15 per centum duties.

<page>6068</page>

Mr Kingston

- It shows that Mr. Wise was a false prophet.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- It shows that Mr. Wise thought with me at the time that the right honorable gentleman's action should be condemned. Through the deceit and duplicity of members who, like the right honorable gentleman, were returned to sink the fiscal issue until the electors had had an opportunity of speaking on the question - by the aid of two or three members representing free-trade constituencies - traitors, such as the right honorable gentleman mid those who supported him on that occasion, they were enabled to accomplish their purpose. I do not blame any protectionist, who comes out openly and boldly fights for his opinion ; I honour him, for he has just much right to his opinion as I have to mine; but I do object to any man taking office for the sake of the position of Attorney-General, giving up his opinions, and deceiving the electors who sent him in to represent them. It is history now that the Government of which the right honorable gentleman was AttorneyGeneral was defeated because of his action in accepting a brief against the Crown.

Mr Kingston

- "What has this to do with the question 1

Mr SPEAKER

- Order. I think the honorable member is departing from the question. I ask him to confine his speech, not to the history of what this, that, or the other politician has done in the past, but to the motion before the House.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I do not wish to transgress the rules of the House, sir ; but I desire some information from you. This is a very big question we are asked to decide. We are called upon to give over to the Government the control of £9,000,000 of revenue, and I think it is only right that I should have an opportunity of showing honorable members and the country that we should not trust the administration of the affairs of the Commonwealth to the hands of a man who has deceived the people as the right honorable gentleman has done.

Mr SPEAKER

-Order. The motion distinctly is in reference to the financial and Tariffproposals of the Government, and

not in reference to any past action of theirs in any State, or in relation to any other matter. I ask the honorable member to confine his speech to the motion.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- Shall I be at liberty, sir, in support of my arguments, to refer to opinions expressed by different members in favour of one policy or the other? It is an important matter, and one which I am anxious to discuss; but if we are to be prevented from referring to the opinions of honorable members it is of no use to refer to anything which has occurred previous to to-day.

Mr SPEAKER

- I told the honorable member last night that while following that line of debate he would be in order. He has been following that line this afternoon, and I have not stopped him. But the last statement he made before I called his attention to the question before the Chair was in reference to some Government of New South Wales having been turned out because its Attorney-General had accepted some brief, and I did not gather that it had any reference to the finances or the Tariff. Therefore I asked him to address his remarks to the question.

Sir William Lyne

- The Government was not turned out on the occasion to which the honorable member refers.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- Well, the Attorney-General resigned from the Government because of his action in that matter.

Mr SPEAKER

- Order.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- The honorable member interjected, and I wanted to put the matter right. I have said all I required to say in regard to that matter. I shall pass over a period of three years, and come to the year 1898, when one of the movers in federation, the Prime Minister-

Mr Conroy

- Not one of the movers, one of the backsliders.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I am not going to say anything about that. I am dealing with the right honorable gentleman in his public capacity, and I do not wish to say anything offensive. I may say hard things, but it is done only in a political sense.

Sir William Lyne

- No one takes any notice of them.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- My honorable friend has had to take notice of them many a time, and he may have to take more notice of them by-and-by. It is immaterial to me whether he takes notice of them or not. I know that the people of the 0 country will take notice of what we say on this question.

Mr Kingston

- We shall accept the honorable member's assurance that he does not mean it.

<page>6069</page>

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I mean what I say in a political sense. I am not going to deal in personalities. When the Prime Minister was before the electors, he spoke in the Town Hall, Sydney, with a view to show that there was no danger to be apprehended from any system of finance proposed by the Federal Government. At that time he had the support of a large number of free-traders for the Commonwealth Bill. It is well known that the federal issue was no party question. All sides agreed to fight; some for and others against the Bill. Some of the strongest free-traders were for the Bill, and some of the strongest free-traders against it. At various meetings the right honorable gentleman pointed out what would be the effect on the fiscal policy of Australia if the provisions in the Braddon blot were carried into law. Speaking in the Town Hall, Sydney, as honorable members will find on reference to the reports in the Sydney 'Morning Herald', the Evening News, the Daily Telegraph, and the Australian Star, the right honorable and learned gentleman pointed out that the Customs revenue for the five colonies - taking an average of the three previous years - amounted to about £5,115,000; or, as he said, £1,000,000 more than would be required to get over the Braddon blot trouble; - Does it not appear to honorable members that that statement was made with the

view of showing the free-traders of New South Wales that there was no- necessity to raise-a large revenue, as was predicted by many free - traders ; that a Tariff similar to that existing in. the five colonies - because at that time Queensland was not included in the estimate - would yield £5,115,000, or £1,000,000 more than was required to get over the Braddon; blot trouble % I am sorry to say that many of the electors were deceived by that statement. Many of our free-traders joined together in support of the Bill, as many of them did to support the Commonwealth Government - to their sorrow, during the last contest. On that occasion - and. I- shall have something to say about farming matters- presently - the' Prime Minister made this statement, which goes to' show that he was afraid that the1 farmers were going over to free - trade under federation -

It must not be forgotten that the farmers of the country might say - " Oh,, we- have got intercolonial free-trade, and we do not care for an outside Tariff. They might thus swell the ranks of the free- traders;"

Mr Wiles

- How long ago didhe say that?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- In 1898.

Mr Wilks

- Only three years ago !

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- That shows that the Prime Minister evidently contemplated - as will be the case, I am sure - that a large bodyof farmers would go over to Swell the ranks of the free-traders. I have a copy of the manifesto issued by the right honorable gentleman, in which he says :: -

The necessity of raising a large revenue makes free-trade impossible, and for the same reason a. prohibitive Tariff is out of the question. Therefore, there is nothing to prevent both free-traders and protectionists from joining the ranks of the association.

Any one who remembers the history of that loyal and righteous movement in which the colonies took part, in sending troops away to assist in defending the Empire, must know very well that anything that could be said at that tune in favour of the mother land would be acceptable to the great body of the electors. No one knew that better than the Prime Minister, and what did he say : -

The events of late years have drawn closer together the component elements of the Empire, and if some feasible scheme of preferential- duties can be arrived at, it will still more closely knit us together in an indissoluble union.

I do not see any evidence - now that the election is over, and the right honorable gentleman has been able to secure a large number of votes - of any intention on the part of the Government to give any preference to British goods. No doubt the- statement was made for a purpose. Later on,, the Prime Minister was elected to represent the Hunter district.

Mr Chanter

- Who was his opponent ?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- He had no opponent, and I will tell the honorable member why.

Mr Mauger

- Did the free-trade party agree to let him have a walk over ?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- If. 1 had had' my way I should have had an opponent out against him, but, unfortunately, a number of us were busy electioneering, and through\* am oversight,, which I regret, no opponent was put forward to contest the seat-

Mr Mauger

- Was it an oversight,, or did the party think there was- no chance?

<page>6070</page>

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- A man was selected to- oppose the Prime Minister, and left Sydney, as the- members of the Free" trade- Council know, to enter uponthe contest ; but lie retired at the last moment, and we had no time to- get any one else in his place. The Prime Minister went to the Hunter and induced a large number of free-traders to support him. Amongst others there was Mr. Thompson, who for a number of years represented the

constituency of West Maitland as a freetrader." Mr. Thompson was led to believe that the Barton Government would propose a revenue Tariff, and he supported the Prime Minister and became the chairman of his committee. But what does Mr. Thompson say now ? He states that in his opinion "the implied promises of Mr. Barton in his Maitland address were not carried out." There is no doubt that they were not carried out.

Mr Mauger

- To whom did he say that?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- The- statement was made in the Sydney Morning Herald, the Daily Telegraph, and in nearly all the papers^ and it has never been contradicted. After thus expressing Mr. Thompson's view, the newspaper statement continues -

Other leading members of Mr. Barton's election committee indorse the sentiments expressed by Mr. Thompson and Mr. Waller."

Those statements show the feeling of the electors in a free-trade constituency. No one will deny that it is a free-trade constituency; because for many years- the electors returned free-traders to Parliament, and they were led to return the Prime Minister because they thought he would bring down a revenue Tariff.. Instead of that we have a Tariff with duties ranging as high as 160: per cent. I am not going into the various items of the Tariff, because the leader of the Opposition, dealt fully with that question, and showed the high duties which, are- to be levied on the necessities of life and the- comparatively low duties to be levied upon luxuries. Very heavy taxes are sought to be imposed upon, the people, of this country,, which, ia my opinion, will seriously hamper our great producing interests. As I pointed out last night, the farmers of the Commonwealth' cannot possibly obtain' any benefit from this iniquitous system of protection.. They are called upon to&gt; pay increased prices for the necessities of life, and for nearly everything else they require. There- is a very heavy duty placed upon kerosene, which the farmers must use, because they cannot afford the luxury of the electric light or gas.. For years kerosene has been admitted into Victoria free, because it was realized that a duty upon it would involve a very heavy tax upon the people of the interior:

Mr BATCHELOR

- Does the honorable member's side promise us free' kerosene ?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I am not laying down a policy for the Commonwealth, but I am criticising that which has been, brought down by the Government, and showing how harshly it will bear upon the people. My own opinion is that there is\* no necessity for these high, duties at all, but it would take me too long to- particularize what duties I would propose and those which I would strike off.

Mr Batchelor

- Look at the good the honorable member might do-; he might bring some of us over to his- side of the House.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- The honorable member will have an opportunity of saying whether he believes in. having a high duty on kerosene. He knows that in Victoria and in New South Wales we have let kerosene come in free because we have realized that the men who are pioneers and who are suffering all the disadvantages and hardships connected1 with the work of . settling the country are entitled to have their burdens lightened as much as possible. We shall not be doing this by putting a heavy duty on kerosene or the other articles I have mentioned. Honorable members know what occurred in Victoria when the protective system was first started. They commenced in a very moderate way in 1867, with 10 per cent, duties, in 1871 those1 duties were increased to 20' per cent., and in 1879 they went on to 25 per cent. After that the party persevered until- they got the duties up to 35 per cent., and in 1892 to 45 per cent. In 1895 the duties went down again to 35 per cent., and I shall be able to read some of the speeches delivered by honorable members now supporting the Government, in regard' to the duties then imposed. The Prime Minister last night referred to reapers and binders, and pointed out that in England there was a "ring." of manufacturers who, as soon as they heard of the proposed Tariff on agricultural machinery, rushed down prices all over the Commonwealth.

Mr Kingston

- That was in anticipation of the Tariff.

<page>6071</page>

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I understood the Prime Minister to say that in anticipation of the duty the "ring" reconsidered their position, with a view to under-selling any machinery manufactured in the various States. But what are the facts in connexion with reapers and binders? There was a duty of 20 per cent. before July, 1879, but on the 20th of that month the duty was abolished. Before the last-mentioned date the price of reapers and binders was £90, and it was reduced to £75 the day after the duty was abolished. Since then the price has been reduced by £5, and similar amounts from time to time, until to-day reapers and binders are sold at £35 to £40.

Mr Kingston

- When the price of reapers and binders was £90, can the honorable member tell us what the price was in the country of production?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I am not in a position to say what the price was in the country of production, but if the right honorable gentleman's reasoning is right, and a heavy duty will lower the price of the article, how is it that a duty of 15 per cent. has been left on strippers? The same argument will apply to strippers as to reapers and binders.

Mr Kingston

- Strippers are produced here, are they not?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- A great many are imported as well, but I am now talking of the time when the duty was taken off reapers and binders. I have here a circular issued by Carolin and Co. Limited, of 191 Collins-street, Melbourne, in regard to the price which, I believe, has prevailed for the last two years, of what is known as the "Bonnie" reaper and binder. I am not here as an advertising agent. I am simply endeavouring to reply to the arguments which have been advanced in regard to reapers and binders, and to show that it is competition which has brought down the price. When this new reaper and binder came out two years ago, the price, as set forth, was £30, and when the other manufacturers saw a new article coming into the market they, as other business men would do, endeavoured to prevent this new implement from taking the place of others, and reduced the prices of their productions.

Mr Kennedy

- Was any standard make of machine sold at £30 two years ago, in any of the States?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I hold in my hand a price list, and also an advertisement which appeared in one of the newspapers on the 30th July, 1901, giving the price of this article for the last two years as £30.

Mr Kennedy

- It is some machine the manufacturers want farmers to experiment with. A standard machine is not sold at that price.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- The honorable member will have an opportunity of inquiring into the truth of what I have stated.

Mr Deakin

- The honorable member for Moira knows what he is talking about.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- And so do I. If honorable members think there is anything wrong about the circular I have mentioned, they will have an opportunity of disproving its accuracy. Last night we were told something about starch. I do not deal with this matter because any honorable member happens to be interested in the industry.

Mr Chapman

- Then why mention it?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- Because starch has been prominently brought forward, and it has been stated over and over again that the price of starch is the same in Victoria as in New South Wales. Messrs. Lewis and Whitty have issued two price lists, one for Victoria and one for New South Wales; and, according to their circular, the Melbourne price of starch is 31/2d. per lb., while the Sydney price is about 27/8d. Harper's box starch is

sold at about 33s. 11d. per cwt. in Victoria, whereas it is sold in New South Wales at about 27s., a difference of 6s. per cwt., or close on  $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per lb. I have also a sale list of Messrs. Foy and Gibson, of Melbourne, who sell a box of starch at  $41\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. in this city. I understand that Messrs. Harper and Co., owing to some arrangement of trade which is not clear to me, do not issue price-lists. I find that Hordern, of Sydney, sells "Silver Star" starch at  $31\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb., as against the  $41\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. charged in Melbourne. It is only fair to say, though this does not make very much difference in the price, that an ounce more is given to the lb. in Melbourne than is given in Sydney. I think that 15 ozs. to the lb. are given in Sydney.

Mr Mauger

- So that the honorable member is not comparing like with like.

<page>6072</page>

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I am showing that there is a difference of 1d. per lb. in the price, and that the difference in weight does not amount to more than threesixteenths of a penny. It will be seen that there is virtually a difference of about  $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per lb. in the price of starch, as between free-trade New South Wales and protectionist Victoria. That bears out what the leader of the Opposition said the other night, namely, that different prices are quoted for Melbourne and Sydney, and this difference the manufacturers in Victoria are able to put into their own pockets. These, and not the purchasing public of Victoria, are the men who have made money out of the duties. If they can sell for a certain price in Sydney, they ought to be able to sell for the same price in Melbourne ; but because of the fiscal barrier, they prevent the people of Victoria from obtaining the benefit of the lower price.

Mr Chapman

- That barrier is knocked down.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I am glad to say it is ; and I am only sorry that the splendid principle of free-trade has not been carried one step further. The Government and their supporters spoke in favour of taking down the barriers between the States, and of the great advantages of freetrade amongst members of the same community. During the elections they led the people to believe that there would be some preferential duties in favour of Great Britain, but we hear nothing of that proposal now. Last night reference was made by the Prime Minister to the rate of wages paid in the various factories. It is a strange thing that the Prime Minister should have made no reference whatever, so far as I could gather, to any industry in which there were no wages boards in existence. He dealt only with industries in connexion with which there are wages boards. If honorable members will look at a report which has been issued by the Chief Inspector of Factories in Victoria, they will find that a very different state of affairs exists from what the Prime Minister wanted to make us believe. According to the right honorable gentleman the wages of male hands employed in the boot factories in Victoria amount to 44s. 9d. per week on an average, whereas the Chief Inspector of Factories says that the average is 34s. 5d.

Mr Mauger

- What report is that?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I am quoting from Appendix B of a special report issued by the Victorian Chief Inspector of Factories. It relates to the special boards. If my honorable friend will take the trouble to look at it, he will see that my statement is correct.

Mr Mauger

- For what year is the report ?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- It is for the year 1900, and it shows the average weekly wage, for 48 hours work, for the trades for which special boards have been appointed. The figures are supplied by the manufacturers, but the report says that in a few instances returns were not received. As I have said, the Chief Inspector of Factories shows that 34s. 5d. is the total average wage received by these workers, whereas the Prime Minister last night told us that the average rate of wage for males was 44s. 9d. That is not the way to put forward statements. We want the truth.

Mr Mauger

- Let the honorable member give the House the New South Wales average.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

-I will give the honorable member quite enough information before I sit down. The Premier said last night that the average wage for females employed in the boot factories was, as I understood, 22s. The chief inspector says the average is 14s. 7d.

Mr Mauger

- What is the honorable member quoting from now?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I am still quoting from Appendix B. In respect to cabinetmakers, the average wage for males, as stated by the Prime Minister, was 50s.1d., whereas according to the inspector's report it is 42s. 4d. For shirtmakers the average for females was stated at 21s. ; according to the inspector's report it is 14s.8d.

Mr Mauger

- The honorable member is taking the average received by workers under 21 years of age.

<page>6073</page>

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- My honorable friend will have an opportunity of replying to me later on. I could also quote other instances to show the way in which the right honorable gentleman misquoted these returns. He has not been fair to his own State in the way he mixed up the figures. The Prime Minister said that he had returns from Mr. Coghlan showing the wages paid in the various industries of New South Wales. I have not been able to discover a return in Mr. Coghlan's book in that respect. I cannot find any return which gives me the information which the Prime Minister ventured to quote to honorable members last night. I could, if time permitted, refer to other instances which the Chief Inspector of Factories in Victoria gives, to show the sad condition in which some of the workers in this State have been reduced under the system of protection which has prevailed here. I am glad to say that in New South Wales the workers have been strong enough to obtain an increase of wages without the aid of special boards. They have done it by their own strength, because they were able to accumulate from the wages which they received a little surplus, by means of which, in many instances, they could fight their battles with a good bank balance behind them.

Mr Tudor

- One of the workers of New South Wales did not say that at Lithgow on Monday.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I am not responsible for the opinion of any individual man.

Mr Kingston

- I have read the parliamentary debates, and from them I have come to a different conclusion.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I have also read the debates. I have some interesting information here with regard to the wages paid in the different industries, and the condition of workers in Victoria, but I am not going to deal with that question now. I dare say that other honorable members will find an opportunity to deal with it. But I can show clearly that our employes in New South Wales are far better off in every way in which a test can be applied to them than are the employes of Victoria. The Federal Government, nevertheless, are endeavouring to hamper them, and lessen their purchasing power by putting high taxes upon the necessaries of life. These duties will increase the cost of their clothing, their boots and shoes, their hats, and the various necessaries which they have to purchase. It is not fair that our workers should be hampered in this way. For 30 years a protective policy has been in force in Victoria. The raising of the price of imported articles does not represent the actual cost to the consumers. It must be recollected that by putting these duties on, as has been done, for instance, in the case of starch - and the same remark applies to other industries - Victoria has enabled the manufacturers to increase the cost of living to the consumers, whilst, as the AttorneyGeneral has said in regard to the woollen industry, the manufacturers have not paid to the men wages in accordance with the amount of protection their industries received. That was a notable speech made by the honorable and learned gentleman. It was one of the best and most reliable statements ever made by him. I know he will not deny the admission I have attributed to him, because it appears in Hansard. I do not mean by that to suggest that he would, because although we differ in our political views I believe him to be a truthful man. The honorable and learned gentleman made a strong indictment against the manufacturers of Victoria, as strong an indictment as a man could



make, when he said they were being protected to the extent of from 30 to 35 per cent., but that he saw no evidence of increased wages being paid to factory employees here. Protection gave no increased wages to the workers, and it was found necessary to create wages boards to force manufacturers to make their employees a fair return for their work.

Mr Kingston

- What is the object of the New South Wales Conciliation Act ?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I will deal with that matter presently. I had to get up at a moment's notice last night owing to the disinclination of honorable members to speak on this question at that stage. I cannot blame them, because this is an important question, and I realize that honorable members ought to be prepared before they address themselves to it.

Mr Joseph Cook

- What is the matter with honorable members on the other side 1 Are they dumb 1

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I have no complaint to make against honorable members sitting behind the Government. If they are not in a position to reply to the arguments of the free-trade members then it is all the better for the State of Victoria.

Mr Kennedy

- It would be better for the honorable member to give us some arguments calling for a reply.

<page>6074</page>

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- My honorable friend is like all protectionists. He has his prejudices, just as the protectionists say that free-traders are prejudiced. I will show presently that many protectionists in the old country have been forced to alter their policy just as protectionists in this country will be forced to alter theirs. When I made a statement last night in regard to the number of employees in the factories of New South Wales and Victoria I was contradicted. But what are the facts 1 In 1889 there were 41,299 males employed in the factories of New South Wales. In 1899 - ten years later - there were 47,063, or an increase of 5,764. Now, let us see what occurred in Victoria. In 1889, Victoria, under its protectionist system, had 49,105 male employees in its factories. Ten years later, protection, instead of swelling their ranks, had led to a decrease, the number of employees in Victorian factories in 1899 being only 44,041, or a reduction of 5,064. Is that any evidence that the system of protection has given an advantage to the male workers of this State? I admit that the number of females employed in Victorian factories has increased. In 1899 there were 8,583 females employed in New SouthWales' factories, while in Victoria there were 16,029. Over 5,000 of the male workers were driven out of the factories of Victoria between 1889 and 1 899, because the manufacturers would not pay them sufficient to keep body and soul together, and girls were employed in their place. Instead of the man being the breadwinner of the family, as he should be, the Victorian manufacturers compel women to do work which should fall to the lot of males. I will defy the honorable member for Melbourne Ports to deny the fact that the number of male employees in Victorian factories decreased by 5,064 during the period I have named, while the number of female employees increased by 7,703. Do these facts bear any evidence of the benefits of protection to Victoria? I think not. The value of production in New South Wales was £38,579,000, while in Victoria it was £30,870,000 odd, or nearly £8,000,000 less than that of the free-trade State of New South Wales.

Mr Mauger

- How much of the New South Wales returns relates to wool and minerals ?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I am taking all the industries. Some parts of a State are suitable for one kind of industry and some for another kind. One part may be suitable for manufacturing purposes, another for farming, and still another for pastoral pursuits. I am taking, therefore, the whole of the industries. I will now take the population figures. According to a newspaper article which I read the other day, we have to gauge the attractiveness of a country by its population. In 1871. the population of Victoria was 221,000 in excess of that of New South Wales. In 1899, New South Wales had not only caught up to Victoria, but had a population exceeding that of this State by 193,000. In ten years New South Wales gained 235,000 people, while Victoria gained 10,000. Is that any evidence of the advantages of protection ? During that

period, the increase in the population of little Tasmania was 37,000 greater than that of Victoria.

Sir William Lyne

- Tasmania had the most protective Tariff of all the States.

Mr Cameron

- No ; a revenue Tariff.

<page>6075</page>

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- Now I take the departures. There have been a great many from Victoria during recent years. She has lost some of the best of her population. Not being able to get a living here, many of her men had to seek employment elsewhere. A number of them came to New South Wales, and we gladly welcomed them, because they made good citizens. We have nothing to say against Victorians. As citizens they are quite as good as are the people of New South Wales, but, unfortunately, they have not been blessed with the advantages of a free and independent organ of public opinion. At least, they have had one, but the other, which has exercised a great deal more influence in the past, has not been fair to the workers ; it has not given them reliable information. I shall show that as the result of the educational process which is in force in Victoria, the honorable and learned member for Indi - a former Attorney-General for Victoria - is 30 or 40 years out in regard to some of the historical events of the old country to which he has referred us. In view of that fact, we cannot be surprised that the honorable and learned gentleman is a protectionist. If I thought that such a thing could have occurred under free-trade as the honorable and learned member said had taken place, I should begin to feel that the question whether protection was not a right principle required serious consideration. But I will refer to that presently. As was pointed out by the leader of the Opposition last evening, New South Wales has been most kind and considerate to Victoria and the other States. She practically said to them - " We will allow your produce to come in free. We want to put no tax upon it. We will allow you to compete with our farmers. They are not afraid, neither are our people. They believe in the stability of the policy under which we are working and therefore we welcome open competition."

What has happened in regard to agriculture? In 1891 the area under cultivation was 846,000 acres, whilst in 1899 it had increased to 2,440,000 acres. Do these figures supply any evidence of decay with a free port? I can also show that the amount of the New South Wales imports has been incorrectly put before the people of Victoria in order to deceive them as to the condition of the farmers in the former State.

Mr Ewing

- How many acres are there under cultivation in Victoria?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- My honorable friend can supply that information.

Mr Ewing

- Just so. It does not suit the honorable member to give it.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- Last night the leader of the Opposition read an article from the organ which, I believe, rules the opinions of a great many Victorian constituencies.

Mr MAUGER

- What organ is that ?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- The leader of the Opposition read an article to show that the newspaper in question was not satisfied with the condition of agriculture in Victoria. It pointed out that there was something wrong with that industry

Mr Mauger

- What organ is that 1

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- My honorable friend knows, because he dare not move without first obtaining its opinion. We have it upon record that the honorable member for Melbourne Ports, in giving evidence before a court, stated that a certain gentleman is usually consulted as to what candidate shall be selected to contest any particular constituency. Then we witnessed the spectacle of the honorable member, in accordance with the convictions to which he gave strong expression during the federal election campaign, making a

vigorous speech in this House in favour of the workers of the Commonwealth. But an article appeared in the newspaper to which I am referring, and as a result the honorable member voted in opposition to his previously expressed convictions. The people of New South Wales merely ask for fair treatment. They neither seek for nor expect any favour. But they have at least a right to expect that honest and fair statements will be made in regard to the condition of affairs in the various States, so that honorable members may have an opportunity of accurately judging of the merits or demerits of the various policies which they have hitherto adopted. I ask honorable members who have read some of the protectionist literature which has been published in the newspapers and by circular during the past few days, to note the fact that this newspaper purports to quote from Coghlan's Statistical Register. But in quoting the New South Wales imports, in order to show the Victorian farmers that they should adhere to a policy of protection because of the failure which has resulted from a system of free-trade in New South Wales, it puts down as the value of imports, in butter, cheese, eggs, wheat, bran and pollard, flour, bacon, hams, extract of meat, preserved meat, onions, potatoes, and straw, during the year 1899, an amount of £1,236,000. It is strange that the writer did not take the imports for 1900, because the statistics were available. The great bulk of the goods represented by this £1,236,000, according to the journal in question, came from places outside of the Commonwealth.

Mr Kennedy

- Is it not extraordinary that they should have to import at all 1

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- My honorable friend can deal with that question. I am dealing with the other side of it. I shall presently show the small amount represented by New South Wales imports as compared with the progress which that State is making. The enterprising journal referred to does not give any figures regarding the importations of hay, chaff, honey, cattle, sheep, and pigs for the year 1899, and the reason why it omits to do so I shall presently explain.

Mr Kingston

- The honorable member told us this last night.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- A good thing cannot be told too often. This newspaper takes no account of the re-exports of most of the articles which I have mentioned, although they represented a value of £221,000. What are the actual facts of the case? Instead of New South Wales importing £1,236,000 worth of farm produce from outside of the Commonwealth, she actually imported, for 1899, only £377,000 worth. If this newspaper had taken the returns for 1900, it would have found a still further reduction in the value represented by the importation of these articles. In that year the imports amounted to only £182,967.

<page>6076</page>

Mr Poynton

- The newspaper wanted to throw dust in the eyes of the farmers.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- Evidently that was the intention. I wish to take a little of the dust out of their eyes. The exports of the same produce from New South Wales during the period referred to represented a value of £1,023,000 or a surplus of exports over imports of no less than £840,000. I ask honorable members if that is straight journalism ?

Mr Poynton

- Are those the Age figures t

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- The amount of £1,236,000 to which I have referred is supplied by the Age, but the other figures are Coghlan's, although the Age purports to quote from Coghlan in both cases. That newspaper has industriously taken from Coghlan the whole of the New South Wales imports without going to the trouble of deducting the Inter-State trade.

Mr Poynton

-It was trying to prove that the farmers were benefiting by protection.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- The reason why it did not mention hay, chaff, honey, sheep, and cattle, was that the imports of hay and chaff, poultry and honey, from places outside of the Commonwealth amounted only to £922. It was further

stated that the farmers would be benefited to the extent of 2d. per lb. on honey. But the total quantity of honey imported into New South Wales represented only a value of £8. Yet a duty of 2d. per lb. is put upon that article in an endeavour to deceive the people. I had a nice little cartoon which I was going to exhibit to honorable members. It was one issued at a time when the workers of New South Wales were striving for an increase in wages, and for a fair instalment of the profits obtained by the owners of mines and by other people. A strike took place, and owing to the unfortunate condition of many of the workers of Victoria, who were forced to consider their families before the workers of New South Wales, a number of them were brought over to New South Wales to take the place of the men who were fighting for increased wages in that State. It is well known that that occurred on several occasions, and it occurred because of the unfortunate condition of the workers in Victoria. They could not obtain employment here, they were driven out of the factories in which the women were placed as bread-winners instead of themselves, and at a time of labour trouble with men in New South 17 y

Wales, most of those who took the places of the strikers were men from Victoria.

