

Liberals, led by Mr. Gladstone, dealt with tariffs, and how tariffs were dealt with under the record of my hon. friend (Mr. McKenzie) to which he makes such confident appeal. In the year 1896, coming in with certain professions—which I have no desire to be repeating in this House, but the need of doing so is forced upon us, shall I say by the disorderly parliamentarism which brings in a Budget amendment on a vote to go into Committee of Supply, and I am compelled to make this statement to renew my hon. friends' acquaintance with the history of tariffs in other countries, and with their own tariff history—in the year 1896, the so-called Liberal party came into power in this country, and in 1897 they introduced some trifling reductions of the tariff, and put two or three articles of importance upon the free list. They also introduced the British preference, which was a fairly substantial piece of tariff reduction, and then they went to sleep for ten years. That is not the way Mr. Gladstone tackled the tariff. For ten years, from 1897 to 1907, my hon. friend (Mr. McKenzie) who is so excited now—who says there is to be no such thing as waiting—waited with absolute patience during that long term, because the tariff was practically passed over for ten years, and then it was,—I was going to say tackled, but that would be an absurd misuse of language,—flirted with again in the year 1907.

Well, what happened to the tariff in 1907? Absolutely trifling alterations were made in it, and in some cases, so far from following the example of Mr. Gladstone, the tariff was raised. It was raised notably on those woollen goods about which my hon. friends are so anxious at the present moment. Any one would have thought that the climate of Canada had improved in the ten years during which these fiscal-preaching Rip Van Winkles had been sleeping. Any one would have thought that the climate of Canada had changed from an Arctic to a tropical one, because hon. gentlemen opposite actually put up the duties on woollens. I suppose they conceived in the intervening time the desire to bring their children up a little more hardily. Well, I am thoroughly at one with my hon. friend from Brome that there could be a good *prima facie* case made out in a Budget discussion for having woollens reasonably cheap, because there are many months of the year in Canada when we are liable to have a temperature at forty degrees below zero; but when I agree with my hon. friend I must ask him also to disagree with the record of the hon. gentlemen with whom

he is now associated, and to which record appeal has been made by my hon. friend the leader of the Opposition.

It is true that the reciprocity agreement was brought in. Now, I do not want to detract by a single word from the credit for that agreement. My hon. friend the member for Shelburne and Queens (Mr. Fielding) seemed to chide myself and others from the West the other night, because we did not always give full recognition to what he, and the Government of which he was a member, had done in this connection.

There is no hon. gentleman in this House, Sir, by whom, on many grounds, I should less care to be chided than by my hon. friend; there is no hon. member of this House for whom I have a higher personal regard. I want to say now that I do not desire to detract from any of the merit that attached to the reciprocity proposals, though a great deal can be said as to whether that is the best method of dealing with the tariffs of a country. But I do want to say this in regard to the reciprocity agreement, and I want to put it on record with these few remarks: that there was a notable quotation made from a notable speech by my hon. friend from Shelburne and Queen's (Mr. Fielding)—as he did not divulge the authorship I should not—but he uttered language in which he pointed out that under the reciprocity agreement the manufacturers were not disturbed. I am not sure that my quotation is verbally accurate—it might have been that he said that they were not hurt. In any case, he quoted from a speech which was made in Montreal in the spring of 1911 for the purpose of soothing the manufacturers, and I hope that western voters and members will note that it was a speech made for that purpose. The manufacturers of Canada were told by someone high in the authority of the Liberal party on that day, that they were not hurt in the reciprocity agreement. That is part of the record relied on by my hon. friend the leader of the Opposition. Well, when he comes to attack the tariff in earnest he will not be able to use that language.

If I were dealing with this question on its economic merits, I should try to prove that free trade would not hurt manufacturers who were really self-reliant. I have said in this House that the manufacturers of Great Britain never did anything worth the name until free trade was established in that country. And that is capable of proof by the most exact figures. But that was not the sense in which the statement, reproduced and commended by my hon. friend