

hon. gentlemen during eighteen years, because any changes in the tariff are against the interests of the farmers and against the poor man.

As soon as he saw it he wrote a note to the Premier asking an interview in reference to it.

He repeats this important interview.

This was granted, and he told Mr. Laurier that they had not left their supporters in the west a single argument with which to meet the people. Against this it was held that the general reduction of about ten per cent was a marked improvement, and it was shown as an argument by the manufacturers of machinery that they had been reduced at one fell swoop from 35 to 20 per cent.

But who reduced it from 35 per cent to 20? Not this Government, not the present Minister of Finance; but the Conservative Government and Mr. Foster.

He had been put off from time to time.

Now, this is what I thought would be interesting to the Minister of Finance:

After thinking a good deal over the situation he (Mr. Douglas) decided to ask for a hearing respecting the valuation of implements imported from the United States. He had been put off from time to time, but finally having caught Mr. Fielding in the lobby he asked him when he could be heard. Mr. Fielding said, in a good-humoured way, "O, Mr. Douglas, I will hear you next August." To this he (Mr. Douglas) replied, "You shall hear me within twenty-four hours," when Mr. Fielding replied, "I will hear you in twenty minutes."

But he did not succeed in getting the duty reduced. Sir, we have in Grenfell, N.W.T., a man of great ability; a man well known to my hon. friend (Mr. Douglas); a man who is a farmer himself; a man who has founded, I believe, most of the Patron lodges in western Assiniboia, Mr. Charles Nichol. This is the way Mr. Charles Nichol comments on what was done:

Speaking of the duty on agricultural implements, which was one of the points of the old tariff most strongly and persistently attacked by the Liberals—

I ask the attention of the House to this:

—and by Mr. Douglas himself, we believe, previous to the general elections, he said the Massey-Harris Company demanded that the duty be raised from 20 to 25 per cent, and that they had reason and logic on their side, and that in asking that implements be placed on the free list the farmer was trying to shift at least a fair share of the public burdens to other shoulders.

In the course of an article characterized by principles of sound political economy, Mr. Nichol refutes this paltry argument of the hon. member for East Assiniboia (Mr. Douglas), and he thus concludes:

We are told that the Massey-Harris Company have a greater sale for their implements in other countries, such as Great Britain, Australia, &c., than any of their competitors. Assuming that to be correct, and that they do not sell in those

markets without a fair profit, on what grounds of "reason and logic," as Mr. Douglas puts it, can a 20 or 25 per cent duty be defended here? We venture to say neither Mr. Douglas or the Government saw reason or logic in it previous to the last general election. And we venture still further to say that the shallow fallacies of either Mr. Douglas or the Government, or other interested parties, will not impose upon the intelligent electors in the North-west for the time to come.

That, Sir, was written by a man who before he was a Patron was a strong, vigorous Reformer, and if he is anything but a Patron to-day, he is yet a strong, vigorous Reformer. That is the way this gentleman writes in a western town, taking the language of the hon. member for East Assiniboia (Mr. Douglas); taking the language of the hon. member for Winnipeg (Mr. Jameson), and Lisgar (Mr. Richardson), when brought before their constituents in which they say they were disappointed in the tariff. I say, Sir, that I have established beyond cavil that good faith on the part of the present Government would necessitate their taking the steps that I mention in that motion.

Now I am going to show that even the imps and familiars of the Government thought they would take another course. And what must have been the horror in the bosom of one of these who, looking down at the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) last night, heard him when he told us that the debt had been increased which they promised to reduce, and that the expenditure had gone up which they promised to reduce; yes, Sir, by millions. Last night the Minister of Finance told us that both the national debt and our annual expenditure had increased, and he was cheered by his supporters for it. He showed us the country was prospering, by giving us what we could have had from the Trade and Navigation Returns, but he did not explain to us why the debt had increased.

THE MINISTER OF MARINE AND FISHERIES (Sir Louis Davies). Order.

Mr. DAVIN. I won't be out of order; I will retire at once; I see my hon. friend has got a little paler and I will not be the cause of making another Minister sick. Two of them are ill now, and I certainly do not want to make a third ill. I am glad to know at any rate that my right hon. friend the Prime Minister will soon be convalescent, and in fact I have heard—although I have always understood that my right hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) was a man of great abstemiousness—I have heard that what he is suffering from is partaking too much of pastry; he has had too much Tarte.

Now, Sir, a pamphlet was published by a gentleman who sits in that Press Gallery and has sat in it for many years. He is a gentleman named Magurn, and he published a pamphlet on the tariff revision in the