

Tory party was a pretty bad aggregation. Running a newspaper as I did, I had a busy time keeping out of gaol when speaking my mind about the members of that party. I thought when my good friends the "so-called" Liberals—I suppose I had better use that term—came to office we would have every vestige of protection wiped from the tariff. That was the promise. Consequently, as a young man, I stumped my riding on a coal-oil can, practically telling the farmers that they were being bled white, and that if we could just get our party into office it would be all smooth sailing, for there would be no more tariff, they would have their boots and clothing, their cotton and wool free of duty, and instead of trading a bushel of wheat for a dozen of bananas or a gallon of coal-oil, they would get their coal-oil for fifteen cents a gallon and their bananas for about twelve cents a dozen. Imagine my disappointment, Mr. Speaker, when I came down to Ottawa to find that some of the leaders whom I thought quite as sincere as my friend the present leader of the Opposition, had changed face on the tariff. The question was not whether the duty on agricultural implements should be wiped out altogether because it was bearing very heavily on the farmers. On the contrary an emissary—to be frank, it was L. M. Jones himself—stayed with me nearly all Sunday to get me to agree to an increase in that duty, representing that the Government was willing. That is really what I was up against. It was not a reduction, it was an increase. If we pass by the 33½ per cent British preferential reduction, much of which was afterwards recalled, the total reduction made by our friends was 77-100 of 1 per cent. I remember being in the House when the present Acting Prime Minister (Sir George Foster) analyzed the tariff and affirmed without contradiction that that was the total amount of the reduction.

Well, it set me thinking, and I had a pretty uneasy time. The late Dr. Landerkin and many of the rest of "the boys" would tap me on the back and say: "Young man, stand by your party." Well, I did try to, but it got too hot for me, and finally I differed from the party. I had a pretty hard time of it then, because I was told: "We have redeemed our tariff pledges; you are not a good Liberal and should resign; you have all that was promised you." I was expected not only to believe that, but to be pleased and to smile over it. To me it was a deep disappointment, because I

[Mr. Richardson.]

had been up and down the country for years denouncing the tariff. I mention this particularly for the benefit of my good friend the member for Marquette (Hon. Mr. Crerar), who has started out to lead a party. I myself once started out to lead a party in the Northwest, but I did not get very far.

I noticed from my hon. friend's speech that it is beginning to dawn on him that the tariff cannot be—or, I should say, will not be—wiped out. I suppose it could, if you could elect a sufficient number of free traders, but the difficulty is that however sincere the member for Marquette may be in his desire to eliminate a great many evil things from the tariff—and I am heartily with him in that—he will find that the people generally will not follow.

Some of the members on the other side from the province of Quebec who applaud heartily when my hon. friend speaks about having the tariff lowered sat behind a Government that practised protection to the hilt, and if put to it to-day when their political existence was at stake, would do so again. That is the insincerity of the whole business. Of course, my hon. friend did say that he was not prepared to wipe it out at one fell swoop—I think that was his expression, if not, it was the substance of it. I am heartily in sympathy with my hon. friend's proposal that the duties should be removed from the implements of production. During the last twenty-five or thirty years I have not changed my views on this question. I would like to see the duties removed from the implements of production. I do not believe that it is possible at this time, owing to the condition of the country and to our international relations, to amend the tariff to the satisfaction of the strongest tariff reformer. So far as my influence and my judgment go, I am just as heartily in favour of a reduction of the tariff as is the member for Marquette. I have had a little more experience in connection with it than he has, and I know something about the tremendous difficulties that will meet him and will meet every strong tariff reformer at every turn of the road. But I repeat that so far as his campaign for having the duties removed from the implements of production goes, he has my heartiest sympathy and I will endeavour to assist in any reasonable way. The Government itself will probably so revise the tariff as to meet in a reasonable measure the aspirations of the West. I do not, however, like my hon. friend, look for such a revision at one fell swoop as will satisfy