

cognizing that as a protectionist Government it had a duty to perform to the farmers to protect them as well as the manufacturers, and that the farmers of the west and the farmers all over the country occupy a special position. Although it is economically unsound, there is a strong colour of reason for what the farmers declare—although as I have said it is not scientifically correct—that agricultural implements are their raw material; and recognizing this, the hon. member for York, N.B., when Finance Minister in 1894, reduced the duty on agricultural implements by 15 per cent. In Room No. 16 the agent of the Massey-Harris Company stated at a time when iron had \$10 per ton duty on it as compared with \$7 per ton now, that if the duty on agricultural implements was reduced as low as 15 per cent and no lower, the Massey-Harris Company and other manufacturers could do well. But now, at one fell swoop, to use the sympathetic language of the hon. member for East Assiniboia, this reduction to which I have referred was made as low as 20 per cent. As a farmer, the Minister of Agriculture said:

Because the United States Congress had made a standing offer of reciprocity in implements, and it was the duty of the Canadian Government to take advantage of that offer. Last year the farmers of western Canada imported \$120,000 worth of American implements, on which they paid \$40,000 duty. Referring to the Massey-Harris combination, he claimed that the fact that these people spoke of going to the States to fight the Yankees in their own market showed that Canadian manufacturers were able to get along without protection. Canadians were able to hold their own with the Yankees in any walk of life. If Massey-Harris got protection, why should not the farmers?

As the Minister of Agriculture has just come in, I beg to inform him that I have been quoting from a speech delivered by him at Moosomin in October, 1894. The farmers flocked to hear and see these great Liberals, and what impression do you think, Mr. Speaker, was made on the farmers who heard them? Sir, the impression was made that if the Liberals got into power the duty would be taken off these farming implements. But, Sir, the Liberals are not ready to take up their note of hand; they allowed their bills to be dishonoured in the bank of public opinion, and is it to be tolerated for a minute that the indignation of the disappointed farmers of Canada shall not get expression in this House?

Mr. BENNETT. Where are the Northwest members to-day?

Mr. DAVIN. I do not see many of them. My hon. friend from Saskatchewan (Mr. Davis) and my hon. friend from Lisgar (Mr. Richardson) are here, but the hon. member for East Assiniboia (Mr. Douglas) is not here, and it is a pity, because I am going to quote some eloquent words

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from that hon. member. Now, a campaign sheet was issued by the Liberal party, and in that campaign sheet for the election of 1896 they held up as one of the enormities of the existing tariff the duty of 20 per cent which was imposed on farming implements, mowing machines, &c. But, Sir, the duty on these farm implements under a Liberal Government to-day is still 20 per cent. I want to call attention to the title page of this election pamphlet, because it is very instructive. It was what Plato would call an esoteric document. It was only intended for the perusal of the political elect and those to whom they would think fit to show it. This is the title:

Dominion of Canada. Principles, Policy and Platform of the Liberal Party

And it says:

This pamphlet is not for general distribution.
(Signed) ALEX. SMITH,
Sec. of the Lib. Association.

And here is what this pamphlet set forth:

A reduction of the tariff as far as the interests of the revenue would permit, with a complete elimination of every feature of the tariff of a distinctive protective character.

And then we have the Conservative party held up to opprobrium because of the duty on farm implements was 20 per cent. Let me ask what impression was made on the farmers by such a pamphlet as that? Do the farmers of this country deserve consideration at the hands of the Government? You must remember that the farmer—I do not use this as the language of a demagogue—the farmer is the most useful man in the community. He begins everything; he lays the foundation of all our wealth; and he works under specially hard conditions frequently, because owing to the peculiarity of his business, if he has to borrow money he has to borrow it at a high rate of interest, and it is well known that the return for the farmer is very small compared with the return to the manufacturer and the business man. I do not see my hon. friend from Leeds and Grenville (Mr. Frost) here, but I am told that he is making in his business 34 per cent profit, and I am told that Massey-Harris & Co. make 34 per cent.

Mr. DAVIS (Saskatchewan). It is a wonder you did not find that out long ago when you were supporting the National Policy.

Mr. DAVIN. I found it as early as 1892 and 1893, and in the latter year I moved in this House to lower the duties, and it was in consequence of my action that the revision of the tariff took place in 1894.

Mr. DAVIS (Saskatchewan). That is the time you voted against your own motion.

Mr. DAVIN. No, it was not. I thought that poor joke of yours was knocked to pieces long ago. My hon. friend (Mr. Davis)