

WHEN LAURIER RAISED THE PREFERENCE.

Let us see what is the difference made by them between the British preference in the year 1900 and the British preference in 1907. The hon. member for Frontenac (Mr. Edwards) put a statement as to this upon Hansard, and I have it here; and I will ask the right hon. the leader of the Opposition one or two questions concerning it. I want to test him and to find out whether he is absolutely—I am not permitted to use the word “sincere”—but whether he is really in earnest in asking why we raised the British preference. I ask my right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition, and I ask my hon. friend from Red Deer (Mr. Michael Clark) who is to follow me in this debate, to give attention to what I say now. I ask my right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition why did he, as shown by the hon. member for Frontenac (Mr. Edwards), raise the British preference on dry white lead from 3 1-3 per cent to 20 per cent; why did he raise the British preference upon white lead in oil from 16 2-3 per cent to 30 per cent, or just about double, and why, above all, and to this I direct the particular attention of the hon. member for Red Deer, did he raise the British preferential rate on wool cloth from 23 1-3 per cent to 30 per cent; why did he increase the British preference on wool clothing from 23 1-3 per cent to 30 per cent; why did he increase the British preference on silk clothing from 23 1-3 per cent to 30 per cent; why did he raise the British preference on paints from 16 2-3 per cent to 20 per cent; on varnishes from 13 1-3 cents per gallon and 13 1-3 per cent ad valorem to 20 cents per gallon and 15 cents ad valorem?

Did my right hon. friend do that for the purpose of adopting a protectionist policy or did he do it because he needed revenue?

There is no escape from the dilemma I present to my right hon. friend. He must say, if he answers at all, that he did it to give greater protection to Canadian industries, or he must say on the other hand, that he did it to get revenue, and there is no other possible answer open to him. And if the right hon. gentleman admits he did it on the ground of protection, then what does all this talk against protection mean from hon. gentlemen opposite, and what has my hon. friend from Red Deer to say to that? And if my right hon. friend admits that he did it not for protection but to raise revenue in order to meet the enormous increase in the expenditure of this country during the year in which this change in the British preferential tariff was made, then I say to him, if he had to do it then to get revenue, with what face can he say now—in presence of the greatest war in history, with finances and trade collapsed, and with our imports and borrowings cut off—you should not for the purpose of raising additional taxation, have increased the rate of British preference. We have not decreased the British preference. We have increased the British preference in the sense that it is more advantageous to the British manufacturer to-day than it was when I brought down my Budget.

My hon. friend from Halifax (Mr. A. K. Maclean) declares that additional taxation is unnecessary, and he says: establish an equilibrium between your income and your outgo. I estimated that for the coming year \$180,000,000 was necessary and I said that on the basis on which we then were of customs and excise duty, our revenue would be \$120,000,000.

Mr. PUGSLEY: How much of that is on capital account?