

the sloppiness of the protectionist argument. Why, in the mother country the friends of my hon. friends opposite have for seven years been telling the people that one of the main uses of a tariff is to bargain with other countries. That is the main item in the protectionist programme of Great Britain. It is the main contention of every man advocating a protectionist fiscal policy. And, yet, when it suits their purpose, my hon. friends come forward and says that this is the main use of a tariff, but how dare these two ordinary gentlemen put a tariff to that particular use?

I am in agreement with another position of these hon. gentlemen. I concede that history will probably record that the reciprocity arrangement, which I trust will soon go into effect, took its origin in the economic necessities of the United States people and the political necessities of the Republican party. The hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) in taking up that position, makes a lone free trader still more comfortable, because he says that it arose from these conditions and we need only have waited for it. What is that but a contention that protection is breaking down in the United States? Does he want Canada to embark upon a foolish policy which the United States people now feel they have to run away from? My hon. friend from North Toronto is coming to see what Mr. Lloyd-George sees very clearly in England, for he stated the other day—truthfully, as I think—that the ice of protection is cracking all over the world.

Well, now, what is it that the government have done against which such complaints are formulated? As my hon. friend from Richmond, N.S. (Mr. Kyte) pointed out in his very able speech, they have remitted over \$2,000,000 of taxation. And hon. gentlemen opposite would like to contend that this was in answer to their criticism or at any rate in accordance with their expressed wishes. Well, it is not a very horrible thing to remit two millions of taxation. Every government that I have ever lived under sought, and received, gratitude from a reasonable population for giving any remission whatsoever in taxation. But I do not know that I have any right to include the hon. member from North Toronto in any reasonable population. This argument of my hon. friend from Richmond is capable of extension. These hon. gentlemen opposite have not only been telling the government, ever since I came to this House, that the government have broken their pledges to reduce taxation, but they have also said: 'You promised to find us new markets, and you have not done it.' Now the government find new markets, and these hon. gentlemen say: 'How dare you do it?'

Mr. CLARK (Red Deer).

Well, what can you do with a front bench of an opposition like that? The hon. gentleman also says: 'The government have taken steps to increase the trade of the country.' How horrible! I wish hon. gentlemen opposite would recall what John Bright said and apply it to economics, to trade. He said that he failed to find any different code of morality for a nation than that which would apply to a man. Well, I cannot find a different code of economic laws, or trade laws, for a nation than I do for a man. When did my hon. friend from St. Antoine (Mr. Ames) fail to develop any opportunity that presented itself of expanding his business? Well, Canada is only an aggregation of human beings something like my hon. friend from St. Antoine, and the government of Canada has as plain a duty in regard to extending the trade of Canada as it has in looking after the taxation of Canada and in finding new markets. They have remitted taxation; they have found new markets; they have extended our trade. And hon. gentlemen opposite say: 'How dare you do it?—you are breaking up the constitution!'

It is extremely refreshing to me to find my hon. friend the leader of the opposition (Mr. Borden, Halifax) and the hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) taking up these well-worn free trade positions; but I must say that their discussion of them does not impress me very strongly with their logic or with the consistency of their political opinions. But, perhaps, they are unconscious free traders.

Now, I want to say a few words on the economic outcome of this policy as it appeals to me. I notice that the leader of the opposition and the hon. member for North Toronto were very non-committal on this point, in fact the leader of the opposition accomplished the extraordinary feat in his speech in the first night of the debate of taking up an hour and twenty minutes on a reciprocity agreement and discussing everything but reciprocity. This non-committal attitude, so far as the hon. member for North Toronto is concerned, is chronic with him in such circumstances, for I find that in 1897, he spoke of the scope of the tariff which was being introduced at that time by my hon. friend the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fielding) and its effect on the interests of the country, and he had to confess candidly that he had not been able to make up his mind yet on these particulars. That is just why the proper place for him was opposition; and that is just why the proper people were in control of the government. Those in control of the government were able to frame a fiscal policy for the good of the country, and they could see well what was to come out of that policy, as all