

The statement made by the hon. member for North Oxford (Mr. Nesbitt) was quite consistent with our policy; it was nothing new, and he had perfect authority, not only he but every member on the Liberal side, to make that statement.

The present Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir George Foster) asked Sir Wilfrid Laurier this question at that time:

Did the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance authorize the member in question to make that statement?

And Sir Wilfrid Laurier replied:

I have answered that already. It is perfectly true. The hon. member for North Oxford and every Liberal member had such authority; he was not kept in ignorance of our policy in this matter and knew it well. He only stated what is our general policy.

I think that this is conclusive evidence that the Liberal party when in power were protectionists. The manufacturers were their friends to the very last. In 1911, the year the Liberal party went out of power—and it was the farmers of this country who put them out—the Liberal party said to the farmers: We ask you to sell your products in a free market, and to buy in a protected market.

What is the history of the fiscal policy of this country? From 1878 to 1911, when hon. gentlemen opposite went out of power, the policy of protection was consistently carried out. May I give some further precedents to show that the policy of protection is the only policy upon which to build up Canada as a great nation. Every country in the world, with the exception of Great Britain, is to-day fostering its industries under that very policy. We have Germany, a great country, a country which has developed her manufacturing industries and her agricultural industries until to-day she is able with a smaller area than the province of Ontario to support a population of nearly seventy million people. We have the United States, a great nation, which has developed wonderfully in the past under that policy. She has grown up under it, and to-day has a market of which hon. gentlemen opposite are jealous; they envy it, and that market was built up under the policy of protection. And that is what we in Canada intend to do. But I think I can hear the voice of my hon. friend from Red Deer (Mr. Michael Clark) pointing, as always, to Great Britain as an example; but what are the facts in connection with Great Britain? Great Britain has free trade at the present time; but what were the circumstances in 1847, when she discarded the

[Mr. Bowman.]

protective tariff? She was supreme so far as the development of her manufacturing industries was concerned; she had cheap labour; she had great natural resources; her commerce reached out to every country in the world; and therefore Great Britain thought it was an opportune time to set an example to the other nations of the world. But that example was not followed by the other nations. To-day we see other nations forging ahead, and actually depriving Great Britain in her own market of the sale of many of her products for which she should have a ready sale at least in her own market. In view of all this, I think the judgment of our Finance Minister is such as to be worthy of commendation by the people of this country. He has maintained the policy which has proved successful, not under the Conservative party alone, but under our Liberal friends opposite.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I ask, where stand our friends on the Opposition benches to-day? They have gone back to the old position that they held prior to 1896; they are back now to decrying the manufacturers of this country, calling them robbers, the oppressors of the farmers of this country, and every imaginable name that they can possibly get their tongues around. The farmers of this country to-day, of whom I am one, are intelligent people. They are not going to be misled by any political—I was going to say clap-trap, but I understand, Mr. Speaker, that you would rule that out of order—so I will say the farmers are not going to be misled by any political deception. The Liberals are telling the farmers to-day that the manufacturers have set out to rob them. It is very strange that, as soon as they get out of power, they should tell the farmers that the manufacturers are trying to rob them. That is very difficult to understand. Speaking as a farmer, speaking in my own interest as a farmer, and I have every respect for the agricultural class in this country and wish to see it succeed, I think it is the greatest mistake to try and create a cleavage between the manufacturing, agricultural and labouring interests in this country. The hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Michael Clark) last night said that protection is not a builder of industries. I disagree with the hon. gentleman in that regard. What do we find is the fact? Take the census of 1910. We find that there are no less than 19,000 manufacturing establishments in this Dominion and that these manufacturing establishments represent an