

don (Mr. Forke) think that his colleague the Minister of Trade and Commerce is one of these robber barons we have heard pictured so often in this House? Can my hon. friend from Brandon honestly and consistently sit in that cabinet council and permit a manufacturer in this country to have a duty of 30 per cent on his production? I should like to hear the opinion of my hon. friend from Rosetown (Mr. Evans) on this subject. Between sessions of parliament I hear the word protection, protection, protection. It is ringing in my ears continually, and it always has a strong resemblance to the voice of the hon. member for Rosetown attached to it. What does that hon. member think of the present situation? His former leader is sitting now in the seats of the mighty, side by side with one of the outstanding protectionists of this country. All I can say to my hon. friend the Minister of Trade and Commerce is that I agree that his industry is properly protected. I only ask him to be generous enough and kind enough to extend similar protection to other industries I could name in this country.

Mr. MALCOLM: Will the hon. member give an illustration to show where the protection on furniture is higher than the protection on woollen goods?

Mr. GUTHRIE: I did not say the protection on furniture was too high. I do not wish to be misunderstood. I said if it was not high enough I would make it higher. I say give to the woollen man the same 30 per cent.

Mr. MALCOLM: Let me say—

Mr. GUTHRIE: I respectfully ask the minister not to interrupt me. I only ask him to be as generous and as fair to other industries as the government has been to him. Furniture manufacture is one of the special lines which should succeed in Canada. We have here the raw material in very large quantities. Canada is the cheapest country in the world, perhaps, in respect to such raw material, but it has been considered, not by this government alone but by its predecessors, by the Laurier-Fielding government, that 30 per cent was reasonable protection in regard to furniture, and formerly it was so considered in regard to woollens by the government of this country. They maintained a duty upon woollens at 30 per cent net. Will my hon. friend the Minister of Trade and Commerce now be just as fair to the textile men, the woollen men, the cotton men and the linen men, as the government has always been to his particular business?

Mr. MALCOLM: There is no change.

Mr. GUTHRIE: No change in the furniture tariff—no, it has been consistently maintained, and one reason it has been maintained in recent years is that the furniture manufacturers have had a loyal supporter on the government side. Now I do not want to be interrupted. I want to express my view. I am sorry that a habit of interrupting has grown up in this chamber which is not at all times creditable to it. Interruption has become almost a parliamentary practice in recent years. I can remember when it was never permitted in this House. I do not wish to be discourteous to my hon. friend in any way, but I do not want to be disconcerted in my remarks.

I wish to refer to another matter in regard to the trade question, and I am glad the Minister of Finance (Mr. Robb) is in his seat. If there is a hindrance in Canada to-day to the increase of legitimate trade in this country, in addition to the hindrance that attaches to the operation of a mistaken fiscal policy, if there is a burden on Canadian trade to-day which is bearing more heavily than any other, it is the sales tax, and I want the Minister of Finance to understand that we on this side of the House are willing to co-operate with him and to assist him in every way in our power to remove from industry in this country this heavy imposition for which the King government is very largely responsible. As a war measure the Conservative government imposed a sales tax of three per cent in the aggregate—one and a half per cent on the jobber and one and a half on the manufacturer. That was for war purposes. It was a heavy tax, and we thought it was a maximum. When Mr. Fielding became Finance Minister he raised the tax to four and a half per cent, and the next year he raised it to six per cent. Then he found that the tax was so high that it was actually stopping business in the country, and he reduced it to five per cent, and there it stands to-day. The business men throughout Canada say that, next to an insufficient tariff, the greatest imposition and the worst injustice from which they suffer is this five per cent sales tax which has been imposed upon them by the King government. The figures in the public accounts furnished to this House a day or two ago, for the year ending March 31, 1926, disclose that in the last year of the Meighen government, under the operation of the sales tax, an amount of \$73,000,000 was collected from the people, while for the year ending March 31 last this tax amounted to \$98,000,000.