Mr Tudor

- They fought lately in New South Wales to get wages raised to the Victorian standard.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- The honorable member knows that my statement is correct.

Mr TUDOR

- I know that they fought at Balmain to get the 7s. per day which was paid here.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- The men fought their own battle without any wages board behind them. Here they cannot fight their own battles, and have to get the assistance of wages boards. Another matter to which I shall refer is that when stock were being imported into Victoria under a stock tax of 30s. per head, a number of stock were brought in under bond to some of the Melbourne abattoirs, and the carcasses were exported ; and the Argus reports that-

At the South Melbourne abattoirs during last month -

That was four or five months ago - the heads and plucks of between 1,300 and 1,400 sheep and those of 150 bullocks were saturated with kerosene and burnt in the desiccating works to prevent the workers or anybody else in this State using them.

Did ever any one hear of such a barbarous condition of affairs as that ? I believe that they were at first offered free to anybody, but a complaint was made that it would interfere with the trade of certain people in Melbourne. They had a Customs officer there I believe, and in order to prevent the possibility of any of the heads or plucks being given away they were saturated with kerosene and destroyed.

Mr Kennedy

- Were they free from lumpy jaw 1

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- The honorable member's interjection does not apply at all. The honorable member is trying to draw a red herring across the trail. The reason for the action taken was not that the animals had been killed and slaughtered because of any disease, but because a number of people complained that to give the heads and plucks away free would be to enter into unfair competition with persons engaged in trade.

An Honorable Member. - They would not use duty-paid kerosene for the purpose now.

<page>6077</page>

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- They had to import the kerosene which was used to destroy this food. I again refer to what has been said by the honorable and learned member for Indi on this question, because

I remember reading his speech with a good deal of interest. Speaking from the miners' point of view the honorable and learned member said -

And the miner, how is he on a level with the worker in town ? He has a weight round his neck. We are told that the miners patriotically stood by protection in the past. Are we to whip the willing horse to death ? Is protection to go on for ever to an unlimited extent, right on as we are told, to prohibition ? Are we never to stop taxing the miner ? He is the man who goes through the most arduous labour - the most dangerous pursuits to win the wealth of the country. And what does he get in return for it ? A promise that more burdens shall be laid upon him. His pick is weighted with taxation, every article he wears is

weighted with taxation, and when he goes home every article in his house, even his knife and fork, is taxed.

That is the opinion of Mr. Isaacs, at present the honorable and learned member for Indi in this House, and an ex-Attorney-General of Victoria. The honorable and learned member, in splendid sentences which ought to be published and distributed throughout the States, pointed out that the miners could not obtain any benefit from protection; and I ask honorable members how they are to obtain any benefit under this Tariff ? Can any honorable member on the other side show me one case in which the miner will be benefited under this Tariff ? Are we going to increase the price of his gold, or to increase the price of his wages, by putting a duty upon his candles, clothing, kerosene^ machinery, and everything he requires? Is that the way we are to help the miner ? I defy any honorable member opposite to point out a single instance in which assistance will be given to the miners under this system of protection. We notice from the papers in Western Australia, that men connected with mining companies there, men who have been struggling in some cases under great difficulties, who have to pay heavy freight for the carriage of machinery, and high prices for it, in order to develop the mineral resources of the State, are now taxed to such an extent that I believe in several cases where it was intended to import machinery to the extent of £250,000, they have cancelled the orders. Members from that State will be able to speak upon that matter in detail.

Mr Kingston

- Does the honorable member say that in several cases they intended to get machinery to the value of £250,000 ?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I believe that that has occurred in several cases. The honorable member for Kalgoorlie assured me last night that the total amount of machinery about to be imported in order to develop the mineral resources of Western Australia amounted to about £250,000 ; and that under this- Tariff many who were proposing to introduce machinery would be forced to cancel their orders, and by that means hundreds of miners would be thrown out of employment.

Mr Poynton

- Some orders have been cancelled.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I am informed that some orders have been cancelled.

Sir John Quick

- The whole of that machinery could be got in Australia at the same price.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- That, I know, is the stock argument of the honorable and learned member, but the men engaged in these industries- are the best judges as to where they can buy their machinery at the cheapest price. They are not going to import their machinery from England or elsewhere if they can obtain it as good and as cheaply here. I have taken, up a good deal of time-

Mr A McLean

- Hear, hear.

<page>6078</page>

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I offer no excuse or apology for doing so, because, this is one of the most important questions that can claim the attention of the Federal Parliament, and but for the question of free-trade and protection arising, and the fact that I,, as a free-trader, strong in that belief, desire to have a free-trade policy adopted by the people of Australia, I would not be a- member of this House to-day, because. I' should not have bothered about standing for a constituency. I went because I believe that free-trade is inseparable from the prosperity of the Commonwealth, and as a native of Australia I felt it my duty - a feeling which I am sure that other honorable members share - to do the best I could to further the interests of the Commonwealth. I, therefore, fought one of the hardest, battles that was fought in any of the States. I did not engage in any light fight ; I did not go to a constituency which, was known to be a strong free-trade constituency. I was asked to contest several easy constituencies, but I preferred to go to a constituency which was virtually in the hands of the protectionists, and which is represented in the State Parliament to-day by the Treasurer, the Minister for Lands, and two other honorable members; all four of whom are strong protectionists. They

did all they could to assist the candidate who was opposing me, : but I am glad to say that I was able to defeat them, and that the constituencies which they represent, instead of returning a majority of 700 or 800 votes in favour of protection, as had previously been the case, gave me a majority of about 600, showing the remarkable change that was taking place. I admit that in New South Wales the majority has always been in favour of free-trade. We have never had. protection there by the will of the people. It is true that we have had two doses of it, but that is because of the treachery of their representatives. Whenever the people have had an opportunity of speaking through the ballot-boxes they have punished those who were traitors to the country, and in most cases relegated them to private life. I understand that before this debate is concluded the House will be given a little information as to the results of freetrade and protection in other countries. One honorable member said last night that he would give us some statistics, but I shall anticipate him by giving him a few to which he will have an opportunity to reply. I have taken occasion to refer with sorrow to the unfortunate condition of the workers of Victoria. That condition has been brought about by the failure of many of their public men, and of a certain journal in this city, to put full and correct information in regard to the results of the fiscal policy in other countries before them. I cannot wonder at them being misled, under such circumstances'. An honorable and learned member, for whom I have the greatest respect, who occupies a high position in this House, and has been AttorneyGeneral to the State of Victoria - a man who has given considerable attention to political questions - interjected the other evening, when the leader of the Opposition was speaking - " What about the ' Song of the Shirt ' ? " The honorable and learned member seemed to believe that that poem was written at a time when England had free-trade; but it is wellknown that it was written by Hood in 1844, when the people had been suffering from protection for many years. I will read those lines.

Mr Watkins

- Will the honorable member also read " The white slaves of England?"

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- Before reading Hood's poem, which caused such a stir in England at the time it was first published, I will read an extract from a description of the condition of the workers of England in 1844, written by Engels : - Women and men enfeebled, children deformed, limbs crushed, whole generations wrecked, affected with disease and infirmity, purely to fill the purses of the manufacturers. Children seized naked in bed by the overlookers, and driven with blows and kicks to the factory, their clothing over their arms ; how their sleepiness is driven off with blows ; how they fall asleep over their work ; children too tired to go home hide away in the wool in the drying-room to sleep there, and could only be driven out of the factory with straps ; how many hundreds came home so tired every night that they could eat no supper for sleepiness and want of appetite, and their parents found them kneeling by the bedside, where they had fallen asleep during their prayers ; how the mother goes to the mill shortly after five in the morning, and comes home at eight at night, and is obliged to give drugs to the small children to keep them still till she returns. How the tender frame of a child is least able to withstand the unfavorable influences of an inferior lot in life. The neglect to which they are subjected when both parents work, or one is dead, avenges itself promptly, and no one need wonder that in Manchester, according to the report last quoted, more than 57 per cent. of the children- boys and girls - of the working classes perish before the fifth year."

That was the condition of the workers of England when the "Song of the Shirt" was published.

Mr.Ronald. - And to-day

<page>6079</page>

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I shall come to that presently. The lines which I "wish to quoteare these : -

Oh men ! with sisters dear !

O men with mothers and wives!

It is not linen you're wearing out,

But human creatures' lives.

Stitch - stitch - stitch,

In poverty, hunger, and dirt,

Sewing at once, with a double thread,

A shroud as well as a shirt.

But why do I talk of death?

That phantom of grisly bone,  
I hardly fear his terrible shape,  
It seems so like my own -  
It seems so like my own,  
Because of the fasts I keep.  
Oh! God! that bread should be so dear,  
And flesh and blood so cheap!  
Work - work - work,  
My labour never flags ;  
And what are its wages ? A bed of straw,  
A crust of bread - and rags.  
That shatter'd roof - and this naked floor -  
A table- a broken chair -  
And a wall so blank, my shadow I thank  
For sometimes falling there!

I shall read another quotation, and I am glad that the honorable and learned member for Indi is present, because he interjected last night that that song applied to free-trade England.

Mr Isaacs

- I did not say that.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- My honorable and learned friend interjected "The Song of the Shirt," and the only inference I could draw was that it applied to the condition of England under free-trade.

Mr Isaacs

- I said last night that the workers there are getting less now than they got then.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I did not hear my honorable and learned friend say that.

Mr Conroy

- For one thing, provisions are cheaper now than they were then.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- Here is another article, written on the theory and facts -

It is, however, impossible to convey by mere statistics of our exports any adequate picture of the condition of the nation when Sir Robert Peel took office in 1841. Every interest in the country was alike depressed. In the manufacturing districts mills and workshops were closed, and property daily depreciated in value. In the seaports, shipping was laid up useless in the harbour. Agricultural labourers were eking out a miserable existence upon starvation wages and parochial relief.

I find, by a strange coincidence, an article written by Mr. Peck, in the New York Commissioner on the condition of the labouring classes in America. When one reads his article, and reflects, one finds a strong resemblance between the condition of the American under protection to-day and the condition of the workers under protection in England. What does Mr. Peck say ?

Mr Ewing

- In what year?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- In 1880.

Mr Mauger

- That was the year of the Cleveland Tariff.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I am going to -quote from the report of, not an advocate of free-trade or protection, but a man whose duty it was to collect statistics to show the exact condition of the working classes in America. I think it is a very fair argument to use.

Mr Mauger

- Why not come up to date?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- Unfortunately they have not any statistics in the Library here bearing upon these matters. I could only

get the report which was given to me by the late Sir Henry Parkes. Speaking of the female occupants of the tenement houses, the New York Commissioner says -

No words of mine can convey to the public any adequate conception of the truly awful condition of thousands of these suffering people.

He went on to say -

In a word, the European workman is a mechanic still, whilst the American workman has ceased to be a mechanic and has become a machine.

The report of the committee of the United States Senate on education and labour, the chairman being a protectionist, shows that they had to listen to tales of misery and distress amongst the American labourers as revolting in pathos as any which have been told of the pauper labourers of Europe. And what do we find further? We find by a telegram from New York - this is up to date - that 150,000 men and women received less than 2s. 6d. in New York, that the women work about sixteen hours a day, and that 82,000 persons were forcibly ejected, not being able to pay rent.

Mr Isaacs

- At what work are they earning 2s. 6d. a day?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- At different kinds of work.

Mr Isaacs

- Are they protected industries or what are they ?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I am quoting a telegram which was sent out here showing the result.

Mr Mauger

- To whom ?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

-Not to the Age, because it will not publish anything which is against its views.

Mr Isaacs

- It might have some importance if the honorable member could tell us what industries were concerned.

<page>6080</page>

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- Protected industries employ foreign labour in some cases in the proportion of seventeen foreigners to four Americans. We have another evidence of that in an interview with Mr. Hoskins - a protectionist I think - who lately visited the old country and America. He pointed out that in many of the industries in America there was almost a complete absence of their own American workmen ; that large bodies of Russians were employed because they accepted lower wages, and their own workmen thrown out of employment. We all know of the wealth accumulated by some people in America, and the fights which the labourers have had, not being always successful - not nearly so successful as workmen have been in our State, or in Great

Britain. The workers are not so strong in America as they are in Great Britain.

Mr Ronald

- Oh !

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- They are not.

Mr Ronald

- That settles it.

Sir Edward Braddon

- Not even in Cleveland's time.

Mr McColl

- The best paid body in the world are the American workmen.

Sir Edward Braddon

- The labour leaders in England do not say so.

Mr McColl

- The mechanics are paid the best wages in the world.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH



- The statistics of wages and prices show that it is not so. I shall quote now from a very good work, written by C. Armitage Smith. Speaking of the condition of the workers in England he points out that statistics, wages and prices show that with easier work and shorter hours the labourer now gets about 65 per cent., the factory operative 75 per cent., and the skilled mechanic 90 per cent. more of the necessities of life than he did 50 years ago. Sir R. Giffen has stated that nearly the whole of the economic advantage of the last 50 years has gone to the working classes - that is, their position has not only changed absolutely as regards the comforts of life, but relatively to classes in their share of the general prosperity.

Mr Isaacs

- It is said that that happens only in free-trade countries.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I have shown pretty conclusively what were the effects of protection in England. I have shown that it did not conduce to the happiness of the people, and no honorable member can boast that it benefited the working classes.

Sir George Turner

- She had 300 years of it, anyway.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- She had 300 years of dark days, and she was never in such a strong position as she is to-day. Take for instance the increases of wages that have taken place. The Daily Press of October last year, gives the increases of wages of British workmen. It is stated that, in 1897, the wages paid to workmen showed an increase of over £45,000 per week. In 1898, they showed an increase of £95,000 per week, and in 1899 an increase of £114,000 per week, or a little under £6,000,000 a year increase of wages, brought about by the greater strength and prosperity of the nation. These statistics were published by the Board of Trade, whose figures also show that, during the eight months of 1900, the increase of wages per week amounted to £150,000. It is also pointed out that the coal-miners in England, according to the Board of Trade reports, received 40s. per week, whilst those in the United States were paid only 21s., in Germany 21s., in France 21s., and in Austria 16s. per week. All this shows that the condition of the workers in England has improved, and honorable members, applying whatever test they like, will find that the increase of wages has been immense in the last 50 years, and that the prosperity of England to-day is marvellous.

Mr Tudor

- The conditions are pretty bad to-day.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- The workers themselves do not say so. Thomas Burt, a well known advocate of the cause of the working man, speaks of the soundness of trade, and of the generally prosperous condition of the workers under free-trade as compared with their condition under protection, and Mr. Davies, the secretary of the National Society of Brassworkers, also gives similar testimony. The honorable and learned member for Indi has spoken strongly to his constituents as to the disadvantages of protection from the point of view of the miners. I remember that honorable and learned member told his constituents that New South Wales had increased in population and in production over and above the extent to which Victoria had progressed.

Mr Isaacs

- I showed that Victoria had: made greater strides than New South Wales.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I read the report of the honorable member's speech from the Age, and he will have an opportunity of correcting it if it was wrong. I remember the honorable and learned member quoting figures given by the free-traders of New South Wales, which showed an increase in the number of male employes in the factories and in the total production over and above the figures that were quoted for Victoria.

Mr Isaacs

- The honorable member should not trust to his memory.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I know my memory is reliable in the matter.

Mr Isaacs

- I assure the honorable member that he is not correct.

<page>6081</page>

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- At all events I remember reading the honorable and learned member's speech, in which he pointed out that the free-traders of New South Wales forgot to tell the people that all this increased production was brought about under a system of protection which prevailed there until 1896 or 1897. Does the -honorable and learned member deny that he told the electors of his constituency that NewSouth Wales had a protectionist policy up to a certain time?

Mr. Isaacs. - I will tell the honorable member what I said.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- The honorable and learned member was reported in the newspapers as having pointed out that New South Wales was under a protectionist policy for some time, but it is well known that we never had protection in that State except through the treachery of politicians at the head of affairs, who, when the electors had an opportunity of speaking, were hurled out of office. I have here a report issued by a commission in England showing the awful condition of the workers there under the system of protection that prevailed in 1840. The commissioners point out -

It will be seen in evidence that in many districts their only food is the potato, their only beverage, water, that their cabins are seldom a protection against the weather, that a bed or a blanket is a rare luxury. Who brought about a change in the policy of England in 1840 ? Was it not one of the strongest protectionists in England ? And why did he bring about an alteration? He did so because of the awful condition of the workers in that country at that time. Sir Robert Peel gave an instalment of free trade ; and, notwithstanding that reduction, the increase in the exports of produce and manufactures from 1842 to 1844, inclusive, amounted to £11,000,000. The increase brought about by the instalment of free-trade so satisfied Sir Robert Peel of the wisdom of the course he had taken that he went a step further and abolished the Corn Laws. At the time he predicted that he would, in consequence, have to relinquish power, and, pointed out that he was dividing himself from his strongest supporters, who had fought by his side for years as protectionists - men to whom he owed every position he had held in political life. But, in response to the appeal of the workers of England, whose condition was truly awful, and at the risk of losing office and the good-will of men with whom he had been associated for so many years, he felt compelled to bring about an alteration of the policy of Great Britain. His prediction was verified, because on the day on which effect was given to the Act for the abolition of the Corn Laws he was ousted from power. On that occasion Sir Robert Peel said -

In relinquishing power I shall leave a name severely censured, I fear, by many who, on public grounds, deeply regret the severance of party ties- deeply regret that severance not from interested or personal motives, but from the firm conviction that fidelity to party engagements - the existence and maintenance of a great party - constitutes a powerful instrument of government. I shall surrender power severely censured also by others who from no interested motive adhere to the principle of protection, considering the maintenance of it to be essential to the welfare and interests of the country. I shall leave a name execrated by every monopolist who from less honorable motives clamours for protection because it conduces to his own individual benefit ; but it may be that . I shall leave a name sometimes remembered with expressions of good will in the abodes of those whose lot it is to labour and to earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brow - when they shall recruit their exhausted strength with abundant and untaxed food, the sweeter because it is no longer leavened by a sense of injustice.

The Prime Minister and his Government will never be able to give expression to such splendid words as those. They will never be able to say they have taken burdens off the backs of the people. No; they are putting burdens on the people, because they are not strong enough to fight against the great body of protectionists who represent Victorian constituencies.

Mr McColl

- Bunkum !

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- That is the reason the Government are afraid. Had it not been for the large number of protectionists returned in Victoria to support the Government, the Prime Minister would have been true to his hustings pledges, and would not have introduced this iniquitous system of protection.

Mr Mauger

- I can assure the honorable member that the Prime Minister has not-satisfied Victorian protectionists.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- If Victorian protectionists are not satisfied with duties amounting in some instances to 100 per cent., I do not know what will satisfy them.

Mr Mauger

- Where are there such duties ?

<page>6082</page>

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- There are any number of duties averaging 20 per cent., 50 per cent., and 60 per cent., and glassware and crockery of all kinds, which are used by the poor, are taxed up to the hilt. There are many other lines on which similar heavy duties are imposed, but the leader of the Opposition referred to them last night, and I shall not further deal with the point. It is admitted that Victoria has not gone ahead like New South Wales, but protectionists urge that this is because New South Wales has a larger area. They have not the fairness to point out at the same time that this large extent of country involves extremely heavy administrative expenses ; they simply argue that if New South Wales is prosperous she ought to be so, because of her larger territory. It was pointed out last night, I believe by the honorable member for Melbourne Ports, that England had not been prosperous. I have taken the trouble to compare the wealth per square mile of the United Kingdom with that of the United States, France, Germany, Russia, Italy, and Austria-Hungary. We find that the wealth of the United Kingdom per square mile is £97,570 ; that of France, £47,500 ; Germany, £35,530; Russia, £760; Italy, £28,500; Austria-Hungary, £18,700 ; and the United States, £4,560 ; and that the trade of the United Kingdom per square mile is £5,640,

Mr A McLean

- Is that how the honorable member compares New South Wales and Victoria - per square mile 1

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I point out in fairness that we cannot always apply this test. But an endeavour has been made to show that New South Wales has built up her prosperity because of her large area, \*ind I am only showing that if the test of area be applied it will be found that England has improved under free-trade. I am giving not only the area per square mile, but also the population. As compared with .America, honorable members will find that the result is as I have stated.it.

Mr O'malley

- The territory of England would not be sufficient for a fairsized zoo in America !

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- We know, of course, that the area of America is very.gr.eat. The trade of England is £5,640 per square mile; of France, £1,410; of Germany, £1,990; of Russia, £15; of Italy, £800; of Austria-Hungary, ,£510 ; of the United States, £100.

Mr Isaacs

- What is the trade of Turkey ?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I have. quoted the figures with regard to the seven great powers of the world. It would take too long to go into the affairs of all countries. My honorable and learned 'friend will be able to give us the figures with regard to Turkey, if he is so fond of that country. The earnings of the people per square mile are - in the United Kingdom, £11,740.; France, £5,900 ; Germany, £6,150 ; Russia, £120; Italy, £3,9.20; Austria-Hungary, £2,930 ; United States, £890. As to population, England maintains per square mile 330 people; France, 192; Germany, 247 ; Russia, 47 ; Italy, 274 ; Austria-Hungary, 162 ; United States, 23.

Mr Isaacs

- Will the honorable member give the House the statistics of population for Belgium ?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- England comes on top of the whole of the great powers. Then take the wealth per inhabitant. The figures are - for the United Kingdom, £302; France, £252 ; German}', £156 ; Russia, £61; Italy, £101 ; Austria-Hungary, £104; United States, £234. The value of trade per head of population is, for the United Kingdom, £17 ; France, £7-

Mr A McLean

- Is that external trade 1

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- We have to judge a country by its trade all round. I am giving the figures with regard to exports and imports. What -nonsense it is to pick out statistics ! That is what has been done in Victoria for so long. Statistics have been picked out to suit the case presented and to back up the arguments, and when exception has been taken to this practice and any one has endeavoured to supply the correct figures, the press has refused to print this information for the benefit of the public - except in the case of the Argus.

Mr Ronald

- Then are we to suppose that there is no difference between exports and imports 1

<page>6083</page>

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I do not say so. The remainder of the figures for the great powers, in regard to value of trade per head of the population, are - for Germany, £8 ; Russia, £1 ; Italy, £3 ; Austria - Hungary, £3 ; United States, £5. The value of manufactures per head of the population in the United Kingdom amounts to £22 ; in France, £15 ; Germany, £13 ; Russia, £4 ; Italy, £6 ; Austria-Hungary, £7 ; United States, £27.

Mr Isaacs

- Where do those figures come from?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I am quoting from a document upon the correctness of which I will stake my existence.

Mr Isaacs

- The honorable member might let the House into the secret.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I have had these figures checked by one of the best authorities who could check them, and I will vouch for the accuracy of them.

Sir John Forrest

- What about the case of Western Australia?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- My right honor able friend will be able to give the facts so far as they concern Western Australia, but he will have to answer to his people in that State for proposing to tax them as he does under this Tariff. Now I will compare the earnings per head of the population. They are in the United Kingdom, £36 ; in France, £31 ; Germany, £24 ; Russia, £9 ; Italy, £13 ; Austria Hungary, £16 ; United States, £44.

Mr Ronald

- Hear ! hear !

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

-I admit that the United States is a large country, and possesses fair advantages. I do not want merely to give one side of the case, but both sides. I want to be absolutely fair. I do not want to make any misquotations. I have now given statistics concerning the wealth, the trade, the value of manufactures, the earnings, and the production per square mile, and also per head of the population, and I have shown that England comes out on top in the result, although she is under a freetrade policy. Now I will compare the whole of the seven great powers showing how the United Kingdom stands in comparison with the other six powers taken as a whole. The wealth of the United Kingdom per square mile is £97,570. The total wealth of France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Austria, Hungary and United States put together, amounts to £3,770 per square mile. The trade of the United Kingdom is £5,640 per square mile, whilst of the other six great powers it amounts to £108 per square mile. The value of the food produced in the United Kingdom per square mile is £959, and of the other six great powers £96 per square mile. The value of manufactures produced in the United Kingdom is £7,240 per square mile, and the value of manufactures produced in the six other great powers lumped together amounts to £325. The earnings of the people of the United Kingdom per square mile of the country amount to £11,740, whilst the earnings of the people of the other six great powers per square mile amount to £610. The agricultural capital per head of the people of the United Kingdom is £53, and the other great powers £50. The average value of manufactured produce in the United Kingdom is per square mile £8,199 as against £422 in the other six great countries. The population per square mile of country is 330 in the United Kingdom as against 29 in the other great powers. Take the figures per inhabitant or per square mile - let honorable members apply the test how they will - and it will be found that England comes out on top. The wealth per head of the United Kingdom is £302 as compared with £131 on the average per head of the other six great powers.

The trade of England is £17 per head as against £4 in the case of the six other great powers. The value of food produced for human use is £3 per head of the population in the United Kingdom, and £3 per head of the population in the other six great powers. The value of manufactures in the United Kingdom is £22 per head, and £11 per head in France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Hungary, and the United States.

Mr Isaacs

- For what year are these figures?

<page>6084</page>

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- For the year before last. They are up to date. I have procured the latest figures available, and will vouch for their correctness. These are the latest statistics which can be secured. Honorable members can apply this test in any way they like, and it will be shown that the condition of England under free-trade has been progressive. Her population has increased by 51 per cent. during 50 years of free-trade; her commerce by 337 per cent. ; her shipping by 736 per cent.; her mining has increased by 386 per cent.; her hardware industry has increased by 98 per cent.; her textile manufactures by 162 per cent.; her revenue by 108 per cent.; her wealth by 139 per cent; her banking by 315 per cent., and the number of her school children by 255 per cent. On the other hand, the death rate of England has decreased by 4 per 1,000, owing to the improved condition of the people of the United Kingdom . They have better house accommodation, better living, better clothes, more free air, and higher wages. All these things have tended to the improved condition of the workers and the people of England, with the result that the death rate under free-trade has gone down to the extent I have stated. That is the best argument that can be urged against the condition of affairs which prevailed in England in 1844, when young children were left at home and given spirits in order to keep them asleep while their mothers and fathers worked for their support. All that has passed away.

Mr Ronald

- Is that so 1

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- Well, to a very large extent that condition of affairs has passed away. I am putting some of the conditions of England under free-trade. Can my honorable friend deny that the people of England are not only better clothed and fed than they were in those days, but that their conditions of work are improved? Do they not work fewer hours per day, and receive higher rates of wages ? Are not the women of England in a better condition under free-trade than they were in those times ? Now we come to the consumption of food. The increase in the consumption of meat per inhabitant is 34 lbs. ; sugar 50 lbs. ; wheat 96 lbs. ; and tea 51 ozs. Under free-trade the paupers of England have been reduced 8 per 1,000 ; whilst the deposits of the working classes, including those lodged with building societies, amount to £322,000,000. England's position today is such that, if we take her assets and liabilities, we shall find that she could pay off the national debt of every country on the face of the earth twice over, and still have a good surplus. Yet my honorable friends want to make out that England is going back. England to-day has the control of a quarter of the surface of the earth, and she has under her jurisdiction a fourth of the population of the world. A policy that has enabled England to build up such a prosperous condition of affairs, which has increased her wealth, improved the condition of her working classes and enabled her manufacturers to give higher rates of wages, should, in my opinion, be good enough for Australia. I have heard honorable members, when endeavouring to capture the votes of different electorates in our State, declaring that we should give a preference to British imports. When the Prime Minister was considering the advisableness of giving a preference to British imports, he declared in favour of this preference, if at all possible. He was desirous of taking advantage of the feeling of loyalty to the mother country which exists throughout Australia.

Mr McCay

- Did the honorable member agree to follow the British policy in regard to coloured aliens ?

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- My honorable and learned friend should not say anything about coloured aliens, because he belongs to the whitey-brown party.

Mr Wilks

- The streaky party.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- Yes, the streaky party. The honorable and learned member was in favour of bringing these coloured aliens into the country ; we want to send them out.

