

it was the same old tariff. Now they expect the new government, who wish to make a new tariff altogether that will be somewhat different from the old tariff, will have it ready in a month and a half. Of course, they are not serious in saying so, but they wish to make the government appear in an unfavourable light. I am quite sure the leader of the Opposition would not seriously say anything of the kind. The same way with the Manitoba school question. The late government had that question in their hands for six years and they did not settle it. I do not think it is necessary to say more than that they did not settle it; and now they expect it to be settled within six weeks after the new government is in office. The next paragraph of the speech says :

The operation of the tariff will be made the subject of careful inquiry during the recess, with a view to the preparation of such a measure as may, without doing injustice to any interest, materially lighten the burdens of the people.

It is satisfactory to know that the government propose to introduce such a measure at the next session of parliament. There is no doubt but that the popular sentiment of this country is in favour of the lessening of the burdens imposed on the people by the tariff; and I may add, although the speech does not say anything about that, what I think is almost as important, there is a very strong feeling throughout the country, particularly amongst business men, in favour of a simplification of the tariff. It is not merely reduction, but simplification. If there is a thorough going protectionist in Parliament, it is the hon. leader of the Opposition in this House; and I think probably the hon. gentleman may challenge the statement which I have made; but I can produce authority—I am not quite sure whether the hon. gentleman will recognize it or not, but most Conservatives will recognize it as good authority, that is, the authority of the hon. gentleman who until lately was Minister of Finance. I turn to the Budget Speech delivered by that hon. gentleman in 1894; and I refer to it for the purpose of showing that the general sentiment of the country is in favour of a reduction of the duties imposed by the present tariff. Those duties, as the statistics show, averaged a little more than the duties imposed by the tariff which existed just before 1894. I have not the volume of Hansard and I cannot refer the

hon. gentleman to the page in Hansard, but I have the official pamphlet containing the Budget Speech of the Hon. Geo. Foster, D.C.L., M.P., Minister of Finance, delivered on the 27th March, 1894, in the House of Commons. At page 11 I find the following :

If there is to be a protective system at all, everybody knows that it must be higher in its inception than as the years gradually pass, when industries have become established, and when the industrial development of the country grows apace. If a high degree of protection is necessary at any time, it is necessary in the initial years of a policy which adopts the principle of protection as its basis.

And then he goes on to show that that stage is passed. I now propose to quote a few lines from page 18 of the same pamphlet. This is the principal quotation—it lays down the whole doctrine :

Now, sir, there have been many changes since 1878. Since the inception of the National Policy, fourteen years have gone by. Changes have taken place in the business conditions of this country itself, changes in the value of raw material and of manufactured products, changes which, so far as the ad valorem equivalents of duties are concerned, have made a very great difference as to the nature and rates of imposts between those times and the present day. The industries of this country have, many of them, well established themselves. The amount of protection which they needed before, they do not need to so great a degree to-day; and for some years an opinion has been gaining ground among the people that the time for a revision has come, an opinion which was recognized by the government when they said to parliament last year that the time had come for a complete re-examination of the whole matter of our tariff arrangements, in order that the anomalies existing might be done away with, and that the tariff might be brought level with the existing circumstances and changed conditions of business, not only in Canada, but in foreign countries, at the present day. Those changes have taken place, and those changes have been recognized.

I do not think the hon. gentleman can raise any question as to my authority for thinking that the tariff needs change. I shall read just one more very short extract, where the Minister of Finance having meanwhile dined and come back fortified, after having weighed I presume what he had said before dinner, says :

When the House rose at six o'clock I was saying that in the tariff revision it has been the aim of the government, while seeing that industries are reasonably protected in this country, to also see that the rights of the consumers are carefully looked after, and that all classes and all conditions of the people shall have fair consideration in the arrangement of the tariff.