

satisfied to answer him out of the mouth of his own Finance Minister, the Hon. W. S. Fielding.

FIELDING GIVES THE ANSWER.

Here is what that gentleman thought about increasing the British preference, when, addressing the Colonial Conference of 1902, he used these words:

"I would like, Sir, to say, from a Canadian point of view, we think THAT AN ADDITIONAL PREFERENCE IN THE SHAPE OF A HIGHER DUTY MAY GIVE THE BRITISH MANUFACTURER A GREATER ADVANTAGE than perhaps Mr. Chamberlain is disposed to think possible. WE DO NOT PROFESS THAT WE WANT TO INTRODUCE BRITISH GOODS TO DISPLACE THE GOODS MADE BY THE MANUFACTURERS OF CANADA. That is a point we must speak with great frankness.

"The statistics show that our tariff is not prohibitive; it is a moderately protective tariff. We say it is incidentally protective. The statistics show that we are importing from abroad vast quantities of goods, and the statistics also show that England is not holding her own, or is barely holding her own, of late, and that a large proportion of these are coming from foreign countries. If these goods are being imported, then, BY AN INCREASE OF THE DUTY, THEREBY INCREASING THE PREFERENCE TO GREAT BRITAIN, THE GOODS ARE STILL GOING TO BE IMPORTED, BUT WE CAN TURN THE TRADE, AS MR. SHEDDEN POINTED OUT, FROM THE FOREIGNER TO GREAT BRITAIN. Take the class of goods to-day, in which there is 30 per cent. duty with one-third off, the British goods come in at 20 per cent. There is thus 10 per cent. advantage to the manufacturer. If you increase 45 per cent. and still KEEP YOUR PROPORTION OF ONE-THIRD, YOUR PREFERENCE THEN BECOMES 15 PER CENT., AND THAT IS AN ADDITIONAL ADVANTAGE TO THE BRITISH MANUFACTURER AS COMPETING WITH THE FOREIGN MANUFACTURER."

Here we have Laurier completely answered by Laurier's own Minister of Finance. If, says Mr. Fielding in effect, you increase the duties, and still maintain your proportion of one-third in respect to the British preference, you give the British manufacturer an advantage over the foreign manufacturer greater than he possessed before. Could anything be plainer than that? Could there be a more convincing and logical defence of what the Hon. Mr. White has done in his War Budget?