

budget which has met with general approval throughout the length and breadth of this Dominion, and has given fresh hope and heart to the people of our country.

We did not expect that my right hon. friend would become very enthusiastic over this budget. When we assembled at the beginning of the present session, the public had been led to believe that the country would again be confronted with a further increase of the public debt, with a deficit resulting from an excess of expenditures over receipts, with a contraction of commerce and trade, and possibly with an announcement of the need for increased taxation. The unfounded and irresponsible attacks made upon the administration in these particulars by the leader of the opposition and his detractions and misrepresentations in the course of his mournful pilgrimages through western and eastern Canada had, it must be admitted, given rise to doubt and created apprehension. I need not enumerate the circumstances which combined to make it difficult, if not impossible, for my colleagues and myself to attend to our many public duties and also find the time necessary to follow my right hon. friend everywhere in a refutation of these erroneous impressions. We knew that the facts were otherwise. We knew that as soon as parliament met the truth would become immediately apparent, and we were content to wait.

As hon. members well know, we had not to wait very long. The Speech from the Throne had no sooner been delivered than the public learned it had been deceived by the leader of the opposition with respect to the addition to the public debt; to deficits resulting from excess of expenditures over receipts; as to the condition of trade and the probability of increased taxation. They discovered that in each of these particulars the truth was the reverse—that the public debt for the first time in a decade has been diminished, not increased; that a surplus of receipts over expenditures would in all probability be announced; that trade, instead of having diminished, had vastly expanded and what was most gratifying of all, that taxation instead of being increased would be substantially reduced; all of which expectations have now been realized as disclosed in the financial statement of the Acting Minister of Finance.

In a word, my right hon. friend finds himself very much at sea, and is now endeavouring to restore the impressions which prior to the assembling of parliament he sought so assiduously to create. This afternoon he endeavoured to make it appear that as a

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

result of representations made in the last general election a sort of nemesis was overtaking the government, and he drew from the papers he had in hand a copy of the Farmer's Sun from which he read an editorial setting forth, according to his statement, the view that

there were divisions in the ranks of the Liberal party, and that this was a punishment for its sins. In this connection let me read to the House an editorial from the Farmer's Sun of April 12, 1924. My right hon. friend did not read this editorial. He has a way of picking and choosing here and there whatever suits his purpose; he does not try to place all the facts before the House, but prefers to give a partisan, partial statement of a kind that will the better serve his ends. In brief, he carefully avoids anything that will bring out the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. As I say, this is characteristic of my right hon. friend's method. It will be all the more apparent to hon. members on listening to the following editorial from the Sun, which I think he should have read when he presumed to draw deductions from the editorial which he presented a few minutes ago. This is an editorial which appeared in the Farmer's Sun of April 12, 1924:

A Commendable Budget

The full measure of the benefit to be conferred upon the primary industries of this country by the tariff and tax reduction proposals submitted to the House of Commons by Hon. J. A. Robb on Thursday cannot be estimated until they are considered in detail, but it is apparent, even upon a cursory examination, that Premier King and his colleagues have made a sincere effort to carry out, within practicable limits, some of the pledges given to the electorate by the Liberal party in 1919. It is equally apparent that Mr. King has merited the support which Mr. Robert Forke, on behalf of the Progressive group, intimated, at the opening of the session, would be given to the government, providing it brought forward progressive measures. Ever since the Speech from the Throne announced the intention of the government to lift some of the burden upon the instruments of production, Premier King has had to withstand tremendous pressure, not only from interests likely to be affected by tariff reductions, but from within his own party. This pressure, it was feared, would cause the government to whittle down its tariff relief proposals. In fact, so general did the impression become that the government's proposals would be of little importance, that *The Montreal Gazette* a day or two ago interpreted a statement of the Minister of Finance as an assurance that relief would be given by tax reductions rather than tariff changes.

Mr. King seems to have yielded little to protectionist urging, and the new budget will certainly be fought to the bitter end by Hon. Arthur Meighen and his colleagues. There are protectionist Liberals who will leave the ranks and join him, but these desertions will not be serious enough to hinder the adoption of the proposals.

Nothing could be truer, Mr. Speaker, than that the proposals will be adopted.

Mr. MEIGHEN: My right hon. friend believes in always reading everything. I