

What is the Canadian Manufacturers' Association? Is it not the union of men in a class? And I venture to say that so far as I have been able to watch their operations, nine-tenths of the activities of that body are political activities—but not always in the open and on the platform where the farmers go.

Mr. MIDDLEBRO: Would my hon. friend justify the Canadian Manufacturers Association, as such, nominating and electing representatives to this House?

Mr. CLARK: The Canadian Manufacturers Association has always had candidates in the field and always had members in the House.

Mr. MIDDLEBRO: The hon. gentleman has missed the point in my question. I asked my hon. friend would he justify the Canadian Manufacturers Association nominating and electing members to this Parliament as representing that body?

Mr. MICHAEL CLARK: Certainly not. My hon. friend scarcely needed to put that question; he could have answered it from what I have said on the general principle. What I assert is that the Canadian Manufacturers Association, and other interests, have been in politics—can my hon. friend deny it? As to having candidates in the field I very much fear that the candidates of all political parties have been much closer to those interests than my hon. friend would like to admit on the floor of this House. What I am objecting to is that hon. members should raise this hullabaloo about class representation the moment farmers and working men begin to make their voices heard as to the political principles which should govern the country. As a matter of fact, and we know it well, these other classes have been in politics and are continually in politics, and no one on either side of the House will deny it. If he did he would produce nothing but laughter and contempt both in the House and outside of it. My point is that the activities that are at present showing themselves for the first time in this country have been provoked by that which is wrong in the body politic and in the public life of Canada; these activities have been provoked by what is wrong in our public life. The fact of the matter, Mr. Speaker, is this: We have only been a nominal democratic country in Canada. We have had many of the marks of autocracy under the forms of democracy; and what I think I see in the public life of Canada

[Mr. M. Clark.]

to-day, as I see it all over the world, is the evolution of democracy. Did people expect that this little country would send 500,000 of her sons, 60,000 of them to die, to fight for democracy without attempting to get some of it in Canada? If it is a good thing for Europe it is also a splendid thing for the North American continent. We have so much of freedom that we shed the blood and gave the lives of 60,000 of our sons to fight for it in Europe. What shams we are if we go back to our own country and go on as if nothing had happened, bowing the knee to Baal, as we did in the past.

I do not concur in the view of the Minister of the Interior that the debate on the Address is an occasion when fiscal matters should not be mentioned. I have always understood that the debate on the Address constitutes a wide-open door, and that it is a tradition of Parliamentary Government that on the Address members of this House may talk about anything. There is a special reason, if I may say so, Mr. Speaker, why individual members should discuss fiscal questions during the debate on the Address, or make fiscal suggestions. What is the use of making any suggestions when the Budget is brought down? No Government ever alters its Budget if it has a majority behind it. In the very nature of the case suggestions are too late in coming when they come on the Budget. This is particularly true at the present moment, because we of the rank and file of the House hail the opportunity of endeavouring to guide the inexperienced feet of my good friend the new Minister of Finance in the path which he has lately had to try to tread. I condone with him on the burden he has had to take up, and I am sure I am sincere in expressing the hope that he will distinguish himself in the post to which the leader of the Government has called him. If he cares for a little piece of advice—I may try and enforce it later on—I will tell him in a sentence how he will make a very good Minister of Finance. If he will fail by just one hundred per cent to follow the three principal courses followed by his predecessor in the Department. If he will carefully forget all that his predecessor did and do exactly the opposite, or go as far in the opposite direction as he can, he will be a splendid Minister of Finance.

Now while my hon. friend (Mr. Meighen) seemed to favour that view he went on himself, as he was merely bound to do in the course of the debate, to reply to some of the points that were raised by my hon.