

TAXATION.

It is charged by opponents of the Government that Liberals undertook to reduce taxation, and instead of doing so have actually increased it. This is a charge which goes right to the bottom of the fiscal policy of the Government, and if it could be established would certainly weaken the Liberal cause before the people. Happily, however, it is a matter which will bear the closest analysis, and the more it is discussed before intelligent and fair-minded electors, the stronger and more convincing becomes the Liberal position. It is only necessary to have the facts clearly in hand, and to fully and candidly present them.

Taxation in Canada means customs duties. There are other forms of taxation, but they do not enter into the controversy between parties. In the last analysis the question at issue turns upon whether or not the tariff has been lowered or raised. Nothing is easier to establish before the people than that the tariff has been lowered, and that the rate of taxation has been decreased.

Here are the facts :—

Imports for consumption in 1896, =	\$110,587,480
Duty collected in 1896,	20,219,037 = 18.28 per cent.
Imports for consumption in 1900, =	\$183,209,173
Duty collected in 1900,	28,866,986 = 15.76 per cent.
Reduction, 2.52 per cent.

A reduction of 2.52 per cent. in the rate is equivalent to a reduction of 14 per cent. of the rate, and to that extent the present Government has lowered the burden of taxation upon the people. No juggling of figures can change that fact, which is the essence of the whole matter.

Opponents of the Government, however, never under any circumstances allude to the *rate* of taxation. They always speak of *volume*. They take advantage of the very large increase in the business of the country since 1896 to dwell upon the *amount* of money collected. They say: "The Liberals undertook to reduce taxation, and yet in 1900 they collected \$7,500,000 more from the people than in 1896. They have broken their pledge."