

hold divergent interests together by giving them special privileges. Free potatoes, so as to enable our New Brunswick growers to get into United States markets are offered with kindly graciousness to the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Carvell), while taxed apples are handed with kindly graciousness to the Secretary of State, (Mr. Burrell) The food of the poor boy, the luxury of the workingman, remains taxed. Why was that done? Because British Columbia, which grows apples, sent six, or eight or ten members—I forget the exact number—to support this Government. But with all respect to those interested in industry, is not this tax on the school boy's apple and the simple luxury of the poor man, rather a mean sort of tax? I think it is.

This is a protectionist Budget, with essentially Tory trimmings in the sense of special legislation for special interests. Last Sunday I was in church, and heard a very interesting sermon. The minister gave an interesting illustration from bird life. He said that a bobolink, which was accustomed to fly at liberty in the free air of heaven, was captured and put into a cage with canaries, with the result that it forgot how to sing like a bobolink and learned how to sing like a canary. Now into the gilded cage of the Union Government have walked, not captive, but have walked, certain politicians or statesmen who called themselves Liberal, and this Budget shows that they have lost the accents of Liberalism and have learned to sing like canaries. Only one escaped from the cage, the hon. member for Marquette (Mr. Crerar). He is a free man once more; he has not learnt to sing like a canary. I think as I watch the expressions of some of the ministers, that when they think of the member for Marquette, the line of the poet comes back to them:

Bird of the wilderness, blithesome and cumberless,
Oh, to abide in the desert with thee.

Now we come to another feature of the Budget which merits, I am sorry to say, the sternest reprobation of any one who is interested in the welfare of this country and in proper administration. I refer to the bargain made by the Minister of Finance with the railways. The Minister of Finance has taken the duty off bituminous coal. Now if this duty was to come off, it should have come off in the public interest. But how has the minister taken it off? He has gone to the railways and said: "Freight rates on ploughs and other agricultural implements from points

around Toronto to the West are very high. We want to please the West, we desperately want to please them, and we also desperately want to please our protectionist friends in Ontario. There is the very deuce to pay in trying to reconcile these two opposing interests. What will you do, kind manager of a railway? If you will give cheaper rates to Western points from Toronto and other Ontario cities we will reduce the duty on your coal." That is a bargain so improper that it verges upon the immoral. That is not the way the affairs of this country should be administered. It is not the first time this Government had done that sort of thing. We remember that when there was trouble between newspaper proprietors and the paper men over newspaper the Government, in order to help one special interest in the country, forced another special interest to give that other interest paper at lower than the commercial rate, for some time at least. And now today, by a bribe, they force the railroads to give lower than the commercial rates on agricultural implements from Ontario to Western points. Does that arrangement apply to Eastern points? No, the Eastern Township farmer, whom I have the honour to represent in this House, will pay just as high freight rates as ever if he should buy a plough or agricultural machinery from Ontario. Is that fair? Is that right? Is it consonant with British traditions and with the Canadian constitution? Is it consonant with the slogan of fair play for all, special privileges to none? I do not think it is.

The next proposal which the minister makes is this: He says we must postpone the revision of the tariff because this is a time of unrest and difficulty. We therefore should not start revising it until the fall and then, of course, whatever change there may be, up or down, will be reflected in the legislation of the year 1920. What the minister proposes to do is precisely calculated to keep up the unrest. The manufacturers of this country wish to know where they are, whether they are to have the same tariff, a lower tariff, or a higher tariff. Nothing is worse for any industry than uncertainty. I believe that the manufacturing interests of this country would prefer a low tariff if they knew it was going to be a low tariff, rather than go on in this condition of uncertainty.

The minister says that the concessions which he has made will mean a loss of \$17,000,000 in revenue. How is that loss to be arrived at? Many of the articles on which the 7½ per cent tax was placed reached a

[Mr. McMaster.]