Mr Chapman

- Honorable members on the opposition side belong to the piebald party'.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- The honorable member is another member of the whiteybrown party. This is one of the most important questions that could engage the attention of honorable members, and I feel that I have been called upon to speak at considerable length, not for my own pleasure-

Mr Higgins

- Nor for ours.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- Possibly not for the pleasure of the honorable and learned member. That interjection shows, at all events, that I must have been giving statistics which honorable members on the Government side of the House will find it difficult to answer. I know they do not like to hear the truth. Honorable members from Victoria have not been used to hearing the truth. Unfortunately, the people of Victoria^ - and I pity them - have been educated in the wrong way ; they have not been allowed to get at the true facts. The honorable and learned member for Corinella went before his constituents, and said that in the interests of Australia a stop must be put to the immigration of coloured aliens. He said - " I have no sympathy with those who do not put out the fire when it is commencing to blaze. I believe in putting it out at once." Yet we find the honorable and learned member voting in a different direction.

Mr SPEAKER

-Order! That has nothing to do with the question before the Chair.

<page>6085</page>

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I am only referring to the matter in order to show how difficult it is to convince honorable member who are not acting in accordance with statements made by them when before their constituents ; who -speak in one way when before their constituents, but take a different course when they come here. One has a difficulty in dealing with a man who acts in that way. While I feel impelled to speak with no uncertain voice so far as my opinions on this question are concerned, I have no desire to make personal reflections upon any honorable member. I refer to these matters only in a political -sense. It is to be regretted that the Government have thought fit to hamper the great industries of the Commonwealth by seeking to fasten upon the people the fangs of a protectionist policy. We have enough to contend against in the Commonwealth already. I am glad to say, however, that we have arrived at that stage when instead of being dependent upon other countries, we are able not only to supply our own wants so far as most lines of agricultural produce are concerned, but to export largely wheat, butter, dairy produce, .&it;fcc. The Government should have endeavoured to give greater help to our producers by assisting to find markets for their surplus produce; by making the cost of production as small as possible, and by imposing no heavy taxes upon machinery and upon the necessities of life. All such taxes tend to hamper the great producing interests of the country - the interests which we are endeavouring to assist. I would ask my honorable friends opposite, who have been crying out since their election that we should endeavour to protect ourselves against the pauper-made .goods of other countries, where those pauper-made goods come from 1 They all come from protectionist countries ! If protection is such a good thing - if it is the panacea for all the evils experienced by the producers - how is it that it has brought about such an army of paupers, and why do the protectionists fear open competition with the markets of the world? All these things go to show the rottenness of the .policy which has been submitted by the Federal Government. I regret .that the Ministry have thought fit to deceive the people upon this matter in the way they have done. I would not care if the Government had expressed their views with no uncertain voice. I speak for the good of the whole of the States when I say that it is to their advantage that we should have a free-trade policy. Our desire should be to do everything we possibly can to advance the general interests of the electors of the various -States. What I regret more than anything else is that the Prime Minister, when addressing the electors of New South Wales, led them to believe that he did not intend to foist a high protective Tariff upon the Commonwealth, but that free-traders and protectionists could join hands in

assisting his Government. How they have been deceived I will allow them to say when they get the opportunity of so doing. If any honorable member takes 'the trouble to visit New South Wales he will find that the people of that State from one end of it to the other declare that the Prime Minister and his Government have been untrue to their pledges - that they have had no mandate from the people of the Commonwealth to fasten these highly protective duties upon them. It behoves every man who believes - as I do - in a policy which will benefit all classes of the community, to do his best to follow in the footsteps of the great reformers of the old country, and to endeavour to build up a nation such as they have built up in the United Kingdom - a nation to which we are all proud to belong, and one which stands today stronger "than any other nation under the sun. It is a nation which is respected by everybody, and whose workers occupy a better position than do those of any other country in the world. Surely a policy which has made England so great and powerful, should be good enough for United Australia.

<page>6086</page>

Mr A MCLEAN

- I shall not endeavour to follow my honorable friend who has preceded me through the long and intricate maze of his discourse, which lasted something like four hours. I listened to him very carefully from beginning to end, and I also listened to the leader of the 'Opposition, who preceded him with a three hours' speech, and for the life of me I cannot find any tangible argument that I am called upon to answer. It is quite true that the honorable member for Macquarie has quoted a mass of -statistics, but they were quoted in such a way that I venture to say he did not find them in any book, but must have worked them out for his own purposes. I do not mean to -say that the statistics quoted are not correct, but they are not correctly applied. 'Has my honorable friend ever heard of commerce and manufacture and all that kind of thing being measured by the square mile? I have read a great many statistics, but this is the first occasion upon which I ever heard of statistics of that kind being compared by the square mile. When we come to deal with the -States where the area has almost every thing to do with the number of population which the State is capable of supporting, the squaremile argument is conveniently dropped, although it is used in regard to such items as commerce, manufactures, and others, which have not the slightest reference or relevance to the area of the country in which they are carried on.

Mr Conroy

- What other test can be applied ?

Mr A McLEAN

- The plain and honest test of the rate of progress made by each nation as it stands, without that test being clouded with this issue of square miles. I shall endeavour to show the honorable member for Macquarie that there are honest and reliable statistics which give a true indication of the progress made by the various nations which we have heard quoted, from the time that England adopted the policy of free-trade down to the present. Concerning the Tariff, I think it right to say that it is not my intention to deal at this stage with its details. I think that the proper place for details to be dealt with is in committee. When we get into committee, my desire will be to so adjust the burdens of the people, that taxation will fall lightest upon those who receive the least benefit from the nature of the Tariff. Those who receive the greater part of "the benefit should pay the greater part of the taxes, so far as that object can be accomplished, having due regard to the admitted difficulty of the question, and to the necessities of the revenue of the Commonwealth. But the whole of the present discussion, as I understand it, is centred round the one question of whether this Tariff should be framed on an absolutely free-trade basis with revenue duties, or whether it should be a Tariff of revenue duties and as far as possible protective in its incidence. If I understood the honorable member for Macquarie, he endeavoured to show that the Prime Minister has not kept faith with the people of the Commonwealth and that he has not brought down such -a Tariff as he promised when upon the hustings. I carefully followed the speech of the Prime Minister at Maitland, and also his subsequent deliveries, and I must confess that I was never for one moment misled as to the nature of the Tariff which he intended to submit. The proof that honorable members opposite were not misled, is supplied by the fact that the moment the House met they took their seats upon the opposition benches. The protectionists of the House ranged themselves upon the side of the Government and the free-traders upon the other side, thus clearly showing that the latter were not misled, Is it fair then to tell honorable members at this late stage that the Government have not kept faith with the people, and that they led the Commonwealth to believe that they intended to bringdown a freetrade Tariff,, whereas'

they have brought down a Tariff which is protective in its incidence? I say that it is not fail<sup>1</sup>. The newspapers throughout the length -and breadth of the Commonwealth indicated the nature of the Tariff which was to be introduced. I think that as nearly as possible the Tariff follows upon the lines of the speeches delivered by the Prime Minister, of the interpretation which was placed upon those speeches by the various candidates who offered themselves for election, and by the public press 'throughout the length and breadth of the Commonwealth. I venture to say that if the Government had brought down a Tariff at variance with promises made at the hustings "the protectionists on this side would not follow them another hour. I feel perfectly sure of that, and the fact that we have not heard of the least defection from the Government following, since the Tariff was introduced, is the best proof we can possibly have that the Tariff follows the lines of the announcement that was made to the people of the Commonwealth by the head of the Government.

Mr Conroy

- Is the honorable member satisfied with it ?

<page>6087</page>

Mr A McLEAN

- I do not think any person -would be absolutely satisfied with any Tariff as first submitted, because the matter is surrounded with -so many difficulties that it .is only by the most careful application of 'the energies of the members of the House to the Tariff, as proposed by the Government, that we can hope to produce any thing like a perfect Tariff. It would be unreasonable to expect that it should be perfect in all its incidence when first submitted. But I am satisfied of this :

That the Government have kept faith with the people of the Commonwealth in the general nature of the Tariff they have submitted for our consideration. That is enough for my purpose at present. We heard a great deal last night, and a great deal to-day, about the respective merits of free-trade and protection. We have heard a great deal of spurious sympathy evinced for the people of Victoria in their wretched condition, and in the miserable state to 'which protection has reduced them. Before I sit down, I shall show honorable members who used these arguments that, if they have any sympathy to spare, they will find better material to lavish it upon in their own State than they will find in the State of Victoria. I shall prove that by their own trusted statist, Mr. Coghlan. I shall prove the same thing by comparing Great Britain under a freetrade Tariff with the leading protectionist nations of the world.

Mr Malley

- Hear, hear. Four millions of paupers.

Mr Conroy

- I thought the honorable member said that commerce had nothing to do with this question.

Mr A McLEAN

- I said it had nothing to do with square miles of territory, but it has everything to do with the arguments, if the figures are submitted in a form in which we can compare them in a fair and rational manner. I have said we ought not to measure commerce by square miles of territory. To do that is to do what is simply absurd. We ought not to measure manufactures by square miles of territory. With a few exceptions, the whole of the manufactures of Victoria are congregated within a few miles of the Melbourne Postoffice.

Mr Conroy

- Hear, hear ; at the port.

<page>6088</page>

Mr A McLEAN

- Would it be fair to measure the whole of the output by the number of square miles which they occupy ? It would be most unfair, and I shall not attempt to mislead honorable members by submitting any such figures for their consideration. I desire in the first place to give some little attention to the position of Great Britain under a free-trade policy. I shall endeavour to show that free-trade has been tried in Great Britain under the most favorable conditions that have existed in any part of the habitable globe, and that even, with all the advantages which England undoubtedly possessed for giving that policy the fairest possible trial, it has not enabled the nation to keep pace with the great protectionist nations of the earth. I shall not refer to the speeches or writings of any irresponsible persons or of any commissioner. I shall take the trusted statist of the nation. I shall not quote from any statist except Britain's own statist - Mulhall. I think we all trust him, and admit that his figures are as accurate as it is possible to make them, that he has



spared no pains in their compilation, and that he does not compare the condition of England with the condition of other countries for the purpose of elaborating either the policy of free-trade or that of protection. He merely records facts as he finds them, after the most diligent and searching investigation. To take the position of England before she adopted her free-trade policy - I may say that I have not been able to find the statistics up to the very year in which she made the change. The latest year up to which I can get reliable statistics in the various branches of trade and production is 1840. That is sufficiently near for my purpose. Prior to 1840 we know that England had something like an unbroken record of three centuries of protection. What was the condition of England then as compared with the condition of the rest of the world at that period? Honorable members prove nothing when they say that England is more prosperous to-day than she was when she adopted free-trade. We all admit that. It would be unreasonable to expect that whilst the whole world was progressing rapidly, England alone should stand still like Joshua's sun and make no progress whatever. That would not be reasonable. We know that England has made progress. But what I do assert, and what I shall prove is that England did not progress at the same rate as have the great protectionist nations of the world since that period. In the year 1840 England had all the raw material that was necessary to carry on manufactures under the most favorable conditions possible at that time. For instance, take her supplies of coal and iron, which are the main factors in manufactures. In 1840 England had an output of 1,390,000 tons of iron; whilst France, Germany, and the United States, together, had an output of only 810,000 tons. So that England's output of iron was more than 50 per cent, greater than the total output of the other three great nations. Then we come to her coal supply, and we find that from 1821 to 1840- that is the period selected by Mulhall and not by me, and it is the latest date up to which I can get an account of her output for a number of years prior to her adoption of free-trade - from 1821 to 1840 the output of coal in Great Britain was 390,000,000 tons, whilst the output of coal for the other three nations, France, Germany, and the United States was only 102,000,000 tons, or very little more than one-fourth of the output of Great Britain alone. Then, in addition to that, Great Britain possessed this very great advantage over the other nations of the earth : She had the command of the greatest portion of the shipping of the world. She had a practical monopoly of the carrying trade of the other nations of the earth. So that she had not only the raw material at her own doors for manufactures, but she had also the shipping to carry those manufactures to other parts of the world, and to bring back their products at the least possible cost. At that time, in addition to those great advantages over other nations, she had completely outstripped them in the output of manufactures. In 1840, her manufactures were valued at £387,000,000, and the only nation that approached within measurable distance of her was France, whose total output for that year was £123,000,000 less than that of Great Britain. Germany and the United States were hopelessly behind.

Mr Conroy

- There was no Germany at that time.

Mr A McLEAN

- Mulhall takes the various States that make up the present German Empire. His comparisons are absolutely fair. The total manufacturing output of the United States in 1840 was valued at £96,000,000, or about one-fourth of the value of that of Great Britain. Great Britain adopted free-trade for the express purpose of becoming the great workshop of the world. That was the very laudable ambition of British statesmen, and I regret that it has not been realized, and that their dream has been doomed to disappointment. In 1896, Great Britain had increased her manufacturing output to a value of £876,000,000, which was about two and a quarter times as great as that of 1840. France in the same period made the least progress among the protectionist nations of the world, but she increased her manufacturing output two and a third times, which was a little more than the rate of increase in Great Britain, though her population had not increased at anything like the same rate. It must be remembered, too, that France gave her attention largely to agriculture, the greatest industry of the human race, whilst Great Britain completely neglected agriculture, and concentrated the whole of her energies in promoting her manufactures. Germany more than doubled the rate of increase of Great Britain, however, her production in 1896 being four and two-thirds as much as that of 1840, while the production of the United States in 1896 was twenty and three-fourths as much as their production in 1840.

Mr Cameron

- But the honorable member omits to tell us how greatly the population of the United States increased by

immigration during that period.

Mr A McLEAN

- What caused her population to increase ? It was the great attractions which she offered to population.

Mr Joseph Cook

- Hear, hear. Her virgin country and resources !

Mr A McLEAN

- The United States made nine times as much progress in manufacturing as was made by Great Britain in the period to which I have referred, although for the greater part of that period they had been the most highly protected country under the sun.

Mr.V. L. Solomon. -The honorable member would not expect a grown man to advance at the same rate as a boy.

Mr A McLEAN

- I hope the honorable member will bear that in mind when we compare Victoria with New South Wales. I have shown that the great nations of the earth - France, Germany, and the United States - all increased their production at a greater rate than did Great Britain during the period to which I referred, although Great Britain concentrated all her energies upon manufacturing.

Mr Deakin

- And Great Britain had no such wars as the Franco-German war or the American civil war.

<page>6089</page>

Mr A McLEAN

- Yes. At the same time she completely neglected her great agricultural resources, although the other nations devoted their attention to that branch of industry even more than to manufacturing. In this connexion it may be well to say that production - that is, primary production and agriculture - has been admitted by all the leading peoples of the earth to be the greatest industry of the human race. It has done more for the advancement of the race, and added more to the wealth of the world, than any other industry. Production, though, it covers the whole range of human industry, may fairly be classed under two heads; primary production and manufacture. To show the amount of attention that is given to agriculture throughout the world, I may say that, leaving out of account China, India, Japan, and the other Eastern nations, that industry employs 80,000,000 peasants, and its annual output is represented by a total value of £4,000,000,000. That industry, however, Great Britain has been neglecting ever since she adopted free-trade. Before pursuing comparisons any further, I should like to point out that the moment England adopted free-trade the rate of increase of her population diminished to an alarming extent.

Mr Henry Willis

- What was the condition of her people in 1840?

Mr A McLEAN

- From 1810 to 1840, in the three decades preceding the advent of free-trade, the population of England increased at the rate of 434 per 1,000, whilst from 1840 to 1870, in the next three decades, the increase fell to 169 per 1,000. Ireland in 1840 was a great agricultural country, with a population little short of 8,250,000, while to-day her population is considerably under 4,000,000.

Mr Henry Willis

- Because of the immigration to the United States.

Mr A McLEAN

- That has been the result of free-trade in Ireland.

Sir Edward Braddon

- But what about the North of Ireland?

Mr A McLEAN

- I have shown from Mulhall's statistics, without distorting them, or altering them in any instance, but producing them just as he produces them, that England has been hopelessly outstripped by other nations in the rate of increase of manufacturing output. I shall now draw attention to her agricultural industry.

Mr Henry Willis

- Give us the cause of that.

Mr A McLEAN

- The principal cause, in my opinion, is that she has adopted a mistaken fiscal policy.

Mr Henry Willis

- It is her technical education.

Mr A McLEAN

- I shall show the honorable member that the same cause operates in precisely the same way in his own State as compared with Victoria, which has been the subject of so much pity at the hands of honorable members on that side. In 1840 the United Kingdom had 22,000,000 acres under cultivation. According to the last statistics which I have read in the pages of Mulhall, it has fallen to 20,000,000 acres; but the figures I have taken are for the year 1888. At that time her agriculture had fallen off from 22,000,000 acres to 21,000,000 acres. In France the area was increased from 55,000,000 acres to 61,000,000 acres during the same period. Germany increased hers by 14,000,000 acres in the same time, and the United States hers by 151,000,000 acres. Yet we hear the progress of Great Britain compared with that of the United States. It is an insult to history, and to the intelligence of the people, to compare the progress of the two nations since Great Britain adopted the policy of free-trade. What is the reason why she could not keep up with other nations in the output of her manufactures or in her agricultural pursuits? We can assume only one of two causes - either that she had adopted a mistaken policy, which had the effect of retarding production, or that her people were not so intelligent or so industrious as the people of protectionist nations. I refuse to believe the latter, because she proved, while working under the same policy as other nations; that she had completely outstripped them in the rate of progress. But we see that after her adoption of free-trade, stagnation commenced for the first time to set in, and that she fell hopelessly behind other nations in production.

Mr Conroy

- Does the honorable member really believe that?

Mr A McLEAN

- What does the honorable member mean? I am not taking an American statist, or a French statist, or a German statist - I am giving the English statist's figures for all the countries whose progress I have cited. I am perfectly sure that no intelligent person in England will deny their approximate accuracy.

Mr Conroy

- Not of the figures.

Mr A McLEAN

- Of course statistics cannot be absolutely accurate in every particular, but they are sufficiently accurate for our purpose.

Mr Henry Willis

- But they prove our case !

<page>6090</page>

Mr A McLEAN

- If my honorable friend's case rests on the stagnation of production then I am quite willing to give him his case; but I contend that it is by production, and by production alone, that nations are made great and prosperous. I contend that the nation which contents itself with trade - that is, with the distribution of wealth - without doing anything to increase or add to the mass of the wealth of the world, is a mere parasite on the industry of the others, because it lives by reason of the black-mail which it can levy on products in course of transit between the producer and the consumer. Trade adds nothing to the wealth of the world, although it may enrich those merchants who are engaged in it. There is no doubt that in external trade England has outstripped all the other nations, and I regret to say that it has been anything but a profitable one, as I shall endeavour to show. The last speaker seemed to me to fall into a very serious error of judgment when he boasted of the total commerce of Great Britain being so much larger than that of other nations. He did not seem to notice that the figures he quoted had reference to only the external commerce of the nation. Every economist whose opinion is worth having in these latter and more enlightened days admits that internal commerce is infinitely more profitable than external commerce.

Mr Conroy

- Then trade between two Presbyterians is better than trade between a Presbyterian and an Episcopalian ?

Mr A McLEAN

- I would be very sorry to contradict anything which my goodnatured friend asserts; but he will see, if he

gives the matter consideration, that trade should, and generally does, benefit both parties to the transaction. Internal trade has two parties to the transaction, therefore both are benefited. One-half of external trade belongs to the nation under review, and the other to some other nation. Therefore external trade is by no means as profitable as internal trade, and if you desire to get at the real condition of trade in any country, it is necessary to ascertain the amount of internal exchange between producer and consumer in that country.

Mr Barton

- Does it pay to "go halves" ?

Mr A McLEAN

- That is what my honorable friends opposite contend - that half a loaf is better than a whole loaf. I have heard it said that half a loaf is better than no bread; but it has been reserved for my free-trade friends to assert that half a loaf is better than a whole loaf.

Mr V L Solomon

- It depends upon whose hands it is in !

Mr A McLEAN

- If my honorable friends will endeavour to restrict their interjections to about three at a time, I shall endeavour to follow them.

Mr SPEAKER

- It is impossible for the speaker to proceed with his speech, and it is equally impossible for the official reporters to take down a report of the proceedings, unless interjections are restrained.

Mr A McLEAN

- This question of external trade is a very important one, and there is one thing which I have heard advocated by free-traders and free-trade journals that I hope there are not many free-traders in this House to subscribe to, and that is that the country which imports more than it exports is a gainer to the extent of the difference between the imports and exports.

Mr Cameron

- Quite correct.

Mr A McLEAN

- Does my honorable friend agree with that ?

Mr Cameron

- I do certainly.

Mr A McLEAN

- Does the honorable gentleman apply that to his own private finances ?

Mr Cameron

- Yes.

Mr A McLEAN

- If my honorable friend earned £500 a year, and spent £600 a year, how long would it take him to make a fortune? Is it not a fair thing to say that a nation's exports represents a nation's sales, and that her imports represent her purchases ? Surely that will not be disputed.

Mr. F. E. McLean. - She pays for her imports with her exports.

Mr A McLEAN

- But the exports and imports do not balance each other in any one country in the world. There is always a balance either in favour of the exports or imports in every case, and the leader of the Opposition last night emphasized that point when he was quoting from some newspaper to show that every nation paid for its imports with its exports. That is only true to the extent of its exports. The country that imports more than it exports, has to adjust the balance by remitting gold to make up the difference.

Mr. F. E. McLean. - Which gold is included in her exports ?

<page>6091</page>

Mr A McLEAN

- No ; it is nothing of the kind. If my honorable friend will read Mulhall or the statistician of his own State he will find that the gold is not included in the exports, and that is what makes the whole difference. My honorable friend will see that if the gold were included in the exports, then the imports and exports would in all cases balance each other, because we all admit that, in these enlightened days, nations pay their

debts.

Mr F E McLean

- Will the honorable member pardon me for reminding him that there may be a balance of indebtedness ?

Mr A McLEAN

- There may be, but a nation which increases its indebtedness is, if anything, in a worse position than the nation which sends away its gold to pay its debts promptly.

Mr F E McLean

- We cannot argue the question out on the basis of income and expenditure.

Mr A McLEAN

- It is nothing else. What is the nation made up of - it is an aggregation of individuals. If the majority of these individuals spend more than they earn in the year, they are losing money, and are on the downward grade, and if the aggregation of individuals who make up the nation do the same thing, and spend more than they earn in the year, that nation must also be on the downward grade. The nation which imports more than it exports, is the loser on her external trade to the extent of the difference between the two, because it must either send away gold that would represent the difference, or add to its previous indebtedness.

Mr Conroy

- What about the case of Great Britain. Surely she is the gainer.

Mr A McLEAN

- I am going to show how that argument affects Great Britain. Mulhall gives very significant figures on that head. From 1861 to 1886, that is 26 years, the exports of the whole world amounted to £29,419,000,000. The imports of the whole world for the same period amounted to £32,786,000,000 sterling. My honorable friend has therefore proof conclusive that gold is not counted either in the exports or imports.

Mr V L Solomon

- In the case of Western Australia, would not the honorable member reckon the export of £6,000,000 worth of gold per annum as amongst the exports ?

Mr A McLEAN

- Yes ; that is a legitimate output of the State. Gold in that case is an article of commerce, not, as in the case of these nations, simply coin interchanged to adjust the balance of their external trade. Whatever you take out of the earth is a product, and a nugget of gold is as much a product as a potato or anything else that is taken out of the soil.

Mr F E McLean

- Where is the difference if the gold is minted into coin ?

<page>6092</page>

Mr A McLEAN

- Every nation has' only limited requirements in the way of coin, and it keeps just such coin as is necessary, but we are not speaking of the exchange of coin that is sent to adjust balances of indebtedness but of gold as an article of commerce. In these 26 years I have quoted the total imports of the world exceeded the exports by £3,367,000,000 sterling. Now how is that amount made up ? My honorable friends know that every article that figures as an import in one country must figure as an export in another country, and therefore the balance of imports over exports is represented by the cost of importing. I would advise my free-trade friends to lay this stubborn fact to heart when they speak about cheapening production and cheapening living by free-trade. How can they explain this difference of £3,367,000,000 between the value of the articles as exports and their value as imports ? The difference is made up of the middleman's profit, of the cost of freight and insurance, and the general expense of distribution. Now, of that enormous balance of imports over exports, what proportion does Great Britain represent? £2,111,000,000, or nearly double as much as all the rest of the world put together. Therefore, Great Britain lost on her external trade during these 26 years nearly double as much as all the other countries of the world put together. I may be asked how it is that Great Britain can, incur such a heavy loss on her external trade, and yet continue in a fairly prosperous condition? The reason is patent, but that reason would not apply to our case. In the case of Great Britain most of that money is paid into British pockets - that is to say, the commerce of the world is carried in British bottoms, and, therefore, the money expended in importing these goods from abroad is paid into the pockets of some British subjects.

In addition to that, we know that Great Britain, for a very long time before she adopted free-trade, was a creditor of nations. Every year a very large amount of money was due to Great Britain in the shape of interest on her foreign loans, and she could afford to spend the money in importing goods without becoming materially impoverished. But let Australia or any other nation without these advantages try the same experiment. Let Australia import largely in excess of her exports, and we shall see where she will be landed in a very few years.

An Honorable Member. - We have seen.

Mr A McLEAN

- We have seen in "Victoria, and I am very glad the honorable member has reminded me of that incident. From the beginning of 1883 to the end of 1892, Victoria imported £62,000,000 worth of goods more than she exported. What was the result? We know that the most serious financial crisis occurred at the end of that time that the colony of Victoria has ever experienced. That was the time when the banks were closed, and other financial institutions came crumbling down. Many people say that the terrible depression of 1892 was caused by reckless speculation during the boom period. But a little reflection will show that there is not much in that contention. Whatever money was lost - and no doubt a good deal was lost by individuals - in those reckless transactions, the money was gained by some other persons, and was not destroyed in any shape or form. This may have displaced capital greatly, and shifted its location from one person to another, but that could not in itself make the country materially poorer than it was before. But the solid fact that we bought £62,000,000 worth more goods than we were able to sell during those ten years, would account, and does account for the terrible financial crisis which followed. If the contention of my honorable friend be correct, Victoria should have been £62,000,000 richer at the end of the ten years than she was at the commencement; but, unfortunately, we found from our bitter experience, that that was not the case.

Mr Cameron

- How much of that was borrowed money?

Mr A McLEAN

- A great deal was borrowed money, but that does not affect the question.

Mr Cameron

- Victoria did not borrow the goods, but she borrowed the money.

Mr A McLEAN

- We borrowed money, and brought it out in the shape of goods; and not only that, but we lived extravagantly. People were making money, or thought they were, and spent it freely; but they got commodities - the money was spent in imports,

Mr Cameron

- That was not trade.

Mr A McLEAN

- It was trade.

Mr Cameron

- No.

Mr A McLEAN

- Then I do not know what the honorable member calls trade. These were imports.

Mr Cameron

- Trade is not borrowing money or goods; trade is the exchange of commodities.

<page>6093</page>

Mr A McLEAN

- The exchange of goods is trade, and borrowing money is a transaction separate and apart. But the honorable member must know that when the States borrow money they do not get that money in the shape of coin, but in goods; and Victoria did the same. During the 26 years that Great Britain lost £2,111,000,000 on her external trade, what was the condition of the trade of the "United States? In that same period the United States exported £141,000,000 worth more than was imported. According to my honorable friends, the United States should be that much poorer on the transaction; but, unfortunately for that theory, the result shows that the United States is very much wealthier on account of the great excess of exports over imports. The honorable member for Macquarie, who, in quoting statistics regarding the

incomes of the United Kingdom and the United States, measured them by the square mile, and so clouded the issue, may, perhaps, be interested to hear the figures as given by Mulhall. The total income of the United Kingdom in 1896, according to Mulhall, was £1,421,000,000 sterling. The total income of the United States for the same year was £3,178,000,000; or about two and one-fourth times greater than that of Great Britain, although the population of the United States, in round numbers, is only about 70 per cent, larger. It will therefore be seen, taking the total income of the two nations, that per inhabitant the income of the United States is infinitely larger than that of the United Kingdom. Revenue, I admit, is not much to be relied on as an indication of wealth. Countries collect what is necessary for their requirements, and some countries may need a great deal more than others, without being actually wealthier. But taking the figures for what they are worth, we find that in 1889 the total revenue of the United Kingdom was £88,500,000; that of France for the same year, was £121,800,000; and of Germany, £154,700,000. Then we find that the gold reserve of England was £31,800,000; of France, £78,500,000; of Germany, £43,500,000; and of Russia, £122,200,000. It is fair to say, however, that I do not attach much importance to these latter statistics, for reasons that I have pointed out. We heard a great deal about the flourishing condition of the people of Great Britain as compared with that of people in protectionist countries. Mulhall gives a table showing the increase in the total expenditure of different countries from 1840 to 1888, a period of 48 years. The total expenditure of Great Britain per inhabitant during that period increased by 20 per cent. The expenditure per inhabitant of France for the same period increased at the rate of 147 per cent., that of Germany by 260 per cent., and that of the United States by 230 per cent. Why does Great Britain lag so terribly in the rear of the protectionist nations in the increase in her rate of expenditure? When honorable members speak of the present position of Great Britain, and compare it with her condition under protection, they should, as I pointed out before, compare her rate of progress. No one denies that Great Britain has made substantial progress. Long may she continue to progress! I am sure that is the earnest wish of every true subject of the Empire. But when we are dealing with an important question such as this, affecting the future policy of the Commonwealth, it is necessary that we should pull the mask off and show the results of the different fiscal systems as they have affected the other nations of the earth, in order that we may judge which is the most likely to benefit the people of the Commonwealth of Australia.

