

The War Taxes

OR

THE 1915 BUDGET

Mr. White's speech was as follows:—

Mr. Speaker, I rise to discuss the amendment proposed by the right hon. the leader of the Opposition, and the more salient features of the criticism directed by the junior member for Halifax (Mr. A. K. Maclean) against the Budget. But before entering upon my argument I desire to call attention to a remark made by the leader of the Opposition to the effect that we need not complain if he takes issue with us upon this Budget. I desire to say to my right hon. friend that we do not complain. We welcome the issue that my right hon. friend presents upon this Budget or any other issue he may desire to bring forward. We ask no indulgence except that indulgence which is the courtesy passing between members on both sides of this House and between Government and Opposition. Let me say to the right hon. gentleman distinctly that we have no complaint; we are prepared to meet fairly and squarely the issue which he has presented to us.

And, Sir, what was the substance and the gist of the attack made by the junior member for Halifax, the financial critic of the Opposition, against the Budget which I had the honor to present to the House? He said: You have been extravagant in the expenditure of public moneys; the war is not the cause of your financial condition; that additional measures of taxation were unnecessary; you should retrench expenditure and establish an equilibrium between income and outgo. I desire to state his case as strongly as he would state it himself—that our fiscal proposals were unscientific and inequitable and that the British preferential rate should not have been raised. My right hon. friend to-day associated himself with that line of argument, and indeed so have all other members on that side of the House who have spoken since the junior member for Halifax addressed the House.

RUINING THE CREDIT OF CANADA.

My hon. friend seemed to be quite at home when dealing with the topic of extravagance, and well he might. The Administration of which my right hon. friend was the head, and of which my hon. friend from Halifax was a strong supporter and almost a member, with the most intimate knowledge of its counsels, ran such a career of unbridled extravagance—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh.

Mr. WHITE: Yes, unbridled extravagance, especially during the late years of its existence as a government, that its continuation for any considerable length of time would have ruined beyond redemption, during the present generation, the credit of this Dominion.