

of progress and prosperity in Canada—and the years succeeding 1911 when the party was again in opposition up to the time of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's death in February, 1919.

I shall not attempt to review much less to enumerate the specific tariff measures advocated, supported and promoted in common by Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Mr. Fielding during the quarter of a century in which together they were the joint exponents of Liberal policy in the matter of tariff, but I will appeal to the record and challenge any one to show wherein, in any one of the three periods I have mentioned, the declared aim, purpose and achievement of Sir Wilfrid and Mr. Fielding in expounding Liberal doctrine was not in full harmony and accord with the action of the present government in reducing duties; reducing duties in particular on the instruments of production in the basic industries of our country, over and above all in the basic industry of agriculture. The record will establish beyond all doubt that the Laurier-Fielding tariff was one not of increased taxation, but of a lowering of taxation with respect to production and living costs.

Let me take first the period prior to 1896. In 1893 the Liberal party held a convention at which were passed two important tariff resolutions declaratory of the party's policy on tariff matters. The first declared the principle on which the customs tariff of the Dominion should be based. The exact words in this particular were "not, as it is now, upon the protective principle, but upon the requirements of the public service". It went on to speak of the evils which the tariff based upon the unsound principle of protection had occasioned and set forth that "the highest interests of Canada demand a removal of this obstacle to our country's progress by the adoption of a sound fiscal policy, which, while not doing injustice to any class, would promote domestic and foreign trade, and hasten the return of prosperity to our people". The resolution went on to declare that the tariff should be reduced to the needs of honest economical and efficient government and to promote freer trade. The second resolution on the tariff was one in favour of reciprocity in trade with the United States.

It was on this policy of tariff reduction, a policy which denounced the principle of protection as radically unsound, that the Liberal party, under Sir Wilfrid Laurier's leadership was returned to power in the general elections of 1896, and that Mr. Fielding entered the Laurier administration as Minister of Finance.

Then followed the fifteen years of Liberal administration. Early in the session of 1897 the new Liberal government passed the first measure of tariff reform, whereby 47 articles were added to the free list, and duties were reduced on 147 others, including farm implements. This was the first instalment of the Laurier-Fielding tariff, a tariff which reduced duties, and which included in the reduction duties on agricultural implements. Then came a second instalment of the Laurier-Fielding tariff in the same year. A preference of 12 per cent granted to the goods of Great Britain coming into Canada, with provision to grant a further preference of 12 per cent in the following year. In the years which followed other items were added to the free list, other duties were reduced, the British preference was further increased and at the time of the general elections of 1900 stood at 33½ per cent.

The session of 1901 followed close upon the return to power of the Liberal government. If honourable members will look up the budget speech delivered by Mr. Fielding on that occasion, they will find the Laurier-Fielding tariff policy set out in the following words "The tariff policy we have to offer to-day is the tariff policy which we adopted in 1897 and which we have continued up to the present time". Note the date 1897, the usual tariff revision downwards. In the years that intervened before the next general election more reductions were made in the tariff, more additions were made to the free list. Especially was this true of the year 1904 when 14 articles were put upon the free list, and the duties materially reduced on 14 others.

In the fall of 1904 the Liberal party was again returned to power. The government announced at the session in 1905 that there would not be any changes of an important character during the year. In 1906 a committee of the cabinet made an extended tour of the country inquiring into the desires of the people of all classes in regard to the tariff and promptly at the beginning of the session of 1906-07 the government presented a full revision of the Canadian tariff in what is usually cited as the Customs Tariff, 1907; reductions in the duty on many articles were provided for, readjustments involving increases were made in some cases as the results of experience in the operation of the tariff of 1897 and the free list was enlarged by a number of important additions. If reference is to be made to general tariff revisions, this may I think be appropriately termed the second Laurier-Fielding tariff the first being the tariff of 1897 which Mr.