Mr Glynn

- The cost of living in Paris is nearly double what it is in London.

Mr A McLEAN

- But is the cost of living in France equal to the cost of living in England?

Mr Glynn

- I can show the honorable member a French paper in which a comparison is made.

Mr A McLEAN

- I have compared all the nations of Europe in respect of the cost of living, and, speaking from memory, I found that the cost of living in Great Britain was something like 50 per cent, greater than the cost in the other countries of Europe. Compare that with America. I will give my honorable and learned friend the figures.

Mr Thomson

- Is that the cost of, or the expenditure on, living?

Mr A McLEAN

- The expenditure on living.

Sir Edward Braddon

- People can afford to spend more in Great Britain.

Mr McLEAN

- I will show my right honorable friend whether they can afford to spend more, because, fortunately, I happen to have taken down the total expenditure in Great Britain, as compared with that of the United States.

Mr Cameron

- It is not a fair comparison.

Mr A McLEAN

- The total expenditure in Great Britain per inhabitant - that is, for every man, woman, and child in the

nation. - amounts to £29 14s. 9d. per annum.. The total expenditure in the United States is £32 16s. 2d. ; so that there is a difference of £3 2s. for every man, woman and child, in favour of the United States, as compared with the United Kingdom.

Mr Cameron

- What is the expenditure in Germany and France ?

Mr A McLEAN

- Now take the case, of food and beverages. In Great Britain the cost for every man, woman and child in; the nation is £14 4s. 9d. In the United'. States it is £9 17s. 7d. So that the cost, in the United Kingdom is more than 50&lt; per cent, greater than in the United States.

Mr O'Malley

- They eat more in the United States.

Mr Cameron

- The comparison is not. fair.

The SPEAKER

- I must ask the honorable member for Tasmania, Mr. Cameron, and the honorable member for Tasmania,, Mr. O'Malley, not to interject so freely as. they have been doing.

Mr A McLEAN

- Here are the words, of Mulhall, the English statistician, on thatpoint. He says - The Americans are the best fed people in the world, and contribute in a great measure to the . abundance and cheapness of food in other countries.....

Mr O'Malley

- The Americans feed all the other nations.

<page>6094</page>

The SPEAKER

- I called the attention of the honorable member for Tasmania just\* now to the disorderly interjections which he was making. I must insist upon their ceasing.

Mr A McLEAN

-

The United States produce 30 per cent. of the grain and S3 per cent. of the meat of the world. Those are Mulhall's words. He is not an American but an English authority. Now I come to the most painful part of these comparisons. I should very much like to pass them over if it were fair to do so. I allude to the number of destitute persons in the different countries. What do we find? I think it is fair to say that these are not the latest statistics. They are taken from Mulhall for the year 1891, but I can give honorable members from his latest work some figures which more than bear out the comparisons. At that time the population of the United Kingdom was 38,200,000.

Mr Higgins

- Was that in 1891 ?

Mr A McLEAN

- The figures are taken from Mulhall for 1891, but they may be for the year 1890. The number of paupers in great Britain during that year was 1,015,000. The number of paupers during the same year in France, Germany, and Russia, with a total population of 179,400,000, was only 960,000.

Sir Edward Braddon

- How many English paupers come from Russia and Poland?

Mr A McLEAN

- Great Britain had far more paupers than had those other nations.

Mr Cameron

- Many are people who go to England to get a living.

Mr A McLEAN

- Take later figures on the same subject. I can give honorable members the figures for 1896 comparing Great Britain and the United States. G reat Britain spent 6s.1d. per head of her total population for the relief of pauperism. The United States spent 2d. per head. So that, in other words, G reat Britain had to expend 36 times more in proportion to her population for the relief of pauperism than had the United States. That is certainly not a very cheering or a very encouraging testimonial for the free-trade policy of



Great Britain.

Mr Conroy

- There is no poor law in America, that is the reason.

Mr A McLEAN

- Dealing with the question of the cost of food, so as to show honorable members how it works out, I find that in the United Kingdom the cost of food is 42.2 per cent. of the total earnings of the people. In the United States the cost of food is only 25.3. In Great Britain it takes 127 days of the year to earn the food of the people, on an average. In the United States it takes 76 days. Yet we hear honorable members speak about the purchasing power of money being greater in Great Britain than in the United States. Mulhall gives the increase in wages in ten leading lines in Great Britain and the United States. The period taken is from 1861 to 1891 - 30 years. In the United Kingdom the increase in wages in those ten leading lines was 37 per cent. during those 30 years. In the United States the increase was 67 per cent., 30 per cent. more than in Great Britain. What becomes, then, of all the cant we hear about the working man being better off in Great Britain than in the United States, when it takes him 127 days to earn his food in the one country and only 76 days in the other ?

Sir Edward Braddon

- The working man's own representatives say that he is better off in Great Britain.

Mr A McLEAN

- These are the most reliable figures honorable members can get. If my right honorable friend who interrupts me can show me any more reliable source of information I shall be glad to take my figures therefrom. At present I am taking the statistics of the most approved and best trusted of English statisticians.

Mr Thomson

- Is not the honorable member omitting a great deal, with regard to the expenditure on house rent, and so on ?

Mr A McLEAN

- But that cuts both ways. These figures are sufficiently accurate to show the trend and extent of industries in both countries. If honorable members will study the question only for a few minutes they will see that the reason why living is dearer in England than in the other countries I have named is obvious. Freetrade discourages local production; it encourages imports. The people of England have to import their food from other countries; they have to pay the price which the people of those other countries are called upon to pay, and they have to pay, in addition, the whole of the cost of importation.

<page>6095</page>

Mr Cameron

- With what do they pay for these imports ?

Mr A McLEAN

- I believe they pay honestly, as far as they can, in products and money combined.

Mr Cameron

- According to the honorable member's argument they ought to be bankrupt.

Mr A McLEAN

- I have shown already how Great Britain has been able to bear that great strain upon her finances. But the reasons I have given in that connexion will not apply to the Commonwealth of Australia. If we adopted a policy which would send our work out of the country to be done elsewhere, and paid for that work in excess of our productions, then we should be drifting seriously along the path of national bankruptcy. We have heard a great many invidious comparisons made between New South Wales and Victoria. I should not have referred to such matters if they had not been dragged up in season and out of season by advocates of free-trade, in order to show that New South Wales is so much more prosperous than Victoria. I would ask honorable members to study carefully Coghlan's figures. Much has been said about people leaving Victoria more rapidly than they are coming into it, and we have heard that they are entering New South Wales very much more rapidly than they are leaving that State. In order to support that contention, a particular period is selected. Those who put forward this contention leave carefully out of review the period when immigration was pouring into Victoria at a very rapid rate. I think that the fair system to adopt in dealing with this matter is to take the whole of the figures relating to both sides, and to

go back to the time when immigration to this country in any considerable numbers commenced. That took place in 1851.

Mr Thomson

- That was not a time of protection.

Mr A McLEAN

- No ; but my honorable friend will see that it would not be fair to debit to protection the departures that took place from Victoria when the goldfields became exhausted to a great extent. People came here to look for gold, and when the gold-fields were largely exhausted they returned to their own lands in accordance with their original intention. I find that the total population gained by New South Wales from 1851 to 1899 was 472,437, while Victoria's increase was 409,892, leaving an excess of 62,545 in favour of New South

Wales. That, however, does not tell the whole tale. New South Wales was assisting immigration, and paying the passages of immigrants to a much larger extent than Victoria. I find that New South Wales assisted 211,972 people to immigrate to that State, while Victoria assisted only 140,102, leaving a balance of 71,870 against New South Wales. If that 71,870 is eliminated, and it should be in order to arrive at a fair comparison, these figures will show that Victoria had 9,325 more immigrants than New South Wales during the period named. What, then, becomes of the contention that the population of Victoria is being emptied out whilst New South Wales is being filled? The excess of population in New South Wales as compared with Victoria has been credited to free-trade by some honorable members who have spoken during this debate. I find, however, that between 1881 and 1890, a period of nine years, New South Wales gained 164,205 in population - that was the balance of immigration over emigration - while from 1890 to 1899 she gained 30,255, so that during the free-trade period the increase in her population was only about one-fifth of what it was before. Surely that does not speak very eloquently for the attractions which free-trade gives to New South Wales ? We have heard also a great deal upon the question of the density of population, and we may well ask what is the density of population of the two States ? In New South Wales there are 4.34 inhabitants per square mile ; while in Victoria there are 13.23 per square mile.

Mr Wilks

- We are coming to the square mile now.

<page>6096</page>

Mr A McLEAN

- I allude to the population per square mile where it tells, and it tells in the case of the United States of America. If I did not allow for the excessive area of the United States of America, what sort of a comparison would the progress of Great Britain bear to the progress of that country? I admit that test in the case of the United States as compared with England, and when comparing New South Wales with Victoria, although we could afford to give in the question of area. Even then, New South Wales would have little, if anything to boast about, as I shall endeavour to show. These figures do not tell the whole truth. New South Wales has only 12 per cent. of waste land within her borders. That percentage represents the whole of the land unoccupied and unused in the mother State ; but Victoria, with its denser population, has 35 per cent. of her area unused and unpopulated, unstocked and unleased.

Mr V L Solomon

- Due to centralization by reason of her factories and protection.

Mr A McLEAN

- It is a very dangerous thing to interject about a matter of this kind unless one has considered it. The lands in Victoria to which I have referred are absolutely valueless, and, I presume, the same may be said of the waste lands of New South Wales, otherwise they would be occupied. More than one-third of the whole area of Victoria is actually unpopulated, and, if we compare like with like, then the density of the population of Victoria compared with that of New South Wales must be increased enormously.

Mr Poynton

- If we compared like with like, we should find more for New South Wales.

Mr A McLEAN

- These are Coghlan's figures. He shows the exact area alienated and leased, and also the area that is unleased and unused in both of the States. The unused lands constitute 12 per cent. of the total area in

New South Wales whilst in Victoria they comprise 35 per cent.

Mr Poynton

- Where is all this land in Victoria ?

Mr A McLEAN

- A great deal of it is in the mountains, and there are a few million acres of what we call "desert" land, which grows nothing but heath. That land is not leased or used in any way. We have heard a good deal about the production of New South Wales and Victoria, and the surplus production of the former State over the latter has been attributed to freetrade. What are the facts? The total annual output of New South Wales is £38,000,000, whilst that of Victoria is £30,000,000, so that the difference in favour of New South Wales is £7,709,000. Let us inquire how that surplus is made up. "Under the headings of "pastoral, mining, forestry, and fishing " alone, which honorable members will admit are not affected in the slightest degree by the fiscal policy of the country, New South Wales has a surplus over Victoria representing £10,248,000.

Mr.Reid. - Does the honorable member think that light customs do not encourage those industries ?

Mr A McLEAN

- I wish that the right honorable and learned member had been present when I was dealing with that question. Let us take the industries which" are affected by the fiscal policy, such as agriculture, dairying, bee-farming, and manufactures. Upon those lines, Victoria beats New South Wales by £2,935,000 in spite of the fact that New South Wales, as compared with Victoria, had the same advantages as England possessed over the other nations of the earth when she adopted a free-trade policy. She had an unlimited quantity of coal at her very doors, while Victoria, in developing her manufactures, was compelled to import her coal from New South Wales. Yet in spite of that drawback Victoria" beat New South Wales to the extent I have indicated.

Mr Poynton

- What about the Victorian gold?

Mr A McLEAN

- That is ancient history. It is going back too many years. At the present time the mines of New South' Wales are infinitely more productive than are those of Victoria. They exceed those in Victoria in production by £2,502,000 per annum. If my honorable friend refers to the mining industry the advantage is all with the mother State. The total wealth of New South Wales is estimated by Coghlan at £265 per inhabitant. In Victoria it is estimated at £233, so that the apparent difference is only about £32 per inhabitant. But I ask honorable members to pay special attention to the following paragraph from Coghlan :-

Victoria and South Australia own large interests in the other colonies, which would largely increase their amounts, and reduce the other if the amount could be ascertained.

When, in this chamber, I proposed the imposition of a stock tax, I could not go ten yards down Collins street--

Mr Reid

- Was the honorable member the author of that ?

<page>6097</page>

Mr A McLEAN

- I was, and I have never denied its paternity. It was passed upon my motion, although I was not, strictly speaking, its author. At that time I: could not meet half-a-dozen Victorians without discovering that two or three of them were hit. Some of them said to me - " You will enormously reduce the value of my New South Wales property, and of my Queensland property." Let me point to the nearest cases to me. Within about two yards of where I sit on the corner benches, there are six or seven Victorians. At least three of them have very large interests in New South Wales and the other States. In the Senate there are only six Victorians, and I believe that three out of them - I am positive about two - have enormous interests in New South Wales and the other States. One of them to my knowledge has over 50,000 acres of freehold besides other very large interests. Coghlan points out that he can only divide the wealth of a State amongst the population residing in that State. Now, if we excise from the wealth of New South Wales the amount that is owned by Victorians, South Australians, and others, and add to the advantage of Victoria her enormous possessions in New South Wales, Queensland, and Western Australia, I venture to say we

shall find that the figures will be very much the other way. Instead of New South Wales having a surplus about which to boast, when the leader of the Opposition extends his pity to the poor downtrodden people of Victoria, which he knows how to do in the most pathetic manner, and with bitter tears in his voice-

Mr Reid

- I do not allude to the 50,000 acre man. He does not wear 3s. 9d. boots.

Mr Deakin

- Does not that estimate of Coghlan's include land ?

Mr A McLEAN

- It includes land, mines, and every source of wealth. Thus, although New South Wales has four times the area possessed by Victoria, and a far greater proportion than four to one of valuable land, if we could only put our hands upon the whole of the wealth owned by Victorians, I venture to say that the balance would be largely on the other side. I am sure that I am speaking a long way within the facts. All the figures bear out my statement. I ask the leader of the Opposition to follow a few of these figures. Let us take the number of people who are engaged in factories. In New South Wales there are 56,646 engaged in all kinds of factories. In Victoria, there are 60,076 hands thus employed, or an excess of 3,430 in favour of Victoria. But if honorable members desire to know the effect of a fiscal policy upon these figures they must analyse them slightly. In smelting, shipping, saw mills, tanneries, and fellmongeries, New South Wales employs 7,543 hands more than does Victoria. If we add that number to the total surplus Victoria has over New South Wales it leaves 10,973 in favour of Victoria. That is the number engaged in Victoria more than in New South Wales in the factories which are affected by the fiscal policy.

Mr Reid

- Victoria has paid about £100,000 each for that.

Mr A McLEAN

- I have shown that the effect of that £100,000 was to leave Victoria richer than New South Wales. But, in addition to that, protection distributes wealth, it creates employment, and it creates production, whilst free-trade only stimulates importation, and that is the reason why in Great Britain there are more destitute people than in any other three nations of the world put together.

Mr Reid

- Oh, oh !

Mr A McLEAN

- I can give my right honorable and learned friend the figures from Mulhall. And I do not think he is a better authority than that statistician. I followed the right honorable and learned gentleman last night, and I never knew a person to waltz round the real issue so cleverly as he did. He got up a great deal of enthusiasm in favour of freetrade, and when he was most enthusiastic in his praise of that fiscal policy he was most hopelessly at variance with the history and experience of the world. The right honorable and learned gentleman did not come down to solid facts. He would not venture to quote history. He would only give us his own opinions, and very wisely, because I must say he manipulated those opinions as cleverly as any person I ever listened to. I always listen to the right honorable and learned gentleman with great pleasure, even when I know that he is hopelessly at variance with the teachings of history, as he was during the whole of his speech last night.

Mr Reid

- History as taught by Mauger 1

<page>6098</page>

Mr A McLEAN

- I think my right honorable and learned friend will admit that a fair indication of a people's wealth is the wealth of those who die ; because people of every class die, the poor and the rich alike. I would draw attention to the probate figures for New South Wales and Victoria, taken from the New South Wales statist, and not the Victorian statist. The number of estates proved in New South Wales in the last five years was 11,246. That represents the total number of persons who died in the State during that period, and who left any money behind them.

In Victoria, the number proved during the same period was 16,174, nearly 50 per cent, more than in New South Wales, although the population of New South Wales is about one-sixth greater than that of Victoria.

Mr Cameron

- That proves nothing. It might be that one or two wealthy men died.

Mr A McLEAN

- The figures I have given show the number of persons in whose estate probate was granted in the two States, and do not refer to the amounts proved. Now, let us take deposits in the Savings Banks, and again Victoria comes out better than New South Wales. The average per head in New South Wales is £7 8s. 5d., and in Victoria £7 16s. which is 7s. 7d. more for every man, woman, and child of the population.

Mr Cameron

- What is the average indebtedness ?

Mr A McLEAN

-The number of depositors per 1,000 of the population should be another tolerably good indication.

Sir Edward Braddon

- Is that the resident population, or the population that has gone to Western Australia 1

Mr A McLEAN

- It is the resident population. I did not count in these figures Victorians who went to claim their own in New South Wales, Queensland, or Western Australia, and who have large interests there. I am dealing only with the residents of Victoria.

Mr Reid

- The people who could not get out of it 1

Mr A McLEAN

- The number of depositors per 1,000 of the population is 19 in New South Wales and 32 in Victoria. That is a fair indication of the prosperity of the people, and there are other indications. I showed a little while ago that there are a great many more destitute people in Great Britain than in any other three nations under the sun put together. On this point let us now compare New South Wales and Victoria. New South Wales has to pay £150,273 a year for the relief of pauperism ; Victoria pays £67,943, or a great deal less than half of the amount paid in New South Wales.

Mr Cameron

- Does that include oldage pensions ?

Mr A McLEAN

- No; this has nothing "to do with old-age pensions. The figures Apply to a period before old-age pensions were established.

Mr Reid

- They are utterly incorrect.

Mr A McLEAN

- Another indication of the prosperity of the people is the manner in which they are educated, and education in New South Wales is hopelessly below that of Victoria. In the year 1899 the number of people who were married in New South Wales, and who had to make their marks because they could not sign their names was 263, and in Victoria the number was only 128.

Mr Hughes

- The New South Wales figures are for Victorians who went over to claim their property.

Mr A McLEAN

- I think honorable members will admit that the manner in which people are housed is a fair indication of prosperity

Mr Reid

- It depends whether you live in the bush or in the town. Victoria has got a town policy.

Mr A McLEAN

- They have both bush ' and town in New South Wales, and they are very proud of both. In New South Wales there are 197,000 habitable dwellings, and in Victoria 217,000, or 20,000 more in Victoria, with its smaller population, than in New South Wales.

Mr Cameron

- How many are there unoccupied?

Mr A McLEAN

- These are occupied dwellings, and if my honorable friend had not been a countryman of mine he would never have asked that question. Now, let us take the number of persons living in tents, miserable hovels

with canvas roofs, and such places. There were 18,000 living in such hovels in New South Wales, and only 5,000 in Victoria.

Mr Page

- It is no disgrace to live in a tent. I lived in a tent for years.

Mr A McLEAN

- I have lived in tents, and in what is called a " bandicoot gunyah," not for love of such habitations, but because at the time I had nothing better.

Mr Page

- I have done it for love.

<page>6099</page>

Mr A McLEAN

- In New South Wales 41,000 persons live in huts of one and two rooms, while the number of persons living in such dwellings in Victoria is only 28,000. Coming to houses of from three to ten rooms, 162,000 are living in such dwellings in New South Wales and 193,000 in Victoria. I am making these comparisons only by way of reply. An invidious comparison has been made by previous speakers between the conditions of the people in the two States, and I contend that I have shown, by a long array of figures bearing upon every phase of social conditions, that the people of Victoria are better off than the people of New South Wales.

Mr Page

- Does not the honorable member think that such arguments are too provincial ? The whole Commonwealth - not merely Victoria and New South Wales - is concerned by the subject under discussion.

Mr A McLEAN

- As comparisons have been made between the two States, to prove that free-trade New South Wales is more prosperous than protectionist Victoria, I have quoted these figures from the New South Wales Government Statistician. They prove conclusively that destitution is more rampant in New South Wales than it is in Victoria.

Mr Reid

- We pay our unemployed 7s. a day in cash.

Mr A McLEAN

- In New South Wales it takes £150,000 a year to provide relief for paupers, while only £67,000 is spent in Victoria in that way. Coming to houses of eleven or more rooms, we find that there are a few more in New South Wales than in Victoria, which means that there are a few more very wealthy people in New South Wales than in Victoria ; so that wealth is not distributed among the masses in New South Wales as much as it is in Victoria. The conclusive inference to be drawn from the statistics of New South Wales and of England is that free-trade, in discouraging local production, and substituting importation, deprives the people of employment by sending work to the people of other countries. I have shown that the production of New South Wales, in all the lines affected by the fiscal policy, is hopelessly below that of Victoria. I find, for instance, that in New South Wales during the years 1897-8-9 there was imported £3,340,000 worth of farm, dairy, and orchard produce more than was exported, while on the other hand Victoria exported £4,552,000 worth more than she imported.

Sir William McMillan

- How did the people of New South Wales get the money to pay for what they imported ?

Mr A McLEAN

- I do not want to make out that New South Wales is bankrupt ; but the figures which I have gleaned from the pages of the New South Wales Government Statistician tend to show that there is more destitution and abject poverty in that State than in Victoria.

Sir William McMillan

- The people of New South Wales did not get anything from Victoria without paying hard cash for it.

Mr A McLEAN

- The Victorians, being business men, charged their friends across the border just the bare value of the articles they sold to them. If it were not for the production of wool, and the mineral wealth of New South Wales, for the existence of which no fiscal policy is responsible, the people of that State might not be in

the fortunate position of being able to pay so much for the products which they have been compelled to import.

Sir William McMillan

- Would my honorable friend take a man away from earning £4 a week at the mines to earn £2 a week at growing sugar?

Mr A McLEAN

- No, but I would take a great many of the unemployed, for whose support New South Wales is paying £150,000 a year.

Mr Reid

- That is not so.

Mr A McLEAN

- I would try and give the destitute poor work. And the same thing applies in England.

Mr Reid

- Oh ! oh !

Mr A McLEAN

- That was a very hollow laugh.

Mr Reid

- They get 7s. a day cash in Sydney for being unemployed. Why should they work in the mines?

Mr A McLEAN

- Does my right honorable friend deny that it is a good thing for the people to produce as much as they can in the way of both primary production and manufacture? It is only by encouraging production that we can promote the welfare of the Commonwealth.

Mr Reid

- Take the harvest out of the soil, not out of the people.

<page>6100</page>

Mr A McLEAN

- Last night my right honorable friend laid a great deal of stress on the condition of the country producers. I assure him that in protectionist Victoria the producers are in an infinitely better position than they are in New South Wales. Not only are they able to supply their own requirements, but they have a very large balance for export, whilst the people of New South Wales have to import a very large quantity of products, notwithstanding that they have four times the territory we have. I think it is right that I should tell honorable members that I was once as rabid a free-trader as any honorable member sitting opposite. In my youth I imbibed all the musty volumes of the old economists, who wrote, not from personal knowledge of trade and its intricacies, but from their ideal standard of what trade should be, but never will be so long as traders are human. I was taught in my youth to believe that the differing climates, soils, and conditions of life and people in various parts of the world were all suited to distinct lines of production. I was taught to believe, and did believe, that any industry which was suited to the conditions of a place would be established without the fostering influence of protection. I believed, relying on the writings of those ancient economists, that the effect of protection was to establish exotic industries which were not suited to local conditions, and which could only be supported by imposing a perpetual burden on the people.

Mr Reid

- Hear, hear, and the honorable member is fighting for it still.

Mr A McLEAN

- I believed, moreover, that the space which was necessary to separate those countries to create those different conditions of climate and of life had been bridged over by nature with a great highway, over which the products of industry could be wafted at the lowest possible price from the producer to the consumer. And I regarded it as little less than criminal for men to put any artificial barriers in the way of the free interchange of the products of industry. So strongly was I impressed with these doctrines that I actually doubted the sincerity of those who advocated protection. I believed that in doing so they allowed their better judgment to be swayed by the sordid consideration of self interest. My faith in that doctrine was not shaken by anything I had read in the columns of the press or by anything I had heard from the advocates of protection. Honorable members may think it strange to hear what first shook my faith in it. I endeavoured to find concrete cases to enable me to defend the faith that was within me, the policy that I

believed in so strongly, but, search the history of the world as I chose, search the statistics of the most reliable statist, I could not get a single case to Support the arguments. For the first time I investigated both sides of the question, and it was then I found that in spite of the most favorable conditions that ever existed in any country Great Britain under freetrade fell behind the other nations, whilst under protection she had led the van, and had outstripped all the other nations in the progress of her manufactures. When I tell honorable members that I was elected three times to Parliament as a free-trader, and each time by a largely increasing majority, they will see that I had no interest in changing my views. When I did change my views conscientiously, I felt it would not be fair to my constituents, unless I went back and told them of that change of policy. But thanks to their generosity I am here ; they returned me after I explained to them the reasons which induced me to change my views.

Mr Reid

- If the honorable member turned Mussulman they would elect him just the same - they have such a high respect for him.

Mr A McLEAN

- I want to tell honorable members another incident in Victorian history. Twelve or thirteen years ago a country party, of which I was chairman, was formed in the Parliament here. We investigated the whole of the lines in our Tariff. At that time the manufacturers of Melbourne were protected, but the farmers were not protected, and we resolved to demand the same protection for the farmer as had been previously accorded to the manufacturer.

Mr Reid

- See how crooked they were before you got up.

Mr A McLEAN

- At that time we were importing wheat largely from South Australia, fruit and preserves very largely from California and other places, oats, barley, and other horse-feed from New Zealand, potatoes and other products from Tasmania, and eggs largely from China, while our own farms were lying idle. What was the result when we imposed duties ? In a very few years after their imposition, we were exporting largely all those products which previously we had imported. We became large exporters of wheat, fruit, and butter.

Mr Reid

- And men.

<page>6101</page>

Mr A McLEAN

- I do not think my right honorable friend was here when I dealt with the statistics he referred to last night. He dealt with only one side of the question ; but I have shown from the figures of the Government Statist that if New

South Wales had not paid the passages of a very much larger number of assisted immigrants than Victoria, she would have been 9,000 to the bad as compared with Victoria.

Mr Reid

- Oh, dear.

Mr A McLEAN

- When my right honorable friend does give a genuine laugh it has a thorough ring ; but that was a very hollow imitation of his usual mirth.

Mr Reid

- I did not like to put it into plain English.

Mr A McLEAN

- Before resuming my seat, I cannot help referring again to the endeavour of the honorable member for Macquarie to impress upon the House that the Prime Minister has not kept faith with his election speeches. I say it is most unfair.

Mr Conroy

- It is quite true.

Mr A McLEAN

- Then, if the honorAble member believed that the Prime Minister was going to bring down a free-trade Tariff, how is it that he went straight into opposition ?

Mr Conroy



- He deceived me once before, and I would not let him do it again.

Mr A McLEAN

- The honorable member says that he knew that the Prime Minister was not going to do what he had promised, but really it seems to me that the free-traders who are sitting on the opposition side of the House were a little bit premature in taking their seats where they did. As a matter of fact, the whole of Australia interpreted the Prime Minister's speeches to mean moderate protection.

Mr Reid

- If the policy of the Government had been free-trade, how could the honorable member have supported them t

Mr A McLEAN

- The people believed that the Tariff would be framed largely in the interests of the revenue, but that it would be protective as far as possible in its incidence. I contend that that is what the Tariff is, and that therefore there was no breach of faith. I think we should be fair to one another, even, if we disagree. Whenever I have any cause to find fault with the Government, I do not hesitate to speak out, and it is very likely that I shall speak out on some of the items in the Tariff ; but I do say that the Government have made an honest attempt to bring down a Tariff that is in strict accordance with their pledges.

