

THE BUDGET

CONTINUATION OF DEBATE ON THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed from Wednesday, May 5, the debate on the motion of Hon. J. A. Robb (Minister of Finance) that the Speaker do now leave the chair for the House to go into committee of Ways and Means, and the proposed amendment thereto of Hon. R. J. Manion.

Mr. A. D. CHAPLIN (Kent, Ont.): When the House adjourned yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I was dealing with the sugar beet industry of western Ontario. I would like now to refer to what the sugar beet industry has done for immigration. During the past sugar beet season 3,000 Hollanders and Belgians worked in the beet fields of the county of Kent, and when not employed in those fields, some of these men work in the tobacco fields and also do mixed farming, thus very materially assisting production. Four hundred Hollanders and Belgians are now located on their own farms. These men had to be assisted into Canada by the sugar beet company a few years ago, and arrived with no money at all. They are very thrifty and have their own farms, well cultivated and in splendid condition, and are making the very best of Canadian citizens.

With regard to the Petrolia plant, construction was discontinued after several hundred thousand dollars had been spent by the farmers, due to the action of the government in placing an excise tax on beet sugar in 1922, and in cancelling this tax in 1923, substituting for it a reduction in protection twice the amount of the tax. This gave the cane sugar refineries a little better protection than they had previously enjoyed, at the same time reducing the protection to beet growers by 50 cents per ton. I am not holding any brief for the sugar company, but they have been doing a good work in bringing immigrants to this country, and that industry has been responsible for placing these 400 Hollanders and Belgians on the land.

While on the question of protection I would like to make a reference to the woollen industry of Canada. As a result of the action of this government a great number of our woollen mills were closed practically over night, which leads us to wonder what business is safe. And what did the reduction in woollen duties mean? In the mill which was closed in Chatham it meant less than 24 cents a yard on suitings and overcoatings, or less than \$1 on a completed overcoat. I

believe the same thing would apply to other mills now closed, and for that one dollar no one received any benefit; suits and overcoats cost as much now as they formerly did, and thousands of men have been thrown out of employment. That may not seem quite correct; such a statement may require a little explanation. I would like to draw attention to the experience of the United States in connection with the woollen industry. Mr. Fordney, of the famous Fordney tariff—the man who put a 42 cent duty against our wheat entering the United States—saw that their woollen manufacturers were in danger as a result of the importation of foreign woollens. He said, "We have the highest standard of living in the world, and we are not going to have it lowered by allowing cheap labour products to come into this country." So Mr. Fordney raised the duty to 100 per cent, and the United States mills are busy to-day.

Now for the explanation I promised. I said that thousands of employees of woollen mills were thrown out of employment. I should have said that they are out of employment in Canada. Many of these men have moved to the United States where they have secured jobs in factories which are sufficiently protected and are running, so they have merely changed their place of employment. It may be argued that there are some woollen mills running in Canada. Some may be running in the hope that a Conservative government may soon be returned to power. Others are running, but it is a safe bet that they are running for cover, and not for profit.

I have heard about the Simcoe mill as one which is running, but I would like to tell this House that the manager of that mill recently passed away. The business of running a woollen mill in this country to-day is enough to kill the most stout-hearted manufacturer. During the late election campaign the Hon. G. N. Gordon, who ran into a Peck of trouble in the late election, asked one of the large woollen manufacturers not to put out any woollen election propaganda, saying "We will fix you all right." This promise was entirely unnecessary, for his government had already fixed the woollen industries, but, unfortunately, it was not "all right"—it was "all wrong." This same gentleman was slated as Minister of Immigration in the new cabinet. I was greatly surprised one day to read the Prime Minister's speeches out in the prairie provinces pleading for Liberal supporters instead of Progressive members. He also stated he would like to have his Immigration minister from that part of Canada. I could