

million barrels of cement on hand and sufficient mill capacity to satisfy any possible demand. Had the Government forced the transportation companies to do their duty and carry the necessities of the country at a reasonable rate, there would be no complaint of a shortage in the West or clamour for a reduction of the duty. Whatever may have been your motive in making the order I can assure you that the public will regard the act as an election dodge pure and simple.

It was the hope of the Conservative party that in you they had found a man who was more than a politician, a man who was a statesman, one upon whose firmness they could rely for steadfastness of policy. Lacking such a man at its head, any Cabinet becomes a nest of intriguing politicians.

This action of yours will do more to split Canada at Winnipeg than Sir Wilfrid Laurier did in his whole life, and to advertise and make known the special and divergent interests of East and West. I have travelled all through the West several times, and I firmly believe that eventually the Conservative party has no hope of support from that quarter. Why, therefore, alienate your certain support from the East, and particularly Ontario?

I conclude only by saying that I am much poorer in purse by relying upon your letter upon this subject, as it would be read by any reasonable man, but poorer far in heart and mind when I see the sacrifice to which politicians are driven.

Yours faithfully,

To that letter—

An hon. MEMBER: Name.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: The name is not given but we shall have it bye and bye when the papers are brought before the House. To that letter there was an answer as follows:

Ottawa, June 13, 1912.

Dear Sir,—In the absence of the Right Honourable the Prime Minister your letter of the 10th instant with reference to the remission of the duty upon cement has been brought to my attention, and I regret very much that under an entire misconception of facts you should criticise so strongly the action of the Government in this matter. The Prime Minister's statement to you under date of May 13th was absolutely correct because at that date the matter of the cement tariff had not been in any way under consideration by the Government. During the past two weeks, however, an extremely serious situation has developed in Canada, and particularly in the West, due to shortage of cement supply, with an accompanying suspension of buildings, paving and construction work in many localities. From careful inquiries made, it became apparent to the Government that the situation should be remedied at once and a fifty per cent remission of duty was decided upon until October 31st. I am satisfied not only that the action of the Government will meet with the approval of the public generally, but that the fears you express as to its consequence will be found to be not well grounded. The present tariff affords protection of at least

sixty per cent to the cement manufacturers, and even with the cut they still have thirty per cent, which is higher than the average rate upon dutiable goods entering Canada. I desire to entirely repudiate your suggestion that the reduction was in any way influenced by political considerations, and feel confident that upon reflection you will agree that the action of the Government was a proper one in the public interest.

Yours very truly,

There is one sentence in this letter to which I will call the attention of my hon. friend the Minister of Finance (Mr. White):

The Prime Minister's statement to you under date of May 13th was absolutely correct because at that date the matter of the cement tariff had not been in any way under consideration by the Government.

This implies that long previous to the 13th of May applications had been made to the Government for the reduction of the duty. The fact is that last session it was rumoured in the corridors of this House that the cement duties were abnormal and that the matter had been called to the attention of the Government. But they did not take it into consideration at that time. I wish to suggest to my hon. friend that the time to have taken that matter into consideration was while Parliament was sitting, and that their policy should have been presented to the House for adoption here. It is stated here that the matter was not taken up until after the 13th of May, but the conditions after that date were not changed from what they had been six months before—nor for that matter, were they different from what they are to-day. And, if the duty on cement was 60 per cent, and if reasons were given after the 13th of May why that duty should be cut in two, there must have been just as good reasons why that course should have been taken before that time. The well-wishers of the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Borden) of whom I claim to be one, believed that no consideration of political expediency would move him in dealing with a question of the tariff, but that the only reasons which would ever appeal to him for the revision of the tariff, were reasons of political economy. And the views which he had expressed more than once we believed were as firmly rooted in his breast as the Rock of Ages.

There is, in the Speech from the Throne, a most important paragraph, which reads as follows:

Several other Bills will be submittel, including measures providing for increased representation of the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba in the Senate.

A Bill is to be introduced for increased representation of the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba in the Senate. With this Bill, as with the naval