Mr HUGHES

- The honorable gentleman who has just sat down has furnished this House with an amount of information that may be regarded as useful or not, according to the point from which one views it. I should be loath to say that it was original, but certainly I never heard it before. The honorable member took exception to certain statistics that had been put forward by the right honorable gentleman who moved the motion.

Mr A McLean

- The honorable member for Macquarie's statistics.

Mr HUGHES

- It can at least be said that he seems to have gleaned his statistics impartially from all sources, but I should be very glad to learn the source from which the honorable member for Gippsland has gleaned his information.

Mr A McLean

- Mulhall and Coghlan.

<page>6102</page>

Mr HUGHES

- Then the honorable member has, in his research, displayed an amount of discrimination which I cannot help calling wise, in view of the circumstances. It would have been better, however, to have either given up this wild attempt to prove by figures what no man breathing can prove either in that way or in any other way, than to have merely taken out items here and there and so constructed a theory as ingenious as it is useless. Before attempting to deal with the honorable member's figures I desire to say that the Government in bringing down this Tariff seem to have regarded it as a kind of last and final effort on the part of human greatness. According to the Treasurer, this Tariff has been framed without any resort to guesswork - it has been worked out line by line, and nothing has been left to chance. It would appear that there is a great deal in what the Treasurer has said', because what he could have left to chance, for an unhappy community that is to be taxed to the extent of £9,500,000, I do not know. The chance of bankruptcy certainly does appear to be not an unlikely one, but certainly there is no other chance. The Ministry seem to be intensely satisfied with this Tariff, and they have every right to be satisfied, not with the Tariff, but with the reception it has met with in the State of Victoria, and certainly with the reception it has met with hitherto at the hands of those docile and unexceptionable gentlemen who sit behind the Ministry. Until the honorable member for Gippsland broke the silence, which was rather extraordinary and almost sepulchral, there was not one of the supporters of the Ministry who would infringe that iron rule of discipline which seems to bind them all in some unholy pact. It has been said that the party to which I belong is bound by an ironclad pledge, but, at any rate, we are never bound to sit down in mute approval of things which we have had no hand or part in drawing up. Here is a thing - the Tariff- - which no man saw before it was brought forward by the Minister for Trade and Customs, and which not one honorable member sitting behind the Ministry is prepared to accept in globo - not even 'the honorable member for

Gippsland, who in his youth was a free-trader, and who now is not. The honorable member has fallen away from grace, and apparently as one grows older it becomes harder and harder, because of the temptations that accrue, to stand strong in the faith, I would not say of our fathers, but which reason and intelligence dictate. Even the honorable member, however, says there are some items in the Tariff to which he will have to object. I should like to know of some items, apart from those which are of importance to people who may be interested in manufactures, to which any reasonable man cannot object. Let us have even one item. The right honorable gentleman in charge of the Bill says we must have £9,500,000 of revenue. Really it is a pity that we did not know that before, because in New South Wales we had a great struggle, as everybody knows, and one gentleman stated during the Federal campaign that the additional expense would merely involve such an amount as we should pay for an ordinary dog - something like 2s. 6d. per head. That was stated by the versatile friend of the Prime Minister, who -like Biela's comet, came flashing across our vision, who came from God knows where, and disappeared, after the elections, to the -same place. He said that the extra taxation would amount to 2s. 6d. per annum. He said, " Are you so wretched and downtrodden in this State, that you cannot afford to keep another dog ? " The Prime Minister said we could manage with a £5,000,000 Tariff, and even those gentlemen who knew something of figures - which no one would accuse the right honorable gentleman of - never ventured beyond £7,000,000. And the Treasurer, who safe in the citadel of protection, could tell something of the truth, while having due regard for his own personal safety, did not venture beyond £8,500,000 ; but now we are told that it is absolutely necessary that we should have a revenue of £9,500,000.

Mr Kingston

- The honorable member is wrong ; the amount is under £9,000,000.

<page>6103</page>

Mr HUGHES

- Well, to the man who is knocked down and run over by a tram, it is small satisfaction to be told that he is not to be run over by a cab afterwards. At any rate we are told now that the revenue required is £9,000,000, and making the best of it, that is a great burden. The Ministry are supremely satisfied with the position. At this juncture there is none of that uncertainty as to their policy that has distinguished them on other occasions. There is no - to-day " we are in favour of this," and to-morrow " we are in favour of that to-day " we think there is a great deal in what the honorable gentleman says," and to-morrow "there is nothing at all." Now they stand firm and implacable. They do not tremble at any thunders of figures or eloquence brought against them. They are secure in the consciousness of having wrought a great work - and it is a great work - and in the fact that they have a solid majority behind them. There is a sweet consolation to be derived from a majority that none but a politician, or perhaps a general on a field of battle, can possibly know. These gentlemen know that no matter what happens, they have a majority. It does not matter what truths or awkward facts are put forward, although one honorable member has kicked over the traces. If last evening they could, by a lucky stroke, have finished the debate at one sweep of the hand, all would have been well. Why should they go to any trouble ? It was not a question of wasting the time of the country, because if Fate had decreed that they should be one or two votes short, I have no doubt that every honorable member on the Government side, with a tongue to wag, would have been stimulated by gentle persuasion at the hands of the Ministry, and we should have had such a cataract of statistics as would have been overwhelming. But Fate has otherwise decided ; and I only wish to say that, in my opinion, it is very unfortunate that the people of New South Wales did not understand this earlier. Had they understood it, I do not think they would have been prepared to make the sacrifice. The Protectionist Association of New South Wales - and this is a matter worthy of honorable members' consideration - rigidly refused during the campaign to call itself a Protectionist Association. It issued a placard to all men to come in whether they were protectionists or free-traders. " Here," said the association, " is a happy place in which all men may meet in common - no free-trade and no protection ; all may come in - " will you walk into my parlour said the spider to the fly." And New South Wales, with that impetuosity which distinguishes her more than her sense, walked in. These gentlemen have brought down a Tariff, and I have not yet heard any defence of it. I have not yet heard even an explanation, but I heard something of the Tariff, It is stated that this is a Tariff for protective purposes. Undeniably it is a Tariff for protective purposes. Undeniably the Minister avers that ; yet during the recent election, as well as during the referendum campaign, at least two or three of the Ministers declared that there could be no

protection, and that there could be no free-trade. The Minister for Home Affairs, when he went round the country wooing the very coy elector, what did he say? He had not the spirit of prophesy, but he had an inspiration, and a very useful one it was. He spoke of duties of from 10 per cent, to 15 per cent. Of course, his electorate is a very large one, which runs right down to the border, and goes a long way back, and in it there are both free-traders and protectionists - there are men who know not Jacob, and men who do - and as will be understood, -the Tariff, as placed before the electors by the Minister for Home Affairs, varied from a light and airy 10 percent, to a solid, substantial, and business-like 15 per cent., though he never ventured beyond the latter. Now, however, the honorable gentleman sits in company with the Ministry, with beams of modest satisfaction on his face, having taken part in imposing a Tariff which, in some cases, runs up to 35 per cent, and 40 per cent. I should like to know what explanation the honorable gentleman proposes to offer for such conduct as that, because an explanation is very necessary. We come now to consider a few of the statements that have been put forward in reference to this Tariff and the prosperity of protectionist countries. First, I should like to ask the Treasurer or the Minister for Trade and Customs whether he really thinks this is the only

Tariff that will bring in the necessary revenue. If that be so, I do not hesitate to say that it is time an agitation was set on foot to amend the Constitution in regard to the financial sections, so that a smaller Tariff may bring in what we require. But I deny altogether that this is the only possible Tariff. I do not think that the right honorable gentlemen who are mainly responsible, will say for a moment that this is the only possible Tariff, or that a Tariff lighter in its incidence, and equally revenue producing, would not effect the purpose in a better manner. I understand that this is not a Tariff in which guess-work, Or even intuition, has had any part, but that it is the result of laborious effort - that experts, starting from different stand-points, have arrived approximately at the same goal, proving conclusively that the Government are right. But where did the experts start from and where were they trying to go? It appears to me that, whatever place they may have started from, they were securely fastened by an iron ring and chain to their legs, and could not get any further than a very little way, at any rate, from the Victorian Tariff. They were told they could wander about, round and round like a bull in a paddock securely tethered by the nose, amusing themselves with the idea that they were free. They were, however, always pulled up when they endeavoured to strike out upon some new and acceptable path by the fact that nothing must be done to disturb the Victorian manufacturers. Now it appears that the right honorable gentlemen do not altogether agree that this is a Victorian Tariff. Everybody knows that it would never do to come down here with the Victorian Tariff, plain and simple, and lay it on the table of the House. The Government are supported by gentlemen, many of whom do not represent Victoria at all, and, therefore, some regard must be paid to their little feelings; and besides more revenue was wanted. But I ask any fairminded man whether, on looking at the Tariff, he will not say it is based on the Tariff of Victoria? How can any man say so, and tell the people of New South Wales that they have not to make sacrifices? The people of New South Wales make all the sacrifices. Why was the Tariff framed with more regard to Victoria's position than to the position of New South Wales? Do honorable members not recognise that the industries under free-trade in New South Wales will be utterly ruined by the Tariff? Do honorable members not realize that there has been developed a condition of things in New South Wales which enables the manufacturers there to buy their raw material, without let or hindrance or duty? Yet it is proposed to impose such a Tariff as will crush those industries or place them at a disadvantage as compared with the industries which have developed under different conditions in Victoria. It is said that this is the best Tariff that can be framed. But have we not a right to consider these things de novo? The honorable member for Gippsland has tried to belittle the industries of New South Wales by saying that they consist of fellmongery, smelting, and wool-washing; just as if a man who works in a smelting mill or at washing wool is not equal to a man who works at making hats or boots. Is he not a human being? "If you prick us do we not bleed?" Are they not entitled to some consideration? It would appear as though there were a halo round a certain number of industries which no person must touch, because, in some mysterious way, the mere fact of there being a hat or boot factory in a country is at once a criterion and a cause of prosperity. We shall see in a moment how this prosperous and happy paradise has existed during the past few years.

Mr Macdonald

-paterson. - New South Wales and Victoria - parochialism and provincialism!

<page>6105</page>

Mr HUGHES

- This Tariff is, of course, an acceptable one to Victorian manufacturers. I have not heard any one else express approval of it. The Home Secretary, who was absolutely the most fervid man on the question of the Tariff in New South Wales during the election, has not ventured to say a word about it. Oftentimes he was ready enough to give the press of Australia the benefit of his wide experience on all matters, but now he is absolutely quiet. He has not even endeavoured to explain why it was that he was wrong when he said he was in favour of a 10 per cent. Tariff. If an explanation could be afforded to this unfortunate country of how it was that the honorable gentleman came to be wrong in such a way and at such a time, I am sure great satisfaction would be given to those people who have to pay so much through his mistake. Had the Home

Secretary said at the time of the election that the Tariff was going to be one of duties of 35 or 40 per cent., and never less than 15 per cent. I am thoroughly persuaded that he would have had a great deal of difficulty to get in. When I remember that even with this graduated Tariff of his - only working between 10 and 15 per cent. - he had a most miraculous escape from defeat, I shudder to think what would have happened to him if he had ventured towards the free-trade end of his electorate with another 5 per cent. Now, the people of New South Wales are subject to the effects of this Tariff, and obviously - we do not hear any one deny it - will cause commodities in that State to increase in price. I do not think any one can deny that. We have heard it said formerly that the foreigner pays the duty. We have heard it argued that protection reduces the price of commodities. It will, perhaps, be interesting if either the Treasurer or the Minister for Trade and Customs will explain how it is that if the foreigner pays the duty and protection reduces prices, the Government are going to get the revenue that they expect through the Custom-house. Obviously, however, it is only a joke about the foreigner paying the duty, to be used on the hustings. The foreigner is not such an idiot. According to some statements that have been made during this debate, we ought to follow the example of the foreigner. The foreigner everywhere is the person to whom we should look. He has the approval of protectionists. They point to the foreigner's country as an example. . The foreigner is an exceedingly smart person. Is it likely, under these circumstances, that he would pay the duty. Why should he ? There is no earthly reason why he should. There is every reason why he should not. And the facts are, of course, that he does not. Now, in New South Wales the price of commodities will rise. Who is going to pay the increase ? How are the people who do not benefit from this Tariff - and I shall inquire in a moment who will benefit from it - going to pay these increases ? Very likely the right honorable the Minister for Trade and Customs will tell us. Possibly we shall be told that they will share in the general prosperity. There are some shibboleths which have been in general use for many years amongst protectionists in Australia and in all protectionist countries. One is that a protectionist Tariff will result in increased wages and decreased prices, and that while all men cannot be employed in manufactures they will all share in the general prosperity. I do not even try to offer honorable members an illustration ; but if it were possible to imagine that we here, in this Chamber, were the whole of Australia, and were agreed that ten of us were to be regarded as specially favoured, and we were to pay those ten half-a-crown each for their own benefit, I ask how in the name of Heaven those who paid the half-crown would share in the general prosperity ? Perhaps some of those gentlemen might ask us to "come upstairs and have a drink;" or perhaps if we had an office they would give us an order, or if we had a store they might buy something. But, after all, they would buy something out of the money we gave them, and there would be no such thing as sharing in the general prosperity. How are these unfortunate men who live in the district represented by the honorable member for Melbourne Ports - the wharf labourers - going to share in ' the general prosperity ? What general prosperity can they share in ? If we cut off the shipping, if we stop a vessel from coming here - and surely it is not alleged that we encourage shipping by such a Tariff - how will they share in the general prosperity ? My honorable friend the member for Gippsland says that the fact that a person is employed in ship-building makes him, so to speak, a burden on the whole country. The ship-building trade of America has fallen off to a minimum. They do not build ships there now. Their trade is carried largely in British or foreign bottoms. What is going to be done, then, if these poor people are going to pay a lot more, even in Victoria, for the necessaries of life ? The ideal of my honorable friend opposite is a free breakfast table - that those things that can be made in the country shall be taxed, and those things that cannot be so made shall come in free. Yet, with all the calmness and confidence in the world, he votes for a Tariff which taxes everything that any man can eat, or drink or

wear. Is that a scientific protectionist Tariff? Is there any vestige of science or anything save class interest in it? Is there any vestige of anything in it than playing into the hands of the Victorian manufacturer? Not the Victorian worker, because there is no room for him under this Tariff. My honorable friend the member for

Mernda smiles. He may well smile. I am given to, understand that a quotation was submitted to a Sydney firm, to-day showing that starch and oatmeal and cornflour had already had the added price caused by the increased duties placed upon them. No wonder the honorable member can smile! Amusing? If I could not do anything but smile under those circumstances, I would hang myself as high as Haman! I should laugh outright! Therefore, I forgive the honorable member for his smile. Now, I ask again, are these men who are not engaged in protected industries, to get any benefit from this Tariff? Is it proposed to raise their wages? In Victoria it has been necessary to bolster up this protective system by wages boards and by Factories and Shops Acts. In fact, Victoria has had to resort to those methods, which political economists and social reformers hold that every nation is compelled to resort to. In France and Germany, in England and New South Wales - everywhere we have had to resort to legislations which has had the effect of artificially restricting the power of the capitalist to do as he pleases. I am saying nothing against honorable members who represent Victoria, on that score. I know very well that they thoroughly agree with such legislation; but I am pointing out that under no circumstances can anything be done under this Tariff for these unfortunate people who do not work in the protected industries. The Tariff increases their cost of living, but does not provide them increased wages. What do honorable members propose to do for them? There cannot be wages boards for every business, and in any case there is no power in this Bill to do anything of the sort. What is going to be done for the people of New South Wales? Is it proposed in some way to provide them with employment or to increase their wages? If so, are honorable members going to provide the employers, with any means of increasing their wages? Obviously not! The honorable member for Gippsland has put forward a number of statements in regard to the comparative prosperity of New South Wales and Victoria. Those comparisons, to a certain extent, I despair of being able to follow. On one or two points I shall be glad to do what I can. But first of all, I should like to say that if any honorable member can explain the principle upon which protection rests and at the same time find any relation between it and the exclusion of coloured labour from this country, I should be glad to hear that explanation. An honorable member interjected this afternoon that free traders supported the exclusion of coloured labour from Australia, and yet were in favour of allowing articles manufactured by coloured labour to come in. Such an interjection as that exposes at once a person's complete ignorance of the very basis upon which the interchange of commodities rests. It is very obvious that when I buy something I want to get as much as I can for my money. The idea at the basis of the free-trade and protectionist argument is simply this: That man, in his primitive state, applied himself to making everything he wanted, and supplying all his needs. He made his boots and hats; he went out and caught his dinner, and he came home and cooked it. By-and-by a differentiation of trade arose, and one person perhaps made the weapons with which the other went out and caught the dinner. In these days we specialize industries still more. It is a fact that to-day every man buys as cheaply as he can, and puts his labour into the most productive channels. By that means he is able to get more for his labour than in any other way. To-day the cry in Victoria is that we want a protective Tariff against the outside world. A little while back, however, that was not the demand. The people of this State now want a Tariff to keep out the products of coloured labour. A little while ago they wanted to keep out the products of the people of New South Wales, their brothers, their long lost and very much valued brothers - especially at a juncture like this - their brothers who are going to foot the bill. There are very few brothers in real life who will do anything like that. When honorable members speak about keeping out the products of coloured labour, what do they mean by excluding the products of the United States of America, which, according to their own statements, are products made by higher-priced labour than our own? Obviously this talk about excluding the products of coloured labour is only a hustings clap-net. Everybody who knows anything at all, knows that the person who is to be dreaded in this matter is the high-priced and not the low-priced labourer. The cheapest labourer is the higher priced, as every one knows. The shearer here gets £1 a 100 for shearing sheep, and he can compete with the shearer of the Argentine Republic or anywhere else - who does not get half as much - because he can earn more in a day. Does not every one know that a bricklayer, either in New South Wales or Victoria, will do more in his day of eight hours than a bricklayer in

England will do in his 9 1/2 hours per day? Do not honorable members realize that the stress is greater, and that when the stress is greater the rate is greater, and the productivity is increased? In a country where high-priced labour is in vogue, there must be the very latest machinery employed. In Victoria they have far from the latest machinery in use, and some honorable members are going to make the people in this country pay because of that !

Mr Mauger

- In what line?

Mr HUGHES

- There is machinery employed in crushing quartz at Ballarat that does not crush one-fifth of the quantity that machines for a like purpose are doing in Western Australia or Johannesburg. The proof of the thing lies, of course, in the facts. In New South Wales we have the boot industry, established without protection, and the largest boot factories there do not want it.

Mr Mauger

- I will tell the honorable member all about that directly.

<page>6107</page>

Mr HUGHES

- The honorable member may say what he likes, but it will not alter the facts. Certain honorable members seem to have an idea, judging from what my honorable friend from Gippsland says, that the mere standing up and making statements will alter something. In New South Wales, under free-trade, the boot manufacturers have been able to develop the industry, and to pay decent wages without a wages board; and they do not want protection. I have a list here, which I may as well read now, showing how the Tariff bears upon the boot industry. Men's boots at 6s. per pair, invoice cost, work out at 8s. 8d. with the ad valorem and specific duties. That is a Tariff equal to 44 1/2 per cent., and I find the Tariff on boots ranges from 44 1/2 per cent. to 66 3/4 per cent. I have here a direct statement, similar to that read last night by the right honorable the leader of the Opposition, setting forth that the boot manufacturers of New South Wales do not want protection, and that, as a matter of fact, what protection will do will be to stimulate the manufacture of shoddy articles. People will not have enough money; their general expenditure will be reduced owing to the increased cost of commodities, and, therefore, they will not be able to buy as much as they did before. But people must have something to eat. Even under a protective Tariff there does not seem to be any way of doing without food. Therefore, the people will do without many other things, or else buy goods of less value. Something has been said about the effect of this Tariff on the iron industry. I should like to reecho the sentiments of the right honorable the leader of the Opposition, and say at once that if an industry wants assistance, the best way to encourage it is to offer a bonus to stimulate production. I should like to say, also, so far as taxing every user of iron in this country for the purpose of stimulating the manufacture of iron is concerned, that one decent-sized mill working here would be sufficient to supply the whole requirements of Australia. An honorable member spoke about the necessity for this Tariff, or one like it, to stimulate the production of coal. There is one mine in New South Wales, which, working ordinary shifts, is capable of supplying the whole of the factories of Australia. It is perfectly absurd to speak about the encouragement of industries in these circumstances. It is just as well to face the matter, and say that for the purpose of stimulating one industry - the iron industry - and giving employment to 500 or 600 people, honorable members are going to penalize the whole of the persons throughout the continent who use iron, which is a very absurd, useless, and expensive way of doing things. I say nothing about the advantages of shipping, because some honorable members seem to regard it as an excellent thing when much shipping does not come here or go away from here. But if they realized that it is by trade and intercourse alone that we live - by exchange - they surely would not have this morbid objection to an interchange of commodities with other countries. Traders will not bring us goods here for nothing. We can pay them with our gold, or with our hats, or with what we will, but we must pay them somehow. Honorable members seem to have an idea that there is a magic way of doing this. The view entertained by some is that we should put our commodities upon a boat and get them out of Australia as soon as we can. They think that the more we get rid of, the better off we shall be. Why not build another ark, and, placing all our wealth upon it, sail out into the Empyrean, and so by one stroke we may achieve a competence and place this country beyond the necessity of having a Tariff at all. 1 These honorable members say that the more goods we send away the better it will be for us. If we send the

whole lot away, obviously we shall be made men. What has been the effect of a protectionist policy in Victoria, in America, and, indeed, everywhere that it has been tried? The honorable member for Gippsland said, among other things, that there were more houses occupied in this country than in New South Wales. He forgot to mention that he quoted the statistics for the year 1891, when there was a boom on in Victoria, and when people were trying to get houses.

Mr A McLean

- They were taken from the latest work.

Mr HUGHES

- The honorable member omitted to say that after the boom there were so many empty houses that it was impossible to find a street in which all the dwellings were occupied.

Sir George Turner

- There are very few empty houses now in Melbourne or its suburbs.

Mr HUGHES

- Is it not a fact that houses used to be taken on wheels and carted from suburb to suburb, thus enjoying a kind of peripatetic existence? It is not a fact, however, that there are more waste lands in Victoria than there are in New South Wales. How the honorable member for Gippsland could make such a statement, knowing the circumstances, I cannot understand. Does he not realize that the whole of the western area in New South Wales is a waste, and a source of embarrassment and expense to the Government of that State ?

Mr A McLean

- It is all leased except 12 percent.

<page>6108</page>

Mr HUGHES

- But it does not return anything like the cost of its upkeep. Does not the honorable member realize that that area constitutes more than a third of the total area of New South Wales ? Does he not understand that it has been droughtstricken during the past five years, and that in not one year have people had a decent season in the back country ? The Minister or Home Affairs knows that to be an absolute fact. He appointed the Western Lands Commission.

Mr Wilks

- Only last night the New South Wales Parliament passed special legislation to deal with that country.

Mr HUGHES

- What did that Western Lands Commission find ? That body has recommended that these lands should be leased almost for nothing, so that they may be kept from going absolutely to waste. Every man knows that the greater the area as compared with the population the more expensive is it to keep up that area. Therefore, instead of the area being an advantage, it is undoubtedly a disadvantage. If one State has to build railways for 500 or 600 miles, obviously, it is at a disadvantage as compared with another State which has only to build railways for 100 or 200 miles. The honorable member for Gippsland said nothing of the fact that Victoria enjoys a regular rainfall, has an excellent soil, and the advantage of a market close at hand. I admit that this State has also had a pushing people, and that in spite of a number of disabilities they have done remarkably well. But what they have not done is to remain in this country, and after all, that is the great test. My honorable friend said that he would not deal with the last decade. Why not ? He took his figures from 1851 - from the period of the gold rush here - to the present time, hoping by that means not to stall off the inevitable because nothing can do that, but to lessen the result of the inevitable. The honorable member said that the position of Victoria from 1851 to the present time pans out very well. Undoubtedly it does, period an unhealthy condition of things, such as boom times and the effect of the gold fever, &c, has been an important factor in producing that result. I would also point out that the year 1851 was prior to the introduction of the policy of protection into Victoria. Therefore my honorable friend was dealing with Victoria under a regime of free-trade. But during the last decade, what has protection done for Victoria ?

Mr Mauger

- It has saved us.

<page>6109</page>

Mr HUGHES

- I will tell honorable members what it has done for New South Wales. We have never had a strike in that State but what it has been defeated, when it was defeated, by imported Victorian labour. I have in my hand a most life-like and admirable view of the Lucknow strike. It is contained in the Bulletin which is a protectionist organ. Even my honorable friends opposite will not deny that, and it is good to get hold of some fact that no man will deny. Here is a protectionist organ depicting the condition of things at Lucknow where men refused to submit to the intolerable indignity of being searched like felons. When they stood up for their rights; and when no men in New South Wales could be found base enough to take their places, the mine owners sent to Victoria. Here is a picture of a Victorian contingent, the basest and most ignoble contingent, taking the places of the Lucknow miners. There was another occasion on which the Victorians displayed their prosperity. There was a strike of shearers in Queensland a few years ago, and no men could be found in New South Wales contemptible enough to take their places. But from Victoria, men were brought over just as Japanese are brought under contract. They were yarded like bullocks, herded together as though they were maniacs or felons, and they worked for a smaller rate than shearers were accustomed to receive. These are facts, and no amount of argument will disprove them. How can the men of Victoria be prosperous? Why should they leave Victoria? Can we imagine Adam leaving Paradise? Can we not picture the anguish with which he heard the gates of Paradise clang behind him, and saw those joys taken from him which he might never hope to gain again? Would men leave a paradise in Victoria to go to a hell in New South Wales? No, they go where they can get the most. Men have left here in such numbers, that even the Age has given up trying to account for it. I cannot conceive of any more lamentable or hopeless condition than that. They have gone from the place where the banks are overflowing with the deposits of the people, where the houses are palatial, where there are more dwellings than are to be found any where else, and where the land only carries four people to the square mile! Does not the honorable member for Gippsland know that there are more than 300 to the square mile in Belgium? Does he venture to call the population of Victoria dense? But, notwithstanding that the banks are overflowing, that money is falling but and waiting only to be picked up, men go away from Victoria. Idiots that they are! They do not realize until it is too late what a place they are leaving. So they come back, do they? Not one of them; they never come back. "We might say about Victoria what Dr. Johnson said about Scotland. When men were everlastingly prating about the glories of Scotland, he said, - "There is one view that strikes the Scotchman more than any other, and that is the broad high road to England." And so it is with these gentlemen, these men who speak of the great benefits and glories of Victoria. They are everlastingly proceeding in an unending train to other countries. They volunteer for the war - any place is better than this. They go to Western Australia; at least there is a chance of their earning an honest livelihood there. They go anywhere to get out. They even escape - from the gaols of this State to go to other places. My honorable friend, the member for Gippsland, said that in Great Britain under free-trade there are as many paupers as in any three other countries, and he mentioned, I think, France, Germany, and Russia. Will my honorable friend say that that is an indication of the relative prosperity of these countries? Will he say that? Will he say that, because there are as many paupers in England as in France, Germany, and Russia combined, it is a proof that the people of England are worse off than the people of those countries?

Mr A McLean

- It is a proof that there is more destitution.

Mr HUGHES

- Is it a proof that they are worse off?

Mr A McLean

- Those who are destitute are certainly worse off.

Mr HUGHES

- It obviously is not a proof of anything of the sort; for let me say that, in England at any rate, they have the humanity to charge the maintenance of the poor to the State, while in Russia, Germany, and France, a man has freedom to die like a dog in the ditch. He has freedom; the State never bothers him; he may proceed along his course from the cradle to the grave, and, providing he does not commit a breach of the law - and to die is not to commit a breach of the law in those countries - he can go along without interference.



Mr A McLean

- England only counts her poor on one day in the year ; and France reckons them throughout the whole of the year.

