

a question of sentiment, and, for my part, I am firmly convinced that the economic interests of Canada lie with this continent, and it is on the broad basis of continental freedom of trade that I place the question.

Sir, has geography changed since that speech was made? Have the great features of this Dominion changed since then? And yet we have utterances now, as though such sentiments had never been entertained by either the Prime Minister or his party. And again:

Sir, without entering into controversies which, for obvious reasons ought to be avoided at this board, I may be allowed to observe that men there are in my own country who seem always to forget that Canada is in America. I do not question their motives—I doubt their discretion. They look to a political federation of the whole British Empire, an idea, it must be admitted, not without grandeur, but which would remove the colonies from the position of security which they now occupy, and would embroil them in all the wars which Great Britain, in her present stage of advancement, might have to wage in all parts of the world.

And now, Sir, when the conversion from such views as these has been so recent and so marked, and the utterances that we now hear, of devotion to preferential trade and devotion to the union of the Empire so strong, we should look carefully at any clause to see what power is given to the Government under it. I, for one, look with great jealousy on giving the Government power to do, what only Parliament in a constitutional country should do. I entirely object to the Government doing what should be done by an impartial tribunal. I would like to have an arrangement made whereby combines should be at once hit, as they should be hit the moment they appear, but, Sir, the tribunal under that 16th clause will not be impartial. I take great objection to the present vague clause about which we can get no information, and I want an explanation of what the words "on the whole" mean. Does it mean an average? If it does, in the German Zollverein there might be an average on goods which the business men of Canada would not be interested in and yet under that average these goods would be able to come in.

I say we ought to have explanations on these matters, that we should look with suspicion on a tariff which erects a 35 per cent wall against the poor man and the farmer. The poor men and the farmers of this country had a right to hope for better than to have been abandoned by the men who professed to be their friends.

Some hon. MEMBERS. Question.

Mr. OLIVER. Mr. Speaker, this is an important question and one which has been freely discussed throughout the country for a number of years. It is a question which

Mr. DAVIN.

affects every part of Canada, and I for one cannot allow it to be voted on, nor can I vote upon it myself, without saying a word in justification of the vote which I give. I shall speak especially as to how the tariff is regarded in the western part of the Territories. I wish to say, that there are features in the tariff as it stands, which are disappointing to the people when considered in relation to the promises which have been made, and the ideas that have been gathered in the past from the party at present in power. There are, as I say, certain features of the present tariff which, as I understand it, are disappointing to these people, and it is on account of that that I wish to speak to-night. While there are features that are disappointing, there are also features most encouraging, and we are bound to consider not only the features that are disappointing, but also the features that are satisfactory. If we remember that on the whole, the tariff as proposed to us is more satisfactory than anything that was offered to us otherwise, we are bound to accept it as a whole, even though we do not approve of all it contains. The dissatisfaction has reference to the duties on articles which the farmer uses, and chiefly the duties on agricultural machinery and coal oil.

Now, we in the west are not unreasonable. We understand the difficulty of the task that this new Government had to face in remodeling the tariff. We do not ask for impossibilities, and we are willing in this matter to accept a policy of conciliation, as we were in the matter of the settlement of the school question. We do not wish to see any longer, the different industries in this country held up to antagonism with each other. We do not want hostility to be perpetuated between the agricultural and the manufacturing classes, if a compromise can be effected whereby justice will be done to all classes. At the same time it must be understood, that there is a strong demand for reductions in the tariff in these particular articles which I have named, and the reason is, as read by the hon. gentleman (Mr. Davin), that the fall in the price of agricultural products in the last few years, has been greater than the fall in the prices of the articles that the farmer had to buy. The farmer has been face to face with dire necessity, and it is because of his dire necessity that he asks for relief. It is for this reason also that he is less willing to freely accept the compromise that is now offered than he would be if his circumstances were better. I say, that the western farmers have been face to face in the past few years with unfortunate and unexpected conditions, and they now demand relief, as far as relief is possible, from these conditions.

The point now is: From what source is that relief to come, and toward whom are they to look? In this House, and on this occasion, if the present Opposition had any measure of relief to offer the farmers, now