

the nation could not go on with it for want of money. Whatever doubt there is regarding the Hudson Bay railway and the navigation of the straits, the time to raise any objection was surely before some \$23,000,000 was spent on that work, nearly half of which has been left to go for naught because some people thought their interests would be hurt by its completion.

The statement is often made in this country, it has often been made in this House, that Canada is a hard country to govern. I say, Mr. Speaker, it is only hard to govern to the extent that in our national life the wedge of privilege has been driven in between the interests of different classes and areas of this Dominion. If those responsible for the administration of this country would consider the needs of the Dominion instead of the exigencies of party things would be different. To-day independent thought is stifled in our colleges and universities. Newspapers are controlled, credit is withheld, enterprise killed and confidence destroyed. Our natural resources go undeveloped while agriculturists and workers are leaving the country. Canada is a country of great potential wealth, but we cannot hope to create a nation by class privilege. We must view these things with a broad outlook upon the fields of the future, and leave to our posterity the foundation of a true democracy.

Hon. W. S. FIELDING (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, if for no other reason I feel that I should rise now to express my warmest thanks to the hon. members in all quarters of the House who during this debate have said so many kind words concerning myself. I appreciate very much these manifestations of their goodwill, and I give them in all quarters my warmest and grateful thanks.

Now, with regard to the budget debate, so much has been said from this side of the House in review of objections that have been raised and the ground has been so well covered in the magnificent address delivered to-day by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King), that there really would be no excuse for my occupying the attention of the House in a lengthy address. I have no intention of doing so. I desire to be brief, but there are a few points, chiefly in the speech of my hon. friend the ex-Minister of Finance (Sir Henry Drayton), and the ex-Prime Minister, the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Meighen), to which I should like to allude, but I promise the House that I shall not detain them at any considerable length.

[Mr. Evans.]

The criticisms offered by my hon. friend from West York (Sir Henry Drayton) were in the main kindly and not calculated to make me or anybody else angry. On the whole I have not much fault to find with him. One criticism that he offered was that I was too conservative in my estimates of the revenue for the year. Well, perhaps I was, but will my hon. friend not agree with me that on the whole it is better in forming estimates of the revenue to be conservative than be extravagant in the other direction? I think it is wiser.

My hon. friend again and again in the course of his address argued that we should have armed ourselves—I think that is the word he used—in our French relations, in relation to the United States, in relation to all our trade business with foreign countries, by first increasing our tariff to a high point in order that, as they say, we should have something to trade with. I am not sure that that is a wise policy; but this I am justified in saying, that if it was a wise policy in the minds of my hon. friends opposite, the strangest thing in the world is that they did not utilize that policy when they were in power themselves. My hon. friend the ex-Minister of Finance did not occupy that post for many years, but he had a couple of sessions during which he might have, to use the expression, jacked up the tariff to a high point if he so desired; but he did not do it. He kept on under the old tariff. My hon. friend the leader of the Opposition fell into the same line of argument. Why did we not arm ourselves, why did we not jack up the tariff before we went to France and before we go to the United States? I think myself I have a right to point out the fact that hon. gentlemen opposite when they had an opportunity did not do it.

How is it if that is a sound policy it has only been discovered since they have been out of office? I had in my mind the story of two country merchants in the flour trade. A customer went into Jones' store and said to him, "What are you asking for flour to-day?" Jones said "Ten dollars." "Oh," said the customer, "that is pretty high; I cannot pay it." Jones said to him "No; that is all right; it is a fair price." The customer said to him "Why, Mr. Smith's price for flour is \$9.50." "Well," said Jones, "in that case I am afraid you will have to buy it from Smith." The customer said "Yes, but Mr. Smith is out of flour just now." When Smith was out of flour, he could quote a low price, and when my hon. friends are out of office they can tell us in pious words what they