Mr HUGHES

- My honorable friend is pushed so hard for an illustration that no sooner do we corner him on one particular point than he retreats like a badger - I do not know whether a badger retreats, by the way, and I should be sorry to do the badger wrong - he retreats to his lair and takes up a fresh position. Let me tell the honorable member that in England and Wales, in 1801, under protection 12 per cent, of the total population were paupers. To-day, 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> per cent, are paupers. That is the result of 100 years of progress in Great Britain. Let the honorable member compare the condition of things at any time in England with that existing in France, Germany, or Russia. The honorable member speaks of his experience, as if being perched on the top of the inaccessible heights of Gippsland were learning anything. A man might stop on the heights of the Matterhorn or of Kosciusko, or of Gippsland, for ever and learn nothing beyond the fact that to-day is wet, to-morrow is windy, and the next day is fine. But does the honorable member know that there are more Russians in the East End of London than in some of the large cities of Russia ? Does he not know that London teems with Germans, from the country where there are no paupers ; that London teems with French, and that London is a den of Frenchmen ! Does he not realize that people go from all quarters of the world to this despised country where all the people are paupers ? The honorable member speaks of the accumulation of wealth in England, and says that there is a greater gulf between the rich and the poor in that country than anywhere else ; but does he not realize that that is absolutely untrue ? Does the honorable member not know that it is in America that the greatest differences between the rich and the poor are to be found ? I have here statistics which show the relative position with respect to wealth. I find that in Great Britain 152,000 families, or 2 per cent, of the population, own 66<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> per cent, of all the wealth, and in the United States 24,000 families, that is 0.14 per cent., own 58<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> per cent, of all the wealth. But why is it necessary to quote statistics or facts known to every man ? Will any man deny that there is a greater gulf between rich and poor in America than there is in any other country, or ever has been in any other country, in the world since history ever was written ?

<page>6110</page>

Sir William Lyne

- Nonsense ! The honorable member is talking rubbish.

Mr HUGHES

- The honorable member for Gippsland said that the exports and imports of a country are a mark of its prosperity, and that in Great Britain they imported more than they exported. I understood the honorable member to say that during the last 30 years they had imported more than they had exported by about £1,000,000,000.

Mr A McLean

- £2,111,000,000.

Mr HUGHES

- A million or two in such a colossal calculation is neither here nor there. Supposing they have done so, is that not indicative of their wealth ? Would not any honorable member say, if at the end of the year he had less in his pocket than he had at the beginning, that he was worse off, and if he had more would he not say he was better off ? Why do people keep on pouring this wealth into England ? Why not pass a law to prevent them doing it ? The honorable member furnished us with an answer. England levies tribute over the whole world. They pour this wealth in - why ? Because England's interests extend everywhere where civilization is to be found. And she has established this position under a policy which my honorable friend said is symbolical, typical, and causative of ruin. Now, let us take the wages in these countries. My honorable friend was saying something about the rates of wages in different countries. I cannot find the statistics on the subject now, but I should like to say that the rate of wages of the miners in America is lower a great deal than the rate of wages of miners in England, and much lower than the rate of wages paid to the miners either in Victoria or New South Wales.

Sir William Lyne

- That is not so.

Mr HUGHES

- Who says so? Has the honorable gentleman been there lately ? Here is an honorable gentleman who has at length broken silence. I desire to ask the attention of honorable members particularly to this. When we asked the honorable gentleman for an explanation as to how it was that the 10 per cent. Tariff which he recommended was insufficient, he never said a word. When we asked him about something within his own knowledge and his own recollection, something which happened, not in America, Germany, or England, but in the Hume electorate, he said nothing. But when we do not ask him about something of which he knows absolutely nothing, he bursts out like an oracle with the interjection - " It is not true." I leave it to the judgment of honorable members whether a statement coming from such a source is worthy of my attention at all. When my honorable friend can explain how it was that he made his mistake about the 10 and 15 per cent., I will admit that he is better than Mulhall ; until then I am putting all I have on Mulhall. I say that the average rate of wages paid to the miner, according to the Northumberland representatives at the Berlin Conference of International miners, is 6s. 6d. a day, which is a tolerable wage. They do not work eight hours a day, as my honorable friend must know - because since he has taken upon himself to contradict one statement I assume that Mulhall is an open book to him. They do not work eight hours a day in Durham. They get a very decent wage, and they do not want to change. The rate of wages paid to artisans in England is not so high, monetarily speaking, as that paid in America ; but I think that on the whole the English artisan is as well off, and sometimes better off, than the American artisan. The stress is not so great in England. I do not deny that America offers vast opportunities. It would be strange indeed if such a country did not furnish admirable opportunities for pushing men; if it did not give an opportunity for the establishment of industries, and for the existence of decent conditions. But in spite of all its natural advantages, as a matter of solid fact, almost every strike that has taken place in the United States has inevitably failed. Why should men strike when they are well off ? The honorable member for Melbourne Ports knows something about working men's organizations, and so do I. Men never strike unless they want something.

Mr Mauger

- Does the honorable member know what they are striking for at the present time ?

Mr HUGHES

- Because they want something - better wages or better conditions.

Mr Mauger

- That is not it.

<page>6111</page>

Mr HUGHES

- One would think that under the ideal conditions which are said to exist in America, men would not want to strike at all ; but we know that the most intolerable tyranny exists there, and that, owing to the action of trusts and other social forces the men have failed, in spite of their huge combinations, to gain the concessions they asked for. I want now to deal very briefly with the effect of the Tariff upon New South Wales. I have been unable to discover from anything that I have heard that there is any assurance that industries will be established in New South Wales by the agency of this Tariff, or that there is any reason for regarding it as a permanent Tariff. In Victoria manufactories are already established ; but if manufacturers are to take advantage of this Tariff in New South Wales, they must invest their money there upon the chance of its being permanent. There is no more certainty, however, that this Tariff will be permanent than there was formerly that the State Tariffs would be permanent. Does anyone representing New South Wales, does even the Home Secretary, believe that the people of New South Wales will not make a strenuous effort to alter the Tariff at the next election? They will. Does any capitalist in New South Wales not realize that until it is seen whether the Tariff is to be permanent or not he cannot invest his money. I think that no man would be so foolish as to invest his money on the mere off-chance of the Tariff continuing for two, three, or five years. The Ministry would have done well if it had annexed to the Tariff the condition that it should stand for the next ten years.

Mr Hume Cook

- Would honorable members oppose respect such a compact?

Mr HUGHES

- I have another condition - that before it is adopted it should be submitted to the people for acceptance. Ministerial supporters say that they have the people behind them. I say : Submit the Tariff to them by

means of a plebiscite, and give them an opportunity to express their opinions. Let the farmer say how much he realizes the prospective benefits of the Tariff upon his industry. Let the people generally speak their opinions. If the Tariff is a good one, it should be permanent, and how can we insure permanency when we have no idea as to what the people think about it ? Give the farmer a chance. He is the backbone of the country. I do not know what the honorable member for Gippsland really thinks of the farmer; I can only suppose that he regards him as on the same level as the ship-builder and the smelter - a pariah and an outcast.

Mr A McLean

- I did not say so.

Mr HUGHES

- He is not a manufacturer ; the fact that he produces something is of no account, according to the doctrine of the honorable member. It is only the men who produce certain classes of things who count.

Mr A McLean

- I said that the farmers were not affected by the fiscal policy.

Mr Reid

- Then they do not benefit by it.

Mr HUGHES

- My honorable friend draws a distinction between a person who makes hats and a person who makes ships - one is a natural and the other an artificial industry. What, I ask, is the farmer ? Coming to the Tariff list, there is something about molasses which seems inseparable from a duty of 6s. per cwt. Then there is a duty on linseed oil cake. In New South Wales we had a factory which made cocoanut oil cake without the protection of a duty.

Sir William Lyne

- And it went bung.

Mr HUGHES

- My honorable friend does not occupy a very consistent position in respect to this Tariff, and I do not think we should regard anything he says upon it as worthy of consideration. He was in office in New South Wales for a period of eighteen months, and never touched the Tariff. He was so converted through association with men sane and in their right minds, that, when he went before the people he had lost the old trick of saying things about protection, and could not get out anything more than 10 or 15 per cent. I believe that another temporary sojourn with the right class of men would effect a perfect cure, and that in three years he would come down to duties of 21/2 per cent., which may, for all effective purposes, be regarded as the correct thing. We have a duty of 20 per cent. upon tents. The honorable member for Gippsland said that in New South Wales 18,000 people lived in tents and wretched hovels. Where are they going to live ? If a miner is a pioneer in this country is he to take round with him a great mansion from Toorak ? All the work which is worth calling work in this country has been done by men who have lived in hovels. I was sorry to hear the honorable member cast a stigma on a class of men who have done the pioneering work.

Mr Mauger

- No, he did not.

<page>6112</page>

Mr HUGHES

- Undoubtedly he said that 18,000 men in New South Wales lived in hovels, tents, and bark humpies.

Mr A McLean

- That is unfair.

Mr HUGHES

- Hansard is immutable, and is not affected even by the awkwardness of the situation.

Mr Reid

- All the wealth of Victoria came from men who worked in tents.

Mr HUGHES

- Here we have tanks taxed 3s. for every hundred gallons ; doors, bellows, casks, sashes and frames 20 per cent. ; axes and pick-handles 20 per cent. It is not necessary to go through the list. I am sure that if it were submitted to the farmers of this country they would accept it with tears of joy in their eyes as being

the one chance of their lifetime. Submit it to the people ; give us in New South Wales, making the best of a bad job, an assurance that it is on for the next decade, and that we may at least invest our money with the knowledge that for ten years nothing can happen to it. Then whatever there is in the Tariff - I do not see anything in it of course - we shall be able to get the advantage of it ; but under present circumstances no capitalist in that State will dare to invest a penny. I have more pabulum here ; but I do not care to take up the time of honorable members. I have satisfied the purpose for which I rose, in pointing out that no effort has been made to justify the imposition of such a Tariff as this. The mere fact of our requiring a revenue, even such a revenue, is not by any means a sufficient argument why it should be raised in this particular fashion. There are honorable members on the other side who are thorough protectionists. I have here a leaflet by the honorable and learned member for Indi, who is a protectionist. He says a number of things, and as to farmers and protection, I would ask him if he were here whether he thinks that this Tariff will protect farmers, and if so in what way ? Will it protect the wheat grower, the butter producer, or the stock grower ? Will it protect any of these men ? Not one. We export all these things and we have to fight in the markets of the world for a price. Therefore, we can get no sort of protection for any of those things. The honorable and learned member says that a 15 per cent. Tariff, when various charges are added, comes to 26 per cent. He says that what a 15 per cent. Tariff means is that the retail purchaser pays 26 per cent. I understand why the honorable member for Melbourne Ports smiles ; for any one would smile in the circumstances in which he finds himself.

Mr Mauger

- What are those?

Mr HUGHES

- According to the honorable and learned member for Indi - 26 per cent. - I am not saying it is - is the retail charge on a 15 per cent. Tariff. I would like to know what it would be on a 40 per cent. Tariff. But 26 per cent. is sufficient for my purpose. You take from every earner of £2 a week in New South Wales from 2s. 6d. to 3s. a week. You are reducing his wages by that amount. What are you going to do for him ? Do you propose to give him 3s. a week ? Do you propose to precipitate a strike in New South Wales ? The workers of that State are not going to live for less. Even if you do put on a Tariff they will have to get the money out of somebody, and they do not want wages boards to get it for them.

Mr Mauger

- They want an Arbitration Act, though.

Mr HUGHES

- We do want an Arbitration Act, because we do not care about strikes.

Mr Mauger

- What is the difference ?

<page>6113</page>

Mr HUGHES

- It is a different thing. We do not say for a moment that we care to go out and stand out for six weeks, because we cannot stand out for that time. We say that a dispute is a bad thing. However, I am not going into that question now. What are you going to do for these people ? Nothing. You are quite satisfied, the Government are satisfied. I can understand the feeling of smug satisfaction which actuates the Government in these circumstances. They do not care for any criticism. They are secure behind the majority, and whatever may be said, matters little or nothing. When this debate is over they will proceed with their Tariff, and in committee something may happen, and something may not happen. But I am very sure that honorable members, docile and amiable as they are - I was going to say intelligent, but I cannot do that - will yet be found raising their voices indignantly enough at items in a Tariff which they are prepared to accept in globo. Indeed, under all circumstances their position, taking it all round, is a satisfactory one. But for us in New South Wales, and for those in the other States, too, there has been no reason advanced why such a Tariff as this should be put forward. It is a Tariff, I maintain, based on a Victorian foundation, and acceptable to that great organ which regulates affairs in this country.

Mr Mauger

- No fear !

Mr HUGHES

- No Government in this country, it appears to me, dare bring in a Tariff which is not acceptable to the

proprietor of the Age. Therefore, I have no doubt that, although this Tariff was worked out correctly and experts were called in, one expert, who was not called in, was there and over-saw the thing, and put those final and effective touches upon it which make it so admirable a production, and commend it to the leading columns of that great and critical newspaper. I do not know that I need say any more. I could say more, but I do not think it advisable at this stage to do so. I am satisfied that no reason has been put forward why we should adopt the Tariff, or why this motion of censure should not be accepted. Last night the Prime Minister said some things about wages in New South Wales which are utterly at variance with the facts. I do not blame him, because he has no personal experience of these things. He said that the bakers in New South Wales are worse off than the bakers here. He must know, if he knows anything at all of that work, that precisely the same conditions - a 48 hour shift, and a 50s. rate - obtain thereas here.

Mr Mauger

- When did it start?

Mr HUGHES

- When did it start? Now there is a sensible question to ask. Supposing it started yesterday afternoon at 3 o'clock, what has that to do with it? I do not know when it started, but will the honorable member say it is not in existence ?

Mr Mauger

- No ; I know all about it.

Mr HUGHES

- I wish to call your attention, Mr. Speaker, to the fact that the Minister for Home Affairs and the honorable member for Melbourne Ports know everything, so that, in case you are in any difficulty at any time, I should recommend you to consult them. They know everything upon those things which are ordinarily within the sphere of human knowledge, and also upon those things which are outside of it. I am sure that the honorable member for Melbourne Ports knows nothing about it. I know, of course, as I ought to know all the circumstances, but the Prime Minister knows nothing at all about it. I do not blame the right honorable gentleman altogether, because the present rates of wages are not furnished in the statistics made up by the Government statistician of New SouthWales, and the rate mentioned by the right honorable member last night does not correctly state the position of affairs in that State.

Mr Barton

- I should like to know if anybody has any better information.

Mr HUGHES

- I think that the right honorable gentleman, when he was quoting statistics with reference to the State which he represents, might have sought his information from the Trades Council. He might have got some information there, but I notice that he never goes near the Trades Council except on certain jubilant occasions when banners are waving, and when votes are flying about. When information is required the right honorable gentleman does not go near the Trades Council.

Mr Barton

- I go there in particular when you extend me an invitation and drink my health.

Mr HUGHES

- Does the right honorable member wish to put that forward as a reason for not applying to the proper sources for information ?

Mr Barton

- I am only adding that to the false suggestions the honorable member has already made.

<page>6114</page>

Mr HUGHES

- The right honorable gentleman is so imbued with his own superiority, that the mere ability to answer a question suffuses him with joy - he seems to beam like a kind of rejuvenated cherub. We are all supposed to be able to speak here, in some way or other. We have the faculty of speech, and we have ordinary intelligence, and yet the right honorable gentleman seems to think that any person who is able to make any sort of a reply to any statement is specially favoured by Providence. What I say is this : That the right honorable gentleman, when he was speaking of the wages of workmen employed in New South Wales, had a very easy way before him of finding out what those wages were by applying to the official body. Instead of that, he gets statistics which are, at the very least, a year old, and very likely a great deal older,

and he puts them forward without inquiry, without substantiation or corroboration, as depicting a state of affairs which, I am fortunately able to say, does not exist in New South Wales. I have nothing more to say. I am quite satisfied that nothing I can say will move this Government from their position, and if I were in their place it would not move me. If I had framed a Tariff that was acceptable, not to the members of this House, but to somebody outside of it, how should I be affected by criticisms coming from somebody whom I had not sought to please, or whom I had not cared to please. We were told that this Tariff was framed to suit the country, but no greater mistake was ever made. It was never framed for any such purpose. It was framed to suit a particular class of people - not to suit the people - of Victoria. If the people of Victoria - to say nothing of the other States - were given a chance to express their views, I have not a doubt as to what they would say, but if the manufacturers only are to have the chance to say anything, that will be another matter. If we give the people of the State of Victoria an opportunity of expressing their views I shall be quite satisfied. Let us have some finality in this matter. I challenge the Government to submit the Tariff to the people - to let the people have a chance. The Prime Minister smiles at the idea of a plebiscite as a ridiculous thing, and yet I hope to see the right honorable member in the future come round to the same view as I hold. I have seen him as much opposed to what he is now in favour of, as he is opposed to the plebiscite now. I have seen the passage of time change the opinions of many men. I have seen men opposed to every plank in the platform which I have always upheld, as time has gone on and circumstances have Changed, come round on the other tack and take the helm, assuming a genial enthusiasm for interests which had been quite foreign to their nature. When I see the right honorable member smile at the idea of a plebiscite I would tell him not to smile at it too much, because if Providence fixes him here long enough he will come round to our way of thinking. I have performed what I conceive to be my purpose by pointing out that the Tariff is neither a scientific protectionist one, nor a Tariff which can be properly regarded as one imposed for revenue purposes. It is a Tariff which cruelly oppresses a very large proportion of the people of this continent, which is unduly harsh, and for which there cannot be any sort of excuse except that there are some vested interests in one of the States which are so strong that it seems to be expedient for the Government to placate them. I have shown that the statement of my honorable friend with reference to the prosperity of protectionist countries is either mythical or is largely the work of exaggeration. I have not gone into details, as I might have done, but I have taken my stand on the broad test of a nation's prosperity. I have preferred to rest my defence on the unalterable motive which actuates all men in every step that they take, namely, the pursuit of their own benefit and welfare in the speediest and most direct manner, and therefore I say that the flow of population is an unerring test of the condition of a country. My honorable friend has spoken of other things, such as the education test, which would have been upon other occasions a matter for humorous comment, but I do not think that such a thing would be permissible now. The fact that there were 263 persons in New South Wales who, at the time of their marriage, were unable to read and write, as against only 128 in Victoria for the same period, throws no light upon the prosperity of the respective States. To regard any such feature as a test of the prosperity of the people is puerile. As to the number of houses occupied and the rates of wages paid in various countries, the facts have been proved, both by what I have said myself and by what others have said before me. I have here the report of the Royal Commission on the Factories and Shops Act in Victoria, and without going into details, I may say that it is shown, in the evidence taken by the commission in Sydney, that the rates of wages paid to artisans and other workmen in New South Wales are at least as high as those paid in Victoria. Whether we take the clothing trade, tailoring, printing, butchering, iron-moulding, fellmongering, or baking, we have the same result, that wages are at least as high in New South Wales as they are elsewhere. I am perfectly sure that none of these subterfuges or excuses - none of these platform shibboleths by which people have been gulled in the past as to the merits of protection - will avail the Government so far as the people of New South Wales are concerned. Every protectionist in New South Wales realizes that this is a Tariff which, whatever it may do for Victoria and the other States, will not do New South Wales any good. I spoke on Saturday last to a protectionist, who is one of the most vehement and most powerful in his advocacy of that policy in the State of New South Wales, and who runs a newspaper that has as much influence outside the daily press as any newspaper in the country, and he told me that this is a Tariff framed for no other purpose in the wide world than to placate the Victorian "ring" of manufacturers. On all sides I have heard the same opinion freely expressed by protectionists in New South Wales. They have only one

opinion, and that is that this Tariff will not stimulate any industries in that State, but that it will press unduly in all parts of the continent. Further, the opinion is expressed that there does not appear any disposition or any intention disclosed on the part of the Government to provide any means whereby the lessened purchasing and consuming power of the people is to be made up. It may be, as I have said, that we shall hear from some honorable members that the people of New South Wales will share in the general prosperity; but the experience in other countries, as it inevitably will be in New South Wales, is that, after a trial, the only thing they will be allowed to share is that of which they appear to have been given more than their allocated part - namely, the heaviest burden of taxation imposed on any people in any State of Australia.

Mr. MAUGER (Melbourne Ports).- I have listened with great attention to the honorable member for West Sydney, more especially as he and I, although disagreeing on this question, have many things in common. He is anxious that trades unionism should prosper, and that the working men of Australia should be in a good position. That I am also anxious for ; and we differ on the fiscal question for that very reason. I believe sincerely that working men are better off in America, Canada, and Victoria than they are in free-trade countries. I take my present stand for that reason, and for that reason solely ; beyond that I have not the faintest interest in the fiscal question. I have not the least connexion with any protected industry, and I have nothing whatever to gain personally by advocating the cause of protection.

Mr Hughes

- Neither have I anything to gain by advocating free-trade.

Mr MAUGER

- I do not infer that the honorable member has anything to gain by advocating free-trade; but remarks have been made in the House which bear the inference that I have something to gain by advocating protection, and it is only right that I should say at the very outset that my advocacy of this principle is purely because I conscientiously believe it to be the best. The honorable member for West Sydney said that I knew nothing about the bakers of New South Wales. I happen, however, to be in communication with a number of journeymen bakers in Sydney, and they have kept me posted up as to the developments which have taken place in connexion with their trade. I know that within the last two months a voluntary combination between employees and employers has been aiming at bringing about a better condition of things. I know that they have been forced into that voluntary combination on account of the terrible conditions of that particular trade in New South Wales. I have here sworn evidence to that effect. A journeyman baker of Sydney, in answer to the chairman of the Victorian Factories Commission, when that commission visited Sydney last month, gave evidence as follows : -

Is there any sweating in your trade ? - A tremendous lot. From nine to nineteen hours a day are the hours of labour. In a fair shop nine hours is the proper amount per night ; in the sweating shops, fifteen hours is about the average per week, and nineteen and twenty hours on Friday and Saturday. I speak as an employee, from practical knowledge.

Mr Hughes

- That is right.

Mr MAUGER

- The honorable member for West Sydney said that I know nothing about the baking trade in New South Wales ; now he admits that what I say is right. Which is right - what he said when he was speaking or what he says now ?

Mr Hughes

- The honorable member is now speaking from a report, and what I said was that he did not know from his personal knowledge.

<page>6116</page>

Mr MAUGER

- Does the honorable member know from his own personal knowledge everything he has been talking about to-night? I am inclined to think the honorable member has been indulging in a great many fairy tales, about matters of which he has no personal knowledge. I am acquainted with the baking trade and various other trades in New South Wales. I am in communication with members of those trades, about which I may know more than men on the spot. I have given the evidence of a journeyman baker, and now I will give an extract from the evidence of one of the largest employers -

What would you suggest as a remedy ? - If the employers were all compelled to pay the same rate of wages as is paid under the wages board in Melbourne, 1s. 01/2d. an hour, and adopt the maximum number of hours, make the working hours 48 a week, and bring the standard rate of wages up to 50s. a week, it would compel every employer to fall into line, and cure the sweating for the employers and employees.

Mr Hughes

- - The honorable member knows that since then everything has been adjusted.

Mr MAUGER

-I know that since then there has been an effort on the part of employers and employed, in sheer despair, to form a voluntary combination, but I also know that both employers and employed are asking for an Arbitration Act, or for a wages board to give that voluntary combination the force of law, as is the case in Victoria.

Mr Hughes

- That is quite untrue.

Mr SPEAKER

- The honorable member for West Sydney must withdraw that statement.

Mr Hughes

- What I mean is that the information of the honorable member for Melbourne Ports is quite inaccurate. I may be permitted to point out, for the honorable member's information, that the employers and employed in the baking trade in Sydney have drawn up a scheme, whereby they can appoint referees and arbitrators, to whom all disputes occurring in the baking trade are to be submitted. Mr. Shadier, the chief baker in Sydney, told me on Friday afternoon that they do not want an Arbitration Act, because they have all the machinery necessary, and every baker in the metropolis is in the combination.

Mr SPEAKER

- The honorable member has not withdrawn his statement.

Mr Hughes

- I do withdraw it.

Mr MAUGER

- All that has occurred within the last two months. I have a letter from the Journeyman Bakers' Society, asking me to address a meeting in Sydney, with the object of bringing about the legalization of wages boards, because those employed in the trade have not the slightest faith in the permanency of the voluntary combination. Has the honorable member for West Sydney any faith in it ? Does he not know that voluntary combinations have always failed to bring about the conditions he is desirous of obtaining.

Mr Hughes

- What has this to do with protection ?

Mr MAUGER

- I did not introduce the subject, and I am only answering the honorable member, who asserted that I knew nothing about the baking trade. Apparently; I now know too much to please him. The honorable member said that the manufacturers of Sydney did not want any protection, and he quoted the right honorable member for East Sydney as to the boot manufacturers who have been named. I interjected when the honorable member was speaking that the boot manufacturer whose name he did not give, but from whom he read a letter, was a man who preferred to import. I am not going to mention the name of the gentleman I believe the letter came from, but I will say this - that that gentleman has always opposed trade unions and has always opposed manufacturing if he could import. He would not manufacture a single pair of boots to-day if he could help it. What do we find in relation to the manufacturers of Sydney? I hold in my hand a telegram from Sydney to the following effect -

McMurtrie, Hunter, although large manufacturers, are principally importers. Meeting boot manufacturers last Friday, seventy attending, only McMurtrie opposed Tariff.

Mr Hughes

- Whom is that from ?

Mr MAUGER

- Mr. H. Sparks.

Mr Hughes



- Who is he ?

Mr MAUGER

- I know more about the honorable member's city than he does himself, apparently. He is the secretary of the Protectionist Union, New South Wales.

Mr Hughes

- Oh !

Mr MAUGER

- The honorable member surely does not mean to say that the secretary of the Protectionist Union would forge that telegram ?

Mr Hughes

- Not at all. I was surprised that there was such an association in New South Wales.

<page>6117</page>

Mr MAUGER

- The honorable member knows that he said himself in the course of his speech that the Protectionist Union of New South Wales sank its protectionist policy during the elections and went under the liberal flag. Yet he now says he did not know that there was such a union in New South Wales !

Mr Hughes

- I said that there was such an association during the campaign.

Mr MAUGER

- Then the honorable member did know that there was such a union, and was only pretending. As a matter of fact, the manufacturers evidently do want such protection as it is proposed to give to them.

Mr G B Edwards

- The consumers do not.

Mr MAUGER

- I will show the honorable member that the consumers in four out of five States do want it, even if they are not so far sighted as to see the necessity for it in the State from which he comes.

Mr Hughes

- Does the honorable member call 400,000 pairs of boots per annum a small output?

Mr MAUGER

- I did not say a word about a small output.

Mr Hughes

- But the honorable member said that these boot manufacturers are .importers.

Mr MAUGER

- I say they are also importers.

Mr Hughes

- They make 400,000 pairs of boots per annum.

Mr MAUGER

- That does not affect my argument. Will the honorable member say how many pairs they import ? Until he does, the comparison as to how many they make goes for nothing. I will give him further testimony in regard to the boot trade. I have here the evidence of John Wright, boot manufacturer. This is sworn evidence given before the Factories and Shops Commission -  
How is it they can make boots in Victoria and import them here and still pay a higher rate of wages than is paid in New South Wales ?- Because the output of the factories is larger and more continuous. The Victorian manufacturer has the whole of his State to himself, no one can trespass on him, but in New South Wales we have not anything to ourselves. We get the imports of all the world ; the3' ship to us freely, and. the purchasers - the merchants and the shopkeepers here - are always in favour of the imported goods rather than those locally produced, that is one reason. Another reason is that a better class of goods, a more highly fashioned class of goods, is made in Victoria than is the custom.in New South Wales, and those goods are imported into New South Wales. We have not the chance to make them- our workmen are not trained to make them ; the material is not produced in New South Wales - if we want a specially good class of leather we send to Victoria for it.

I would ask the honorable member to read this evidence, and he will then find that instead of the Victorian factories in the boot line being behind those of New South Wales, the whole of the testimony goes to

show that their machinery is more complex, more complete, and more up to date, and that the better class of goods is made in Victoria, whilst the manufacture of brown paper goods is carried on in free-trade New South Wales. Here is the evidence of a journeyman in the same trade, a representative unionist : - What do you pay your clickers ? - From 20s. to £ 2. The foreman gets £2.

That is a very low wage ? - Very low.

Why is that ? - Because of the importations.

They pay higher in Victoria ? - But there is no importation there. I have carried on business the last four years for the benefit of my hands. I have lost money every year.

Mr Conroy

- Is that J. B. Wright ?

Mr MAUGER

- He is a representative bootmaker.

Mr Conroy

- Paid by the manufacturers to state that !

Mr MAUGER

- The honorable and learned member is always imputing motives. He imputes motives to the Prime Minister and he imputes motives to the unionists of New South Wales.

Mr McCay

- It is a sign that he does not play fair himself.

