

higher figure than they are at the present time. The amendment also fails to get after those persons that my hon. friend from Red Deer and his present leader, and certain other hon. gentlemen, are fond of talking about—I refer to the manufacturers. The amendment leaves them entirely alone. It refers to the farmers alone. Why, Sir, I could quote to you the statement made in this House by the hon. member for Red Deer in regard to reciprocity as a means of tariff reform. What did he say? These were his words:

When one thinks of the fifteen-year record of the Liberals in power, which practically amounted to the tariff in full, and not proposed to be touched in any way worthy of the name in the reciprocity agreement, what patience they had in power compared with their eagerness and impetuosity in Opposition.

I venture the assertion that there is not an hon. member who has displayed either the virtue or the fault to a greater degree than the hon. member for Red Deer. In 1909, in 1910, and again in 1911, he gave a very complacent support to a tariff, which he was pleased to call at that time a revenue tariff—a tariff which is very much higher than the present tariff. It does seem to me that he is very impetuous and very determined in Opposition while sitting on that side of the House and his attitude is very different indeed from what it was when he sat as a supporter of the Liberal Government, which all through its regime maintained the tariff at a much higher rate than the present tariff.

I could quote a great many other statements made in this House by the hon. member. The thing that strikes me as so absolutely unfair is the suggestion to remove the protective tariff from the things which the farmer produces and leave alone the things which the farmer has to buy. In my travels throughout the country I have not found a single farmer, whether Grit or Tory, who would say that that in his estimation is a fair proposition. But that is the proposition of the hon. member for Shelburne and Queen's. I could quote a statement by Sir Wilfrid Laurier to the effect that the Liberal party had not any intention of going after the manufacturers, but to remove entirely the duty on natural products. It seems to me a very unfair and unreasonable proposition, and I shall take very great pleasure in recording my vote against him.

Mr. A. R. McMASTER (Brome): Mr. Speaker, I wish first of all to address my [Mr. Edwards.]

remarks to the argument made by the hon. member for Frontenac (Mr. Edwards), that if hon. members voted in favour of the resolution proposed by the hon. member for Shelburne and Queen's (Mr. Fielding), they will be raising the tariff on certain articles instead of lowering or allowing it to remain where it is. Let me place this proposition before you, Mr. Speaker, that the tariff schedules found in the arrangement made by the hon. member for Shelburne and Queen's and the late Hon. Mr. Paterson, on behalf of the Dominion Government, and by Mr. Philander C. Knox, on behalf of the American Government, merely established a maximum rate of duties, and that under the agreement it was left open to either party at their desire or will to reduce the duties below those schedules. That is stated in so many words in the American statute embodying and accepting this agreement; and, indeed, the agreement itself so provides. I will quote from the letter directed to Mr. P. C. Knox, Secretary of State of the United States, by the hon. member for Shelburne and Queen's and the late Hon. Mr. Paterson under date of January 21, 1911:

Nevertheless, it is distinctly understood that we do not attempt to bind for the future the action of the United States Congress or the Parliament of Canada, but that each of these authorities shall be absolutely free to make any change of tariff policy or of any other matter covered by the present arrangement that may be deemed expedient. We look for the continuance of the arrangement, not because either party is bound to it, but because of our conviction that the more liberal trade policy thus to be established will be viewed by the people of the United States and Canada as one which will strengthen the friendly relations now happily prevailing and promote the commercial interests of both countries.

Mr. EDWARDS: Where does my hon. friend find the word "maximum" in that?

Mr. McMASTER: The word is not found there. But we must remember the circumstances of the case. The American nation offered to us at that time unrestricted reciprocity. We declined the offer, but we made this agreement. In the United States statute there is found these express terms:

Provided that the duties above enumerated shall take effect whenever the President of the United States shall have satisfactory evidence and shall make proclamation that on the articles hereinafter enumerated, the growth, product, or manufacture of the United States or any of its possessions (except the Philippine Islands and the Islands of Guam and Tutuila) when imported therefrom into the Dominion of Canada, duties not in excess—