Mr MAUGER

- It is a sign that the honorable and learned member does not play fair himself or he would not impute motives to others. My right honorable friend the leader of the Opposition urged that New South Wales under his free-trade policy had made rapid progress industrially. What are the facts ? If a beginning is made from the year 1896, when the advantages of the free-trade policy commenced - or the nearest approach to free-trade New South Wales has yet possessed - it will be seen, on a comparison, that the progress of the five leading Australian States has been something as under. I am now quoting Coghlan's Seven Colonies of Australasia, at pages 598 to 601. My honorable friend the member for West Sydney can check my figures.

Mr McCay

- Possibly it will be said that Coghlan is paid by the manufacturers to say these things !

<page>6118</page>

Mr MAUGER

- I suppose my honorable and learned friend, the member for Werriwa, would say so. But I am not imputing motives ; I am simply stating facts. In 1896 the number of hands employed in Victorian factories was 50,448, and in 1899 the number had increased to 60,070. These figures are up to the latest date I can get.

The increase in Victoria, therefore, in that period was 9,622. In Queensland there were 19,733 in 1896, and by 1899 the number had increased by 7,467. In South Australia there was an increase of 2,370. In New South Wales there was only an increase of 5,806. All the other States under protection had shown a greater ratio in their industrial expansion than had the great State of New South Wales.

Mr Hughes

- What industries are included in those figures ?

Mr MAUGER

- The whole of the industries which the factory inspector gives returns for. I am glad that the honorable member interjects with that question, because it enables me to state that the industries included in the New South Wales figures embrace 1,168 men in connexion with the sugar industry - an industry on which it was found necessary to continue the protection, or else these men would not have been maintained in their employment. It also includes 2,616 men employed in connexion with the Smelting Works. That makes the position of New South Wales worse than it would have been under other circumstances. My honorable friend claims that New South Wales is infinitely more prosperous than Victoria. The leader of the Opposition did the same. After three years' experience of that policy in the sister State, what was the right honorable member's view? I hold in my hand the first progress report of the Unemployed Advisory Board of New South Wales. Just a little time before the right honorable the leader of the Opposition

vacated office as Premier of New South Wales he penned the following minute on it : -

For many years, at intervals, and constantly since 1890, the question of the unemployed and what to do with them has been pressing itself upon public notice.

Public works have been pressed on from time to time, but the trouble has proved to be one which is not to be solved in that way.

Honorable members will find that these public works were pressed on and paid for out of borrowed money, and that if Victoria had borrowed to the same extent during the same years, the men that my honorable friend talks of would have been employed in Victoria instead of being out of employment in New South Wales.

Mr Thomson

- Victoria borrowed just as much as New South Wales did in those years.

Mr MAUGER

- My honorable friend is wrong.

Mr Thomson

- If we include the borrowings of the subsidiary bodies, she did.

Mr MAUGER

- The honorable member is wrong again. They left off borrowing before that date.

Mr Crouch

- The last Metropolitan Board of Works loan was floated in 1891.

Mr MAUGER

- And the Harbor Trust left off borrowing before that time.

Mr Hughes

- There is at least one thing we have not done in New South Wales; we have not reduced our old-age pensions.

Mr MAUGER

- We have not done it yet.

Mr Hughes

- The Victorian Government is talking about doing so.

Mr MAUGER

- Let my honorable friend wait until Victoria does reduce the old-age pensions. The minute proceeds -

On Monday last I received a deputation consisting of a number of citizens and some representatives of the unemployed who have devoted much time and evident ability to this subject, and these gentlemen have submitted an outline scheme. Without entering upon the various proposals therein set forth, at the present time, I consider that something should be done at once to deal with the evils made so manifest.

This is signed by " George Houstoun Reid," and it shows the result of his policy after only a three years' trial. Had not federation come about, and had not those manufacturers, who have urged that this is acceptable protection, been rescued, it is impossible to say what would have been the condition of New South Wales in another ten years. I have not given the whole of this interesting report. My honorable friend, the member for Macquarie, who addressed the House yesterday and this afternoon, was chairman of this unemployed board, and this is what he has to say about it--

Mr Harper

- What, the honorable member for Macquarie?

<page>6119</page>

Mr MAUGER

- Yes, and he must admit that I am giving authorities. I am not making a wild statement and telling fairy tales for the amusement of the House. I am stating my authorities, their date and their page. The report is signed by Mr. Sydney Smith, the honorable member for Macquarie, and it sets forth that - Efforts were made by the board to obtain reliable information as to the numbers and classes of persons at the present time out of employment in the colony. The board however, early recognised that, while there can be no doubt whatever as to the existence of deep and widespread distress, resulting from the want of employment by a large body of willing workers, no really reliable data can be obtained as to the actual number of persons so unemployed and of those more or less dependent upon them.

Mr Sydney Smith

- The honorable member must remember that we had had five years' drought in New South Wales.

Mr MAUGER

- We had had not only a drought, but a financial crisis unparalleled in the history of any of the States.

Mr Sydney Smith

- Will the honorable member quote from the report of the Victorian Unemployed Board, of which he was a member?

Mr MAUGER

- My board never reported ; a minority presented a report, and an effort was made by some of the members to use it for free-trade purposes ; but they were thwarted in their purpose.

Mr Sydney Smith

- The protectionists stopped it.

Mr MAUGER

- My honorable friend does not like it, although he is so exceedingly good tempered. This is his own report coming home to condemn him.

Mr Sydney Smith

- I am perfectly prepared to stand by every word I wrote in that report.

Mr MAUGER

- The report continues -

The number registered at the Government Labour Bureau is very large, and the superintendent (Mr. Creer) estimates the number of men at present unemployed, in Sydney and suburbs, at between 3,000 and 4,000, and from 8,000 to 10,000 in the whole colony, with a strong tendency to increase.

Mr Wilks

- In May last, according to her own reports, Victoria had 14,000 unemployed.

Mr MAUGER

- The honorable member is wrong again. The New South Wales Labour Commissioners were here in May last.

Mr SPEAKER

- I must ask honorable members to refrain from conversing in such a tone as to be heard all over the chamber, and to refrain from such continuous interjections'. It is impossible for the honorable member to make his speech in such a way as he ought to do while these interruptions are going on.

Mr MAUGER

- In New South Wales there are commissioners permanently appointed for looking after the unemployed problem, and those commissioners were among the guests at the opening of the Federal Parliament. I have it on their authority that there are as many thousands unemployed in New South Wales as there are hundreds in Victoria. I give my authority, and surely that is enough. But that is not all.

Mr Wilks

- If this Tariff is carried we shall be all unemployed in New South Wales.

Mr MAUGER

- The Ladies Benevolent Society of New South Wales reported, in the year that the right honorable the leader of the Opposition vacated office as Premier of that State, that there had been more cases of distress, more intense poverty, and more want of employment in that and the preceding year than ever there had been before in the history of their society. That is another evidence of the immense prosperity of New South Wales.

Mr Chanter

- And there were more blankets distributed among the poor during that time than ever there had been before.

<page>6120</page>

Mr MAUGER

- The honorable member for Gippsland alluded to the Savings Banks deposits. I shall endeavour to avoid going over the same ground, but I wish to direct attention to another social indication of the position of the people afforded by the position of the friendly societies. Comparing the friendly societies of New South Wales with those of Victoria I find that in the first-named State the societies have £561,813 in funds, or 8s. 4d. per inhabitant, while in Victoria they have £1,150,408 in funds, or 19s. 10d. per inhabitant. These

splendid thrift organizations in Victoria have twice as much funds as the friendly societies of free-trade New South Wales. I could go on quoting statistics in regard to a number of other matters, but I should like, first of all, to call the attention of honorable members to a statement made by the honorable member for Macquarie as to the figures quoted by the Prime Minister relative to wages in the boot trade in Victoria. If he will look again at the schedule from which he quoted, he will find that the Prime Minister was exactly right in his quotations, while the honorable member was wrong altogether. I will not say that the honorable member was wilfully misrepresenting the facts, but it was a gross misrepresentation. He said that 37s. 6d. was the average wage paid to bootmakers in Victoria, and not 44s. 9d. per week as stated by the Prime Minister. Now what are the facts? The wage of 37s. 6d. per week is the minimum rate paid to 58 workers who have special permits. The average wage of 44s. 9d. per week is paid to 1,564 male employes in the boot trade in Victoria, so that the right honorable the Prime Minister was correct. The honorable member for Macquarie quoted the average wage paid to 58 men having special permits, and he omitted, wilfully or otherwise, the wages paid to the vast bulk of the employes. I have shown the House what are the wages and conditions of boot operatives in New South Wales. I have quoted authorities who ought to know better than does the wealthy importer whose telegram the leader of the Opposition read last evening. I should like briefly to allude to the remarks made by the honorable member for Macquarie this afternoon, in regard to the position of the working classes in England. Has the honorable member never heard of The Bitter Cry of Outcast London? Has he never read of the white slaves of England?

Mr Wilks

- The outcasts of New York.

Mr MAUGER

- I am dealing just now with London, and not with New York. That is a way which the free-traders have. Whenever we press them home, they want to shunt off somewhere else. Does the honorable member remember hearing of The Submerged Tenth? I am going to quote the opinion of an honorable member of this House, who is a prominent free-trader, and of whose integrity there can be no question, in order to show the conditions of free-trade England within the last ten years. It is the opinion of the honorable member for Parramatta. He says -

I have seen with mine own eyes men with pretty constant work die like rats from sheer starvation, and all because of the decline of the export trade, and the increase of the imported article.

These words appear in a letter which the honorable member for Parramatta published in the Australian Star. Surely the honorable member for Dalley will not contend that free-trade England has been turned into a paradise during the last decade! This is the evidence of an eye-witness who saw these things for himself, and who is a prominent member of the party to which the honorable member for Dalley belongs. The honorable member for Parramatta further says -

We sell at the lowest analysis our flesh and blood, our independence, our credit; and persistence in this kind of barter will lead to ruinous results.

I commend this to the attention of my honorable friends opposite. Then I hold in my hand a leaflet issued by the Fabian Society of London, and revised in February, 1898. I should like to mention, for the information of my honorable friends opposite, that men like Mr. Sydney Webb Mr. Bernard Shaw, Dr. Clifford, the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, and others belong to this organization.

Mr Fowler

- They are all free-traders.

Mr MAUGER

- The honorable member does not realize that free-trade and protection are variable expedients.

Mr Fowler

- The honorable member wants to argue that the conditions which he pictures are inseparable from free-trade.

Mr MAUGER

- Nothing of the kind. I merely wish to show that the contention that free-trade has made a paradise of England has no foundation in fact.

Mr Fowler

- That is never contended.

Mr MAUGER

- Then I have yet to learn what is contended. The same thing has been contended to-day. It has been urged that free-trade has given a paradise to the people of England. It is said that there is no pauperism there, but that the sunshine of prosperity is blazing away in a manner unexampled in the world's history. Yet, in this leaflet - and every one of these leaflets is subjected to supervision before it is issued - it is stated -

Each day in the year about 1,000,000 persons in the United Kingdom are driven to accept relief as paupers. In the course of every year more than 2,000,000 of separate individuals are thus relieved. At least one in five persons over 65 is a pauper. In London alone there were on 1st January, 1897, 68,302 indoor, and 53,657 outdoor paupers, over 280,000 separate individuals falling for longer or shorter periods into this condition in the course of the year. One in every eight of deaths in London takes place in a workhouse or other Poor Law Institution.

This is not the worst side of the story. Over 50,000 children in England alone are in charge of the poor law authorities. No less an authority than John Burns has stated within the last two years that the London school boards estimate that there are 40,000 children daily attending their schools who are hungry, not having partaken of breakfast. Is there any such condition as that obtaining in any protectionist country to which honorable members can point I have not heard of one.

<page>6121</page>

Mr Wilks

- Any amount of them.

Mr MAUGER

- I have heard statements, but I have not heard of authorities, and I quote my authorities.

Mr Wilks

- What cure does this society provide ? Is it not socialism 1

Mr Higgins

- Their evidence is unimpeachable, because they are impartial.

Mr MAUGER

- I am endeavouring to point out that the rosy condition of England pictured by my honorable friends opposite, and which they attribute to freetrade, is altogether contrary to fact. I have alluded to the condition of England, as it is brought out in such books as The Bitter Cry of Outcast London and Frank Heard's Cry of the Children. I have also quoted as an authority an honorable member of this House. I have not been in England myself, and therefore cannot do more than quote my authorities.

Mr Wilks

- All these authorities are opposed to protection !

Mr MAUGER

- The honorable member seems to think that protection begins and ends with the Custom-house. Nothing of the kind. With me protection only begins there. It does not finish till it embraces in an Arbitration Act every toiler throughout Australia.

Mr Thomson

- How will the honorable member protect the primary producer 1

Mr MAUGER

- We are not dealing with the primary producer just now ; but if the honorable member will earnestly endeavour to protect the primary producer, I have no doubt that he will succeed in so doing. But carping at the statements of these men will not afford the primary producer any protection. Let me give some further evidence. I learn from the Manchester News that at a recent public meeting which was held in Manchester, the Rev. H. Mills moved -

That this meeting deplores the long hours which so many women and girls are compelled to labour, the scanty remuneration which they receive, and the insanitary conditions of so many work-rooms ; and calls upon all lovers of justice to endeavour to promote a happier state of things.

Speaking to this resolution Lady Dilke said : -

To show how necessary it was that women's wages should be raised, she would quote a few cases. A Birmingham girl was making pens at 2s. per gross. A London woman made fancy aprons at 2s. 6d. a dozen, and could only earn 10d. a day by working sixteen hours. Hatch makers had 2id. per gross, and they had to find tow and paste, and in damp weather fire to dry the boxes.

Honorable members on the opposite side of the House talk about the duty upon nails, and yet they want to bring Victorian and Australian manufacturers into competition with this kind of thing. The same lady says : -

At Cradley Heath, where I was last year, I found girls working 75 hours in the week receiving 2s. 6d. That is in free-trade England. I do not wish to weary the House by dealing with the question of female labour, but I earnestly commend to the attention of my free-trade friends Hobson's Evolution of Modern Capitalism, in which book they will find it stated that all over the industrial world female labour is displacing male labour. Hobson says -

Modern manufacture with machinery favours the employment of women as compared with men. Each census during the last half-century shows that in England women are entering more largely into every department of manufacture, excepting certain branches of metal-work, machinemaking, and ship-building, &c, where great muscular strength is a prime factor in success.

From the table which is published by Hobson, we perceive that, while the number of males engaged in these manufactures in Great Britain has increased by 53 per cent, during the half century, from 1841 to 1891, the number of females has increased by 221 per cent. ; showing conclusively that the question of female labour displacing male labour has nothing whatever to do with the fiscal issue, or with the question of free-trade or protection. . I would also commend to honorable members, if they are desirous of getting more information upon this subject, the recently published volumes of Women in Industrial Life.

Mr Tudor

- Who is the author ?

Mr MAUGER

- There are a number of authors, and Mrs. Sidney Webb edits the book. At page 182 of the volume it is stated -

In London alone there are 30,000 tailoresses, 20,000 of whom are in the East End, and 10 per cent, are always out of employment, while from 60 to 70 per cent, are earning less than 8s. per week.

That is in free-trade London.

Sir Edward Braddon

- How many of them are foreigners ?

Mr MAUGER

- I do not think my honorable friend is in earnest in asking that question.

<page>6122</page>

Sir Edward Braddon

- I am very much in earnest.

Mr MAUGER

- I should like to say that in very many instances the foreign sweater is working these girls to death, but the girls themselves are daughters of Britain and are not foreigners.

Sir George Turner

- At all events, they are human beings.

Mr MAUGER

- At all events, as the Treasurer says, they are human beings, and whether they are foreigners or not does not affect my argument. Twenty thousand in London are earning 8s. a week, and the minimum wage under the Victorian Factories Act is £1 per week. Will any honorable friend tell me how a tailor could hope to compete with such conditions? In the old country they work for 8s. per week, when they can get work, and they work for fourteen hours a-day. In Victoria they are protected by legislation under which they get £1 per week, and work for 48 hours per week. Is competition under such circumstances as these anything like fair, or anything like possible?

Mr Thomson

- Have we not the natural protection ?

Mr MAUGER

- My honorable friend as a commercial man knows the value of natural protection.

Mr Thomson

- I do.

Mr MAUGER

- The honorable member knows, or he ought to know, that many of our commodities are absolutely brought out as ballast.

Mr Thomson

- What about wool ?

Mr MAUGER

- And then he talks about natural protection in the way of transit. In a number of cases shippers even pay to get goods to bring out as ballast for their vessels, that they may take back the wool the honorable member refers to. My honorable friend would send the wool back, have it made up in the old country, and have the manufactured article sent back here. That natural protection, so-called, goes for nothing, no one knows better than my honorable friend himself. He knows that the means of transit are being improved every day. He knows that the large oceangoing steamers are greatly reducing their freight charges, and he knows very well that, as time goes on, the distance between London and Melbourne, Manchester and Melbourne, and New York and Melbourne is becoming less as regards the transit of goods.

Sir George Turner

- And they allow discount to cover it.

Mr MAUGER

- And as my right honorable friend says they allow discount to cover it. I intended to refer to America, and before concluding I may be excused for reading one extract from a lecture delivered as late as July, this year, in America, by Professor Gunton, before the Institute of Social Economics. The Institute of Social Economics is comprised of the leading men in New York and in America. The Chancellor of the New York University is president and the Chancellor of the Cornell University is a member. All the leading literary and intellectual men belong to this institute. Speaking of the progress of America and the working classes, the professor said -

As an index to this, we find that the consumption per capita in the United States is higher than that of any other country.

Then he quoted Mulhall, the great English authority, who had no prejudice in favour of that country, and he said -

He tells us that in 1894, for instance, the consumption of textiles, hardware, leather, and other manufactures per inhabitant in England (which is the highest of any country outside of the United States) was 138s. a year; in the United States 148s. So of the earnings per capita, of the population. He says it is £36 per inhabitant in England ; £31 in France ; £25 in Germany ; £17 in Austria ; £14 in Italy ; and £44 in the United States. In other words that, measured in pence, the daily earnings per inhabitant are 24 in Great Britain and Canada ; 20 in France ; 16 in Germany ; 11 in Austria ; 10 in Italy ; and 30 in the United States.

My honorable friend the member for West Sydney spoke about strikes in the United States, and when I asked him what the present strike was over, he did not appear to know. I shall tell honorable members. The great strike in connexion with the Steel Trust in America is not for higher wages. The men are evidently satisfied with their wages. It is not for shorter hours.

Mr Wilks

- It is for the fun of it.

<page>6123</page>

Mr MAUGER

- It is not for the fun of it. The honorable member thinks of nothing but fun, and that is one of the difficulties in dealing with a serious matter like this. The strike in America at the present time is for the principle of unionism. There are a number of engineer shops in America that have not yet come under the influence of the Engineers' Union of that great continent, and the struggle going on at the present time is conducted by men who are in a sufficiently comfortable position to wage industrial warfare in the interests of unionism, in order to embrace in the union the whole of the employes in the trade. When does my honorable friend remember a strike of such magnitude for such a cause in any free-trade country ? I have not time to quote statistics in connexion with a dozen different trades, showing the relative amount of wages paid in America and in England, but I shall quote a few words of the late esteemed President McKinley in regard to a Tariff, and in regard to fiscal proposals. Let me say that as a protectionist, as one who is in no way directly interested in manufacturing concerns in Victoria, but as one who knows all about



the requirements of these industries and the competition they have got to face, the Victorian manufacturers in many instances are dissatisfied with this Tariff - not because it is too high, but because such enormous reductions upon the Victorian Tariff have been made in it. I say that advisedly. Take, for instance, the shirt and collar trade. The Government make a reduction at one swoop in that trade from 35 per cent. to 20 per cent., and then add 10 per cent. and 15 per cent. to the raw material. Take the industry of hats: they reduce the protection there from 24s. and 34s. a dozen down to 10s. a dozen and 15 per cent. Then my honorable friends talk about the poor working farmer. The farmer is getting a better and a cheaper hat now than he ever did before in the history of Victoria.

Mr Thomson

- Then what is the good of that big duty?

Mr MAUGER

- My honorable friend is sufficiently well acquainted with commercial life to know that, so far as the cheaper article is concerned, it would not matter if they reduced the duty by one-half. The cheaper hat would not come into Victoria. There is no labour in connexion with it. It is made of a little wool, and by machinery. It is the better class of hats that will be imported, the hat that needs workmanship and skill of the highest class. And that is the sort of hat we should insist upon the workmen of Victoria producing.

Mr Thomson

- Then will the honorable member say why there is a duty on the lower class article?

Sir George Turner

- Because they would swamp us.

Mr MAUGER

- Because by supporting our Australian mills in regard to the higher class article we shall get well served in regard to the lower class article. The farmer and the artisan can get for 1s. 11d. as good a hat as any working man desires to wear. The hat can be produced for that, and can be bought for 2s. 6d. in almost every country town in Victoria. Then; too, a farmer can buy a pair of boots for from 3s. 11d. to 4s. 6d. Where does the bleeding and the taxation come in? Take the glass industry. In that industry the duty has been reduced by 40 or 50 per cent., and a new duty for revenue purposes has been put upon raw material. The House must carefully consider these anomalies, and earnestly try to carry out the programme of the Government without the destruction of any industry. I am prepared to admit that Victoria must make sacrifices as New South Wales must make sacrifices. Under our present Constitution we cannot get an ideal Tariff; we cannot get the Tariff which I desire.

Mr Cameron

- I hope not.

Mr MAUGER

- If we did, there would be a very big free list, with adequate protection for the articles we can produce; and the effect would be more local consumption, more local work, and better conditions for the employer and the purchaser.

Mr Cameron

- And no revenue for the States.

Mr MAUGER

- I admit that it is the exigencies of revenue which require the passing of the Tariff which has been introduced. We cannot get what we desire, and what I believe to be absolutely necessary to pay the minimum wage provided for under our Factories Act. In connexion with the hatting industry we have a trades union which is as powerful as any legal enactment. Every man and woman employed in the hatting industry of Victoria - and there is no hatting industry worthy of the name in any of the other States - belongs to a trades union, and receives a minimum weekly wage - not an average wage - of £3.

Mr Page

- The women as well?

<page>6124</page>

Mr MAUGER

- The women receive 25s. a week. If new machinery is introduced, the trades union is strong enough to require that a journeyman, and not a boy, shall be told off to work and take care of it. Do honorable members mean to say that under such conditions the Victorian manufacturers could, without protection,

compete with Italian manufacturers, who pay per day no more than we are called upon to pay per hour ?

Sir Edward Braddon

- That is in protectionist Italy !

Mr MAUGER

- My right honorable friend appears to think that protection at the Custom-house is the beginning and the end. He does not know the alphabet of the science he is talking about. If it stopped there, it would be absolutely futile. I have tried to show that protection without trades unions, Arbitration Acts, and wages boards is protection only in name - protection for the employer and not for the community.

Sir Edward Braddon

- There is no man living but knows that it is futile.

Mr MAUGER

- President McKinley is not living, it is true, but his words live after him, and I venture to think that he was as great, self-sacrificing, and noble as is the right honorable gentleman. Men like Horace Greeley, Garfield, and Lincoln were not fools. They guided successfully the destinies of one of the greatest countries in the world. I could quote, did time permit, the opinions of the leading professors of economy in the German universities. Is my right honorable friend not going to take into consideration the economic thought of the times, or does he contend that the last word has been spoken upon the subject of political economy ? Will he contend that political economy is not a progressive science ? Will he not agree with Ruskin that it is the correlation of facts pertaining to the times to which they relate ? What are the words of wisdom spoken by President McKinley on this subject ? -

A low Tariff or no Tariff has always increased the importation of foreign goods until our money ran out ; multiplied our foreign obligations ; produced a balance of trade against the country ; supplanted the domestic producer and manufacturer ; impaired the farmer's home market without improving his market abroad ; undermined domestic prosperity ; decreased the industries of the nation ; diminished the value of nearly all our property and investments ; and robbed labour of its just rewards. . . . This is the verdict of our history, and .... the verdict of history in the case of other nations.

Are these words to be ignored? Are they meaningless? Was it a fool who spoke them ? Is all the wisdom of the world on the side of the economists represented by my right honorable friend ? I could quote Cardinal Manning, Horace Greeley, and the author of Alton Locke, to show the condition which free-trade brought about in England, but time will not permit. As a native of the Commonwealth, I am anxious to do all I can for this young nation, in view of the possibilities of industrial and national development. Looking at the nations of the earth - above all, looking at the federated nations - I can come to no other conclusion than that those which have adopted the policy I have the honour to be associated with have found progress attendant upon its wake, and neither Germany, Switzerland, Canada, nor America has ever attempted to plunge into the gulf of despair which my honorable friends opposite would lead the Commonwealth into.

Mr Sydney Smith

- By way of personal explanation, I should like to say that I would not willingly misquote any document I might give to the House. During this debate I took the opportunity to quote from an official document prepared by the Government of Victoria, giving the rate of wages paid in the various trades, but the honorable member for Melbourne Ports said that I misrepresented it. What are the facts? Just as I stated them. The Prime Minister said that in boots and shoes the general average wage paid to males was 44s. 9d. for 48 hours. I showed that according to Appendix B the average rate for 2,628 - not 58 - was 34s. 5d.

Sir George Turner

- That includes piece-work.

Mr Mauger

- To what report is the honorable member referring ?

<page>6125</page>

Mr Sydney Smith

- The report of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Workshops for 1900. The Prime Minister said that for females the average rate was 22s.; but according to this report, for 1,304 females it is 14s. 7d. Then I pointed out that in the cabinet-making trade the Prime Minister had said that the average rate was 44s. 9d. for 48 hours. I find that I did misquote him in that respect. Instead of putting it at 40s. 5d. I gave the

workers the benefit by taking the figures above, 42s. 4d. The 40s. 5d. is the exact rate fixed by the inspector, and quoted in this report as against 44s. 9d. stated by the right honorable gentleman. Then I pointed out that in regard to the shirt-making trade he said that 21s. per week is the average rate, whereas, according to this report, it is 14s. 4d. I only make this explanation to show that I was perfectly correct, notwithstanding the contradictions of the honorable member for Melbourne Ports, in giving the rates as fixed by the chief inspectors in Victoria. What does he say to that?

Mr. Mauger, in explanation : I was particularly careful not to impute motives, but to say that I believed the honorable member for Macquarie had made a mistake. I repeat, the fact that he has quoted the piecework figures does not in any way alter the statement I made that the average he quoted this afternoon related to the small number I was speaking of.

Motion (by Mr. Poynton) negatived -

That the debate be now adjourned.

Mr POYNTON

- I shall not occupy a great deal of time. I wanted to read some of the speeches which have been delivered; but unfortunately that opportunity has not been granted to me. It is pleasant to observe that honorable members on the opposite side have been let off the chain. Last night we saw a conspiracy of silence which one did not expect to see in a Chamber like this. One would have thought that the Ministers would have been only too glad to have their proposals criticised. One might ask - What are they brought down for, if they are to be covered up in mystery, the gag applied and a robbery perpetrated under the guise of a Tariff saddled on this country without the people knowing anything of it ? The Prime Minister, in his speech last night, seemed to make a great effort for the purpose of proving that because the Tariff is less than the average of the Tariffs for the six States, we ought to be thankful, and ought to swallow this coated pill without any consideration. While he was speaking, I interjected once or twice, " But what about the incidence ? " The incidence is a matter which ought not to be considered ; it is a mere detail, which is not worthy of the House. He also stated, as other honorable members have done, that the advantage to be derived from the release of Inter-State trade to the amount of £29,000,000 is more than equivalent to what is made up by the increased duties. A remarkable feature of this debate is that not one honorable member has defended the Tariff. They have gone away on the other issue altogether. We have seen a fight between the giants of the House on the question of free-trade or protection, but as to the Tariff not one word have we heard from the other side. Is it because they wish to conceal the truth from the people who have to pay the imposts that they do not want to go into details ? : What was the object last night when they tried to apply the gag and get the debate closed ? Was that the purpose for which we came here ? It will come with a revelation, I think, to Australia to learn that the amount to be raised for all federal purposes has been sprung from £7,500,000 to £9,000,000, that a proposal is actually submitted to raise considerably more than was raised by Inter-State duties, the cost of the Federal Government, which is termed new expenditure, and the total of customs and excise on a fair year - an increase of considerable proportions. Not one Minister has yet defended the increase; not one Minister has attempted to justify the incidence of this taxation. Let us see what we gain by the abolition of Inter-State duties.. The amount which the people of New South Wales had to pay prior to the imposition of uniform duties was £1 5s. 7d. per head, but under this Tariff they have to pay £2 7s. 9d. per head. Then it is said - " But look at what they get as a result of Inter-State free-trade." According to the figures which have been presented, £141,06.1 represents the total amount of the InterState duties for New South Wales. Working that out on the population basis, we find that 2s.1d. per head represents the total benefit which the people of that State derive from Inter-State free-trade. That leaves them with a balance of £1 0s.1d. in the shape of new taxation.

Sir George Turner

- They have all our markets.

Mr Thomson

- Victoria had all ours before, and we did not charge her for it.

<page>6126</page>

Mr POYNTON

- I have heard it argued before in South Australia that if we went in for federation, instead of having 350,000 people to supply we should have. 4,000,000, so that that argument cuts both ways. In Victoria I

find that the taxation per head under the old Tariff was £1 19s.; whilst under the new Tariff it will be £2 3s. 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d., showing an increase of 4s. 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d. Under the Inter-State remissions' amounting to £358,659, Victoria will benefit the extent of 5s. 11d. per head, and the new Tariff will therefore be lower by 1s. 4d. per head than the old one. When I take my own State of South Australia, I find: that the taxation is to be increased from £1 14s. 8d. under the Tariff in 1899, to £1 17s. 8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>d. under the Government proposals. The people of that State will have taxation remitted in respect to Inter-State free-trade, to the extent of about 4s. 11d. per head, and there will thus be a balance of 1s. 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d. per head in favour of the new Tariff. In working out the Queensland Tariff we arrive at somewhat different results. There the taxation will be reduced from £3 6s. 5d. to £2 14s. 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d. per head, or a decrease of 11s. 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d. As the abolition of Inter - State duties represents a reduction of another 5s. 6d. per head, the total decrease will be 17s. 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d. Applying the same rule to the Tasmanian Tariff, I find that there will be a balance of something like 17s. 9d. in favour of the new Tariff, after making deductions on account of the Inter-State free-trade. I do not wonder that there should be such indignation expressed in New South Wales with respect to the new Tariff.

Mr Wilks

- It is all indignation there now.

Mr Barton

- That is the only local manufacture.

Mr POYNTON

- Honorable members who had not previously studied the Tariff list of New South Wales must have been astonished to see that only some 49 articles were taxed, whilst under the new Tariff over 1,000 articles will have to pay duty. Therefore the new Tariff will be a very serious matter for the people of New South Wales. I now desire to show how this £9,000,000 of revenue is to be raised - how the difference between the £9,000,000 and the amount which was previously levied on the people of the various States through the Customs is to be made up. I have chosen the conditions in my own State for the purpose of making a comparison. Any one who looks at the Tariff of South Australia will not say that it is a free-trade Tariff, but they will admit that some consideration has been shown for what may be termed the actual necessities of the people. It is in this consideration that the new Tariff is absolutely deficient. I am going to show how the revenue is to be raised under the new Tariff, and how the masses of the people will have to pay. No consideration has been given to the necessities of the people at all, but the Government have gone on the broad line that the greater the number of consumers the greater their right to tax the commodities on which they live. Take the case of molasses and golden syrup. Some people may look upon these articles as luxuries, and no doubt it is a laughing matter to the Prime Minister, with his £2,500 a year.

Mr Barton

- I like treacle as well as the honorable member.

Mr POYNTON

- This is one of the luxuries that goes into the homes of the poor people.

Mr Kingston

- Queensland will give us enough for a century.

Mr POYNTON

- Then what is the object of putting on the duty ?

Mr Kingston

- To give Queensland the pleasure of supplying us.

Mr POYNTON

- The object is to give the local manufacturer an opportunity of charging a higher price - in fact, the price has already been increased. The duty on these articles under the new Tariff will be 25 per cent. higher than under the old South Australian Tariff. Take another thing that goes into the homes of the poor - arrowroot.

Mr Kingston

- Queensland will give us all we want of that.

Mr POYNTON

- Then why put a duty upon it? The Government are showing their sympathy for the unfortunate users of arrowroot by putting a duty of £9 6s. 8d. per ton upon it. They are taxing the food of the babies, and they

are taxing the poor man's puddings; and, in fact, they are levying duties upon those commodities that are more frequently used in the homes of the poor than in the houses of the rich. The duty on arrowroot represents to the people of South Australia an increase of £9 6s. 8d. per ton, because arrowroot was on the free list in the South Australian Tariff.

Mr Watkins

- And what has the honorable member to put in the place of these duties ?

Mr POYNTON

- Does the honorable member justify these duties ?

Mr Watkins

- Not all of them, but I want to know what the honorable member would substitute for them.

Mr POYNTON

- Then we have candles, which are largely used by poor people. We know that the manufacturers of candles are making fortunes out of one penny per pound duty. But not satisfied with that they must increase the duty on this line.

Sir John Forrest

- There is Inter-State free-trade.

<page>6127</page>

Mr POYNTON

- The right honorable gentleman took care to protect his State for some time against Inter-State free-trade.

Sir John Forrest

- There was necessity to do so.

Mr POYNTON

- If the right honorable gentleman were to take a plebiscite in Western Australia at the present time he would not find many " ayes " for the Ministerial programme. During the campaign I heard people advocate " a free breakfast table." I was then candid enough to say that if a man contended that under the conditions of the Commonwealth, so long as certain amounts had to go back to the States, it was possible to have a "free breakfast table," he would be only playing the fool with the people. What we did expect, and what every taxpayer in the State had a right to expect, was that, at any rate, the extra revenue would not be raised on the lines such as those to which I am referring. An increase of 25 per cent, in the duty on coffee may be nothing to those who drink champagne, but it is something to those who regard coffee as a luxury. Then as to oatmeal, I may be told that that can be manufactured in the States.

Mr Kingston

- I should think so.

Mr POYNTON

- But is there any necessity for a duty of £9 6s. 8d. in order to encourage the manufacture of oatmeal in the States ?

Mr F E McLean

- Oatmeal was manufactured in Victoria with a lower duty.

Mr POYNTON

- Most decidedly it was. The proposed duty on rolled oats is £9 6s. 8d. a ton, and the effect of this in South Australia has been to increase the price of the 7-lb. bag from 1s. 3d. to 1s. 9d. Wheatmeal, pearl barley, and Scotch barley are in every-day use in every family in the Commonwealth ; and yet we find that there is a duty of £9 6s. 8d. per ton imposed on these lines. Even children's food is not allowed to go free, and we have a similar duty imposed on maizena. [House counted.] I asked for an adjournment of the debate, but the Government were not inclined to grant it, and when I attempt to deal in detail with the impositions on the commodities of the poor, my statements are found unpalatable and honorable members leave the chamber. The proposal to put a duty of £9 6s. 8d. on the lines I have mentioned is certainly unpalatable, and I guarantee that, when the division comes in connexion with these commodities, a number of honorable members will be found voting on this side of the House. They have not the moral courage, however, simply because they are sitting behind the Government, to get up and condemn the proposals. Surely the manufacture of preserved milk is an industry which could be

established in Australia without penalizing, in many instances, people who are far away from the possibility of obtaining fresh milk. In many cases babies are recommended by medical men to have preserved milk, and yet we find a duty of 25 per cent, imposed on this commodity. Rice is another article which honorable members may say can be produced in Australia. We are very considerate about the man who makes the starch ; but is not rice a commodity that is largely used in the homes of the poor ? That is so ; yet there is an increase of duty on this commodity. We realize a very small percentage of money under this Tariff from luxuries, or from those articles which the rich will purchase. In South Australia we did consider that the blankets of the poor, at any rate, ought to come under a low Tariff; but the Government propose that the duties on blankets shall be increased from 15 to 20 per cent. In some of the other States blankets are on the free list, and I take South Australia as an illustration, because in this particular, that State is neither on the free-trade or the highly protective side. Then, again, surely coatings, vestings trousers, flannels, and flannelettes might have been more leniently treated. Flannelette was on the free list in South Australia, but under the Commonwealth Tariff it has to pay a duty of 20 per cent. We have also 20 per cent, on flannels, trouserings, coatings, and vestings. Here is another line that goes into the homes of the poor. South Australia, Victoria, Queensland, and New South Wales have hitherto had these articles on the free list, and they should have found a place under the free list of a Federal Tariff. Then we will take blue frocking, butter and cheese cloth, calico (white and grey), drills, duck, dungaree, jeans, moleskins, and oil baize. (House counted.) I would ask the Minister if I can now have leave to continue my remarks to-morrow?

Mr Kingston

- No ; we previously mentioned the time we intended to sit.

<page>6128</page>

Mr POYNTON

- I was showing the lines on the free list in, at any rate, four States, and was expressing the opinion that these lines might have found a place on the free list under the Federal Tariff.

Mr McCay

- Where is the money to come from ? That is the trouble.

Mr POYNTON

- Does the honorable and learned member want to increase taxation that comes out of the homes of the poor ?

Mr McCay

- No; but I want to know where the money is to come from.

Mr POYNTON

- Then the honorable and learned member will not support taxes on these goods ?

Mr Hume Cook

- Will the honorable member tell us how he is going to get the money out of the homes of the rich?

Mr McCay

- We have to yield, because we cannot help it.

Mr POYNTON

- The honorable and learned member has to yield because he sits behind the Government. He has not the courage to get up and challenge the Tariff in detail.

Mr McCay

- I have not had a chance yet.

Mr POYNTON

- Honorable members opposite would have applied the gag last night if they could, and that is what they are trying to do now - the whole lot of them. Material used in the homes of the poor, such as calicoes, moleskins, towellings, shirtings, sheetings, and similar things, are taxed, although they might have been included in the free list. I suppose they are taxed to encourage manufactures, according to honorable members opposite. We find also that the great mining industry is penalized throughout the whole of this Tariff. There is hardly an article that goes on to a mine that is not taxed heavier under this Tariff than under any previous Tariff in Australia. I wish especially to refer to one or two lines, and I am going to show what revenue the Government expect to raise from them presently. We have before us the estimates of revenue in detail, set out under different headings. I find that £120,000 is to be raised from sugar, which

was previously on the free list in some of the States. Then we find upon the Tariff such articles as the Minister says can be manufactured here - lines chiefly used for children - arrowroot, tapioca, and sago. From these articles it is expected to raise £13,790. The Government estimate to receive £32,540 from cocoa. They also propose to tax dried fruits, as if the natural protection that is given to these articles in the way of the cost of carriage from abroad was not sufficient. From this source they expect to raise £152,445. If those goods can be manufactured here, what will become of the revenue? Then we find that on the little line of preserved milk, the Government estimate to receive £28,750. Preserved milk is an absolute necessity of life in many places. But there is not much consideration for the back-blocks on the part of this Government. Next, let us take the line of tea. The tea-drinkers of the Commonwealth are to have increased burdens placed upon them because they have entered into the Federation.

Mr L E Groom

- There will be a big reduction of the tea duties so far as concerns Queensland.

Mr POYNTON

- The honorable member speaks for his own State.

Mr L E Groom

- But the honorable member professes to be speaking for the Commonwealth.

Mr POYNTON

- I say that under this Tariff the commonest tea, that goes into the homes of the poor, will be raised in price by at least 4d. per lb.

Mr McCay

- What ?

Mr Kingston

- Don't talk nonsense !

Mr POYNTON

- The honorable and learned member for Corinella seems astonished.

Mr McCay

- I am astonished at the honorable member.

Mr POYNTON

- I am just as much astonished that the honorable and learned member should take it in that way. What I say is, that the cost of this tea will be 4d., as against 3d. in South Australia.

Mr Kingston

- The honorable member is wrong.

<page>6129</page>

Mr POYNTON

- No ; I am not wrong. Take the duty ad valorem, and the right honorable gentleman will see that I am correct. This money will be taken out of the pockets of the poor. There is no champagne and no silk about this business. The sum of £384,312 is the amount of revenue to be raised from this source. From rice, the Government estimate to raise £142,422. These are lines that might have been put upon the free list. There are increases of duty in a number of other lines. We know that usually, when the Government brings down a Tariff, it is not the duty of private members to propose increases on some lines, and decreases upon others. In fact, sir, if you were in the chair, I believe you would rule that it was out of order for any honorable member to do so. Now let us see how they propose to make up this revenue. Coming to the duty on blankets and rugs, we find that they estimate to collect £21,900, and from apparel and attire £72,600. Practically, they propose to raise as much by taxing the blankets and wearing apparel of the poor as they do from silks.

Mr Tudor

- Do not the rich use blankets 1

Mr POYNTON

- The honorable member knows very well that there are more beds to be covered, and that more blankets are required by the poor. I am astonished to hear such a remark coming from the honorable member, who ought to agree with me in regard to every line. I really believe he does think that blankets ought to Come in free as soon as possible.

Mr Tudor

- I shall go with the honorable member for letting them in free. My vote will be all right. I shall be in favour of reducing some duties and increasing others.

Mr Sydney Smith

- We cannot increase them.

Sir William Lyne

- Of course we can.

Mr Tudor

- I hope to have the honorable member for South Australia with me.

Mr POYNTON

- Cotton and linen piece goods surely constitute a line used among the poor. These articles were on the free list under the South Australian Tariff and under the Tariff of some other States, but under the Government proposals it is estimated that £338,000 will be raised from this source. Notwithstanding that the Prime Minister said last night that, judging by the experience of Western Australia, the mining industry should be able to obtain all the machinery that is required within the Commonwealth, I notice that the Government estimate to obtain £80,500 by a further tax upon mining requirements. Evidently they do not think that we shall be able to obtain locally all that we require in that direction. Now we come to kerosene.

Mr McCay

- I shall vote with the honorable member for striking out the proposed duty on kerosene.

Mr Conroy

- But that is a protective duty. There are some 300 men employed in the industry here.

Mr POYNTON

- The Government purpose raising £15 7,500 by means of a duty on kerosene. With the exception of mining machinery, there is not a line to which I have referred which does not go into the poor man's house. I notice that an increased duty on cement is proposed, although in New South Wales they can carry on the cement industry without it. For the sake of some very few men, however, the Government propose to tax that article and to raise £44,250 in that way. There is one item to which I desire to make special reference. I am surprised that the Ministry, as representing South Australia, in common with the rest of the Commonwealth, has not seen fit to remove timber from the list of dutiable articles. The Prime Minister seemed last night to look on this matter as immaterial. As a matter of fact, however, the Government, according to their Estimates, expect to raise £11 9, ISO from this source. What will be the effect of this proposal on the mining industry at Broken Hill?

Sir John Forrest

- We have plenty of timber in Western Australia that we can send to Broken Hill.

Mr POYNTON

- The right honorable gentleman should be aware of the fact that those who are able to speak with authority say that the great bulk of the timber used in the Broken Hill mines is Oregon, imported from America.

Sir John Forrest

- There is no reason why they should not use jarrah.

Mr V L Solomon

- It is not strong enough.

Sir John Forrest

- It is used in all the mines in Kalgoorlie.

Mr POYNTON

- It has been pointed out by those interested in Broken Hill mining that this is going to be a very serious matter to them. The Government propose also a duty on coke.

Mr Kingston

- Can we not produce that here 1

<page>6130</page>

Mr POYNTON

- I suppose the honorable and learned member will say that we can make it here. Honorable members must know that ships come out here with coke as loading, and take back bullion and ore. In that way we get it very cheaply. A duty of 4s. per ton is now sought to be placed upon it. It is the last straw that breaks



the camel's back. The Broken Hill mines, at the present time, have more than enough to contend with. Some of them are making calls, some of them are closing down, and others are considering a reduction in wages. This proposal is not going to help them.

Mr Kingston

- The Silverton Tramway Company should reduce its rates.

Mr POYNTON

- Now we come to that wonderful Victorian industry, the manufacture of barbed wire, which employs about one man and a boy, and the protection of which leads to an increase in the cost.

Mr Hume Cook

- It is not correct to say that it gives employment to only about a man and a boy.

Mr POYNTON

- I know what I am talking about. In South Australia barbed wire is a necessity, and is used very largely by people in the back country. How do the Government propose to help them? Wire netting, the manufacture of which is more intricate than barbed wire, can come in free. The wire-netting industry in New South Wales can go on without protection, but, because of this barbed wire industry in Victoria, which gives employment at all events to a very limited number of workmen, there is to be an increase, which will mean £3 or £4 per ton to the user. The duty in Victoria was £3 per ton; New South Wales free. The price in 1 ton lots on 3rd October, 1901, in Sydney, was  $\pm 15$  15s., and in Melbourne £18 10s. for 12-gauge per ton. The imports in 1900 were 252 tons, and the revenue  $\pm$  £846. The Age having made an investigation, published on 3rd November, 1900, an article showing that the weekly output of local factories was 27 tons, equal to 1,350 tons for a year of 50 weeks. The account, therefore, stands thus : - Imports, 252 tons - revenue of State at £3 per ton, £846 ; local product, 1,350 tons - price increase, £2 15s. per ton, equals £3,712 10s. ; added price to consumers, £4,558 10s. Of the total revenue yielded by the duty, the State only got £1 for every £4 7s. 6d obtained by manufacturers. The Age of 3rd November, 1900, also shows that two persons (one man and one boy) attending a machine, produce 3£ tons per week. As not all the machines used are of this modern type, reduce the average output per machine to 2 tons, and the result is, that thirteen men and thirteen boys are employed in the industry. The average wage in wireworks for males of all ages is 28s. 3d. per week, as is shown by the Chief Inspector of Factories' Report of 1901, Appendix C. The total wages per year of 50 weeks paid by manufacturers is, therefore, £1,863. The 1 manufacturers received from the State all labour for nothing, and a bonus of £1,849 as well, or £2 for every £1 expended in wages. If the factories were closed and every worker paid a life pension equal to his wages, the State would still save £1,849 a year. There is hardly a piece of that vast tract of country which I have represented in the South Australian Parliament for nearly eight years, that can do without the extensive use of barbed wire. The Minister for Trade and Customs knows that I am saying what is true.

Sir John Forrest

- What do they want barbed wire for 1

Mr POYNTON

- If the honorable member knew anything about the wild dog pest he would be aware that barbed wire is the only thing that will keep the dogs out of the sheep paddocks. There is not a mile of country from Port Augusta to the border of his own State - west of Streaky Bay, away to the south to Port Lincoln, and extending to the New South Wales border, and thence to Queensland - which can be used for sheep, except it is made secure by barbed wire. Yet the Government propose to increase the cost of this article by putting on a duty for the sake of two or three people, who in the course of their whole existence here have not had to put up with such hardships as fall to the lot of those in the back country of South Australia. I would ask, Mr. Speaker, that I have leave to continue my remarks to-morrow.

Mr Barton

- Under no circumstances whatever.

<page>6131</page>

Mr POYNTON

- Well, I have not to thank the Government for anything. If the Prime Minister thinks that he is going to have this matter disposed of any sooner by adopting such an attitude, he makes a very great mistake. I have now to deal with some other lines. I find that under the Victorian Tariff, cocoa beans and cocoa

butter were on the free list. We will see how the incidence of the Tariff works out on those lines. A duty of one penny and two pence per lb. respectively is now imposed. Then we had raw coffee on the free list. That now bears a duty of three pence a lb. It is remarkable to find that a duty on hay and chaff is proposed. I will show later on the amount which the Government expect to derive from that source. But as a mere sop to the farmers who have to pay for everything else, this is put upon the list. Hay, chaff, and linseed, which will have to pay 2d. per cental, have hitherto been on the free list. Linseed cake and oil cake, which are to be charged 1s. per cental, were also previously on the free list. Then I come to the duty upon matches. This duty has, I presume, been imposed with a view to protecting the match industry in Victoria, which, I believe, has cost this State something like £10,000 per year for the benefit of a very limited number of hands. In the report of the Chief Inspector of Factories for 1901, Appendix C, it is stated -

Up to 1894 annual importation of wax vestas was 290,000 gross average per annum, and revenue from duty of 1s. per gross .£14,500. In 1894 Messrs. B. Bell & Co., of London, opened a match factory at Richmond. Imports and revenue gradually fell off, and were in 1900 58,300 gross, yielding £2,915.

Supposing consumption has remained unchanged, Messrs. E. Bell & Co. produce locally 231,700 gross boxes. The price of wax matches wholesale in usual quantities in Sydney is 2s. per gross boxes. Messrs. B. Bell & Co. sell at 2s. 10d. for large contracts, and 2s. lid. for ordinary wholesale quantities. They, therefore, obtain lid. per gross boxes more than they could without the duty. In addition to legitimate profits they get per year 231,700 x lid. - £10,620 as a tax imposed] upon consumers. Total employment in industry- 8 males, averaging 18s. 8d. per week; 41 females, averaging 14s. lid. per week. Total work per year, according to Bell & Co. 's statement in Age - 46 weeks. Total wages paid in year £1,750.

Rice, sago, and tapioca, were on the free list in Victoria. Spices unground, green ginger, tapioca flour, potato flour, and straw were also free. Now a duty of 6s. per ton is to be imposed upon straw. It would be interesting to know how much revenue the Ministry expect to obtain from this one line. Then hatters' fur, mittens, flesh gloves, flannelettes, lace and veilings, cotton and linens, cotton and linen piece goods, sails, mantle trimmings, bonnet and hat trimmings and yarn are to be taxed. All these articles were on the free list in Victoria, but they are now to carry more or less duty. Then I come to the item "galvanized iron."

Mr Kingston

- That was in the South Australian Tariff.

Mr POYNTON

- One line was in that Tariff.

Mr Kingston

- The other was 30s. a ton there.

Mr POYNTON

- But it is not so here. Admitting that the Government wanted to encourage that line, there was no necessity to put such a heavy duty as £1 a ton upon it. It does not require an immense amount of machinery or of expert knowledge to transform a sheet of iron into rolled iron. There are a number of other lines to which I could direct attention, if time permitted. A great deal of talk has been indulged in about the reaper and binder. I have heard this same argument trotted out in nearly every political speech, which has been made since we had a debate upon the fiscal issue. But I am assured on the very best authority that despite the enormous profits which are supposed to be made out of reapers and binders, three firms in Melbourne which dealt in them have had to give up their business because of the cost attached to it. The expense in connexion with the fixing up of the machines, and with the keeping of them in repair for a certain time, was so great that recently a new arrangement was made with the manufacturers in America. This fact proves that if a ring existed at all, it existed in America. I do not wish honorable members to lose their trains, and I therefore ask for leave to continue my remarks.

Mr Kingston

- We cannot do that.

Mr POYNTON

- If I had been upon the other side of the House it would have been quite convenient for the Ministry to do it. I challenge honorable members who are at present supporting the Government to vote for a number of the lines which I have indicated. When we come to deal with the items in detail, if we have to sit here till

the Christmas after next I shall fight those items line by line. It is all very well for the Government, with a majority sitting behind them like dumb sheep, to try and apply the gag as they did last night.

Mr Kingston

- It is idle to say that.

<page>6132</page>

Mr POYNTON

- I repeat that the Ministry attempted to apply the gag last night. They even tried to snap a division. When the items come up for discussion, the Ministry will find that there are a number of honorable members on their side of the House\* who will vote with the Opposition. A number of honorable members who sneer at the impositions placed on the poor, who seem to think that the Tariff is all right so long as revenue is obtained, and who have no consideration for the incidence of taxation, will then be found voting on this side of the House. This is the most iniquitous Tariff ever placed before the people of Australia. I am not speaking of it from a free-trade or protectionist point of view. But I do say that there ought to be some consideration shown in the adjustment of the incidence of taxation, so as to insure that the burden shall fall upon the backs of those who are least able to bear it.

Mr McCay

- Can the honorable member show us the way to do it?

Mr POYNTON

- The honorable and learned member has indicated one line upon which he is prepared to do it.

Mr McCay

- But we must have the money.

Mr POYNTON

- Does the honorable and learned member believe that a revenue of £9,000,000 is absolutely necessary ? I do not believe that it is. Under this Tariff it is proposed to hand back to some of the States more than they have hitherto been realizing under their own Tariffs, in conjunction with the Inter-State duties.

Mr McCay

- And some less.

Mr POYNTON

- Are we to penalize the whole of the people for the sake of these States ? Have they not other sources from which they can derive revenue? Are we, because Western Australia has shirked direct taxation, to penalize our people who have gone in for direct taxation? Take my own State, for instance, where we have a progressive land tax and an absentee tax.

Sir John Forrest

- You cannot afford to lose any revenue, anyhow.

Mr POYNTON

- What do we find that the Premier of that colony says, from the telegrams received to-day ? When he was asked yesterday to set a day apart for the discussion of this Tariff, he said he would not do that, but he advised those who asked him to see that public meetings were held everywhere to protest against the incidence of this taxation. That is the advice of the Premier of South Australia, and it will be carried out from one end of that State to the other. I say it is a most iniquitous way of raising revenue to tax the people because of their necessities, and that is what is proposed to be done under this Tariff in connexion with a great number of lines.

Mr McCay

- What is the alternative ?

Mr POYNTON

- The alternative is difficult to show now. Ministers should have considered the matter before they introduced the Tariff. The honorable and learned member knows how difficult it is to adjust the incidence of taxation when we are discussing Tariff proposals in detail. Does the honorable and learned member think it is a fair thing to put 20 per cent. on blankets, and 15 per cent. on silk ?

Mr Mauger

- Certainly. One is a protective duty, and the other is a revenue duty.

Mr POYNTON

- The honorable member only thinks of a few Victorians about Melbourne.

Mr McCay

- Does the honorable member know that the 15 per cent. duty on silk in Victoria was the result of violent exertion by free-traders?

<page>6133</page>

Mr POYNTON

- Is it not a source from which we should expect to get some revenue? Is it not a better source from which to get revenue than to get it from the backs of the poor, and out of the mouths of babes and sucklings? I do not intend to detain the House any longer to-night. I shall have opportunity later on of dealing with the Tariff in detail. I am not going to be bluffed out of it, though I may be bluffed out of it to-night. There are a number of lines I want to speak of. I want to speak, amongst other things, of the extravagance of the Ministry in their financial proposals. I want to know why they increased salaries that this House practically stopped, and why, by a subterfuge, they failed to carry out the directions of this House in the matter of paying allowances? Why have they since increased the salaries of the men to whom these allowances were paid? If their salaries were sufficient in June of this year, what has transpired since, other than the motion of the honorable member for Illawarra, to account for the increase in those salaries? The Ministry climbed down over that motion, and yet in these Estimates there are marked increases, and a number of them in connexion with men whose emoluments in the shape of allowances were stopped. Is this House going to allow Ministers to defeat its decision when it has distinctly stated that no allowances were to be given to these men? Ministers have in some cases increased these salaries by as much as £100 without consultation with this House. I should like to know, also, why the return I asked for in connexion with travelling expenses has not been laid upon the table? It would have been very convenient to have had it here at this time. I want to know a lot of things in connexion with it, but at this time of the night I shall not go into the matter. I shall have an opportunity later on, and I mention these matters now so that Ministers will be in a position to explain these items away if they can.

Debate (on motion by Mr. Thomson) adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

Hours of Sitting

Mr. KINGSTON (South Australia-  
Minister for Trade and Customs). - I move -  
That the House do now adjourn.

In doing so I ask honorable members to come prepared to sit a little late to-morrow. We hope to be able to finish the debate on Friday.

Mr SYDNEY SMITH

- I feel sure the honorable gentleman will be perfectly satisfied if we sit till this time of the night. If we sit from half-past two o'clock in the afternoon until half-past eleven at night, we shall have done a fair day's work.

Mr CONROY

- I should like to know whether it is the intention of the Government to make any explanation in regard to some of the duties imposed in connexion with various manufactures; because what the country will want to know is why they have singled out special men. Some Ministers should get up and explain that to the House.

Mr SPEAKER

- The honorable and learned member cannot upon this question discuss the motion, the debate upon which has been adjourned until to-morrow.

Mr CONROY

- I would say that if the Ministry persist in trying to force the debate through, when it has not been delayed by this side, they will destroy any good feeling there has been. There will be fight enough over this without starting it first here. I ask them accordingly to deal with us as we ought to be dealt with. I presume members on the Ministerial benches want to say something. I do not think it is unreasonable to ask us to sit until half-past eleven to-morrow night, but on this, the first occasion when a Tariff for Australia is being discussed, to push the matter through too soon will be trying the patience of the House in a way which will not lead to the advancement of business. I say that it will tend to destroy the fairly good feeling that has sprung up here amongst honorable members. I think the Minister for Trade and Customs ought not to

hold out a veiled threat in the way he has done, and I ask him to reconsider his statement now, and say whether, if we sit until the same hour to-morrow night, we ought not then to adjourn.

Mr KINGSTON

- The honorable and learned member has asked us to deal with him, referring I suppose, to members of the party to which he belongs, as wo ought to. That is our intention.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

<page>6134</page>

23:29:00

House adjourned at 11.